
HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Canterbury Christ Church University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	17- 18 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-12034-Q8L6Z0

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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:

Fleur Kitsell	Physiotherapist
Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Ian Hughes	Lay
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.

Claire Alfrey	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Canterbury Christ Church University
Lauren Smyth	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Canterbury Christ Church University
Claire Anderson	Internal panel member	Canterbury Christ Church University

Shola Osinaike	Internal panel member	Canterbury Christ Church University
Rebekah Osbourne	Learner member, internal panel	Canterbury Christ Church University
Sarah Crowther	External member of internal panel	Sheffield Hallam University
Steve Ryall	Professional body member	Education advisor, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Nina Paterson	Professional body member	Education advisor, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed first intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01757

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	Not Required

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

Group	Met	
Learners	Yes	The programme is not running yet so we met with learners from the existing HCPC-approved BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy.
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 15 June 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 applicants have access to all necessary information required to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this standard, in the programme specification, which included descriptions for applicants of the application process, and information about the various requirements and prerequisites for entry to the programme. From this information, they understood that some of the placements were a considerable distance from the main programme site and so learners might incur

significant extra costs associated with travel or accommodation. They could not see in this evidence where applicants would find clear information about the costs that they might incur during practice-based learning. From the meeting with learners from existing programmes, the visitors were aware that for other HCPC-approved programmes the materials available for applicants gave approximate indications of the costs associated with different placements. However, the visitors could not determine how applicants to this programme would have access to information regarding associated costs. The visitors could not see where applicants were given full details about the specific contents and process of the occupational health check. Discussions with the senior team and programme team did not clarify how applicants might access information about potential costs and the occupational health check at an appropriate point in the application process, before applicants would make a decision about whether to accept an offer. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that all applicants are provided with timely information about the nature of the occupational health check and the extra costs that they are likely to incur on placement.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify what programme of professional and academic development is available to visiting lecturers that is appropriate to their role on the programme and effective at ensuring their skills are up to date.

Reason: The visitors were not able to review documentary evidence for this standard but did discuss staff development opportunities with the programme team and the senior team. They were satisfied from these discussions that there was an effective programme in place to ensure the development of permanent staff, and that the education provider had systems in place for monitoring and recording the academic and professional development of permanent employees. The visitors also reviewed a copy of the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing Research & Knowledge Exchange Newsletter. However, regarding visiting lecturers, the visitors were unclear about how the education provider ensured that such staff were keeping their skills up to date. There did not seem to be a written record of this. They considered that, due to the structure of the programme and its reliance on visiting lecturers, it was especially important for the education provider to have a way of ensuring that these lecturers were accessing continuing development appropriate to their role. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating that they can do so.

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 ensure that the programme documentation is accurate in its references to HCPC requirements.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the programme specification and the programme and placement handbooks. They noted that the programme specification stated that the HCPC required physiotherapy learners to complete 1,000 hours of practice-based learning before they were eligible to apply for registration. This is not the case; the HCPC does not set out such requirements. The visitors therefore require the education provider to amend this part of the programme specification.

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 all educators in practice-based learning are appropriately trained before learners are placed with them.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the practice handbook. It consisted of a description of the role and responsibilities of the practice educator, but did not make clear the training requirements that practice educators would have to meet prior to working with learners on the programme. The mapping document referred to practice educator training days, but this did not link to any specific evidence regarding these training days. The visitors discussed practice educator training with the programme team and the practice placement providers, and they received verbal assurances that practice educators were expected to undergo training before supervising learners. However, they could not see anywhere in the programme documentation a clear statement that all practice educators must undertake appropriate training before they can supervise learners or how they ensure that all practice educators have completed the training. As such, they were unable to be certain that the standard was met. They therefore require the education provider to submit evidence showing how they will ensure that all practice educators undergo appropriate training, specific to their role, before supervising learners.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will manage the moderation of assessment for learners on placement to ensure that it is as fair as possible.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided for this standard, in the programme specification and on the education provider's website. From this evidence and from discussions with the programme team, they were not clear how the education provider would ensure that moderation of assessment in practice-based learning would provide a fair measure of learners' achievement. They were aware that the education provider had chosen to use a 20 per cent sampling rate for termly moderation, but they considered that on a programme which would only have 20 learners per cohort this would mean a low level of moderation. There was a risk that assessment which was not fair or reliable would not be picked up by this method. The visitors were particularly concerned about two potential problems in assessment that might not be picked up by this moderation strategy:

- Fairness around the pass / fail borderline for practice-based learning placements. It was not clear to the visitors how the education provider could ensure that the judgements by practice educators concerning whether a learner had passed a placement were as fair as possible
- Whether any particular assessor was assessing work appropriately – with only a 20 per cent sampling rate an assessor might easily go for some time without having their work moderated.

The programme team stated that alongside the sampling method, they were also looking to use team assessment strategies where possible, for example in large clinical settings. However, not all practice based learning takes place in such settings; some learners would be placed in settings with only one or two supervisors, which would mean that the potential issues outlined above might still arise. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that their moderation of assessment carried out by practice educators will be objective, fair and reliable.

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.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should continue to develop its methods for maintaining regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as the programme team and practice placement providers had explained in meetings how collaboration between them worked. There are regular meetings and long-standing professional relationships in place. However, the visitors were not clear about how and where discussions about assessment on placement had taken place. There did not seem to be a record of such meetings. They therefore suggest to the education provider that they review how best to maintain clear records of these discussions so that collaboration continues to be effective.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should continue its planned development of use of service users and carer involvement across the programme.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as there was an active service users' group which worked closely with staff in the School of Allied Health Professions, in which this programme is placed. Service users and carers will be contributing to teaching and admissions on the programme. The visitors noted that the service users' group did seem to be relatively small, and that there were plans for them to be involved more widely and systematically in the programme in the future. They suggest that the education provider carry forward these plans to broaden and strengthen the service user and carer involvement, and to review which parts of the programme are most appropriate for their involvement. In this way they will continue to ensure that service users and carers contribute to the programme's overall quality and effectiveness.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Leeds
Name of programme(s)	BA Honours in Social Work, Full time
Approval visit date	3-4 May 2018
Case reference	CAS-12199-Q0V5G3

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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:

Luke Tibbits	Social worker
Richard Barker	Social worker
Louise Whittle	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.

Mitch Waterman	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Leeds – Pro-Dean for Student Education
Deborah Schofield	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Leeds – Quality Assurance Manager

Paul Baxter	Internal panel member	University of Leeds – Director of Classified Undergraduate Studies
Karen Lee	Internal panel member	University of Leeds – Director of Postgraduate Studies
Helen Smith	Internal panel member	University of Leeds – Director of Student Education

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BA Honours in Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 August 2003
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 45
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01803

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. The education provider made changes to the programme, in order to incorporate the requirements of the new Social Work Teaching Partnership created in the region. A decision was made to visit the programme due to the nature of the changes, and its impact on several standards.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

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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 13 June 2018.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the admissions process assesses the suitability of applicants, which may not be related to criminal convictions.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the admissions case study and Self Declaration Policy. From the information the visitors were clear that after interview, learners are asked to complete a Disclosure Barring Services (DBS) form. However, from conversations with the programme team the visitors could not determine how the admissions process assesses potential suitability issues, which may not be highlighted in the criminal convictions check. The visitors asked how issues which may be non-criminal such as child protection issues, with no criminal charges, or if a learner has been expelled from another programme for fitness to practice issues, will be

assessed. The programme team explained that learners are required to provide two references. However the visitors note that these references may not reflect the issues around suitability. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how they assess the suitability of applicants during the admissions process, for non-criminal issues.

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

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

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the staff curriculum vitae. From the documentation and discussions with the senior team, the visitors were aware of the individuals who will have overall professional responsibility for the programme. The visitors noted that the staff member identified was appropriately qualified and experienced and, on the relevant part of the Register. In the senior team meeting, the visitors were informed that there is a process in place to ensure that they identify and appoint an appropriately qualified and experienced person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme. However, the visitors were not given the process, and therefore could not determine that it is appropriate to ensure that the education provider will continue to appoint a suitable person and, if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement. As such, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate that they have an effective process for ensuring that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.

3.8 Learners must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the process which enables learners to review the programme is effective and communicates how and when learners can be involved in reviewing the programme.

Reason: From the documentation it states that “each year group appoints two student representatives who attend the Programme Management Group and feedback the view of the year group”. During the meetings with the programme team and learners, the visitors heard that the student representatives take feedback to management meetings and then feedback to their colleagues on the programme. The visitors note that there is a process which enables learners to contribute to the enhancement of the programme. However, in the meeting with the learners some student representatives expressed that throughout the academic year they had not been invited to any of the meetings and therefore could not feed in and feedback their cohorts concerns. The visitors therefore could not determine that the process was effective in ensuring that learners have the opportunity to review the programme and have their feedback is adequately addressed. As such, the education provider should ensure that there is an effective process in place to enable learners to review the programme and that they communicate to all learners how and when they will be required to review the programme to ensure that their concerns are adequately addressed.

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 programme team must revise the programme documentation to ensure that the resources to support teaching and learning are accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit and clarification at the visit, the visitors noted various instances of inaccurate information. Examples include:

- The study hours associated with some modules such as module HECS2217 (Decision-Making in Social Work) and module HECS1119 (Social Work Theory and Practice Across the Life Course).
- Discrepancies in the assessment methodology of some modules such as module HECS1119 (Social Work Theory and Practice Across the Life Course).

These are only some examples of inaccurate information identified in the programme documentation, which will be made available to both learners and educators.

Considering these and other instances, the visitors were not satisfied the education provider has ensured that learners will have the accurate information they require in order to support their learning. The internal validation panel also required the programme team to amend various parts of the documentation which will be made available to learners and educators. The programme team must provide the visitors with the amended final version of the documentation, to enable them to determine that it is appropriate for all.

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

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

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the learning outcomes and assessment for the professional practice modules. The visitors noted that learning outcomes of various modules highlighted the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. However, from discussions with the learners, the visitors were informed that whilst on the 'placement' (Shadowing experience) in year one of the programme they were involved in activities where they work autonomously with service users. In the programme team meeting the visitors were informed that this was intended as a shadowing experience and not a placement. The programme team also expressed that prior to learners going out on their shadowing experiencing they are told through the professional practice module that they are not allowed to work autonomously with service users. From the conversations, the visitors were however unclear how the learners understand how expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs), apply to them in this part of the programme. In particular the SCPEs regarding 'maintaining appropriate boundaries' and 'working within your limits'. The visitors were unclear how learners understand what is expected for them as they work outside their limits whilst

out on their shadowing experience. The education provider must therefore ensure that the learners understand and are able to apply the expectations of professional behaviour at an appropriate level through this part of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must communicate any changes to learning and teaching methods of the dissertation module and ensure that the methods adopted are effective to deliver the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation provided and conversations with the programme team, the visitors were satisfied that the current teaching and learning methods for the dissertation module were appropriate for the effective delivery of the learning outcomes. However, throughout the visit the internal validation panel stated that they require the programme team to amend the teaching and learning methods for the dissertation module. Whilst the HCPC does not stipulate which learning and teaching methods should be adopted, the visitors noted that there could be significant changes to the methods and therefore the effective delivery of the learning outcomes. Without seeing the changes to the finalised methods, the visitors cannot make a judgement on how they will enable learners achieve the learning outcomes and therefore the standards of proficiency for social workers in England. The visitors therefore require the education provider to communicate any changes to the learning and teaching methods and ensure that the methods adopted are effective to deliver the learning outcomes.

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 the practice setting is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the audit process of practice-based learning areas. From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and practice-based learning educators the visitors were clear that learners are inducted into their practice areas. The visitors were also clear that learners, the education provider, and the practice areas sign a tripartite learning agreement highlighting the responsibilities of learners. In relation to the above 4.2 condition, the learners expressed that they work autonomously with service users whilst on their shadowing experience. The visitors note that there are associated risks with learners not being appropriately supervised throughout their shadowing experience and this could provide an unsafe environment for both learners and / or service users. The education provider must therefore demonstrate how they will ensure that the environments where learners undertake their shadowing experience, provides a safe and effective environment for both the learners and service users.

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 will ensure that the learners and supervisors on practice will be adequately prepared for the shadowing experience.

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors saw that learners are prepared through their Professional Practice modules before they go out onto their shadowing experience. The visitors were also clear that learners, the education provider, and the practice areas sign a tripartite learning agreement highlighting the responsibilities of learners. However, from the learners meeting, the visitors were informed that learners work autonomously with service users whilst on their shadowing experience. The visitors were therefore, unsure how both the supervisors in practice and learners are adequately prepared to ensure that learners understand their scope of practice during the shadowing experience. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure learners and supervisors will be adequately prepared for practice to ensure that the learners work within their scope of practice.

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 any changes to the assessment strategy and design, ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for social workers in England

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors reviewed the assessment strategy and design for the programme, which is designed to ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs for social workers in England. However, during the meeting with the programme team and the informal feedback meeting at the visit the visitors noted that the internal validation panel will require the programme team to make some changes to parts of the assessment strategy and design. These changes include reviewing the assessment workload and some of the assessment methods. As such, the visitors have not seen the final, confirmed, assessment strategy and design for the programme. Therefore, they cannot determine how the amended learning assessment strategy will ensure that successful graduates can meet the SOPs for social workers in England. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide additional evidence, which will communicate any changes to the assessment strategy and design, so they can determine whether the programme meets this standard.

HCPC approval process report

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

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David Whitmore	Paramedic
Robert Fellows	Paramedic
Deirdre Keane	Lay
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

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

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

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 48
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01866

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

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

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

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

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

Group	Met
Learners	The visitors met with learners from other NIAS programmes.
Senior staff	Yes
Practice education providers	Yes
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes
Programme team	Yes
Facilities and resources	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that:

- there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met;
- the nature of the proposed conditions mean that a further visit would be the most appropriate method of scrutinising any further evidence provided, enabling further discussions to be conducted with key stakeholders of the programme; and,
- any further visit should focus on the conditions, with scope to review the wider standards if there is reason to do so, and should include meetings with the programme team, senior team, practice education providers, learners, service users and carers, and a facilities and resources review.

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

Conditions

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

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation, in particular advertising material, to clearly state the eligibility criteria for applicants to this programme.

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

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

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

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

- selection and recruitment process;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

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

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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

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

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

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

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3.8 Learners must be involved in the programme.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the resources to support learner learning in all setting will be appropriate to the delivery of the programme and be accessible to all learners.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate what effective and formal process is in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about safety and wellbeing of service users.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The University of Northampton
Name of programme(s)	BA (Hons) in Social Work, Full time MA Social Work, Full time
Approval visit date	25 - 27 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-13170-P0G2F6

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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 the Social work assessment are as follows:

Beverley Blythe	Social worker
Graham Noyce	Social worker (Approved mental health professional)
Manoj Mistry	Lay
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

This was a multi-professional visit with three HCPC panels. One panel for the Social work programmes, one for the Paramedic programmes and one for both the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes. For the Paramedic programme there were representatives from the professional body, College of Paramedics. For the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes there were representatives from their respective professional bodies, College of Podiatry and Royal College of Occupational Therapists. For each profession assessed at this multi-professional event there were representatives from the education provider and the External panel members from their relevant professions. Outlined below are the details of the other groups in attendance at

the approval visit. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Internal panel members		
John Sinclair	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Vivien Houghton	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Lyndsey Williams	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Sue Donnelly	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Clare Green	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Ashleigh Jones	Independent Student Panel Member	University of Northampton
Cathy Smith	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Social work panel)
Faith Tucker	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Aileen Cowan	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
James Underwood	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Paramedic panel)
Matthew Watson	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Terry Tudor	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Esther Olorunsomo	Independent student Panel member	University of Northampton
External panel members		
Robert Wu	External panel member	Birmingham City University—Social work
Mairghread Ellis	External panel member	Queen Margaret University – Podiatry
Anita Atwal	External panel member	London South Bank University – Occupational Therapy
Tom Davidson	External panel member	University of Cumbria – Paramedic
Professional body panel members		
Sally Abbey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Representative
James Coughtrey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Head of Education and Development
Alison Hart	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Officer
Anna Clampin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Representative

Clair Parkin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Officer
Kirsty Lowery-Richardson	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics— Representative
Paul Townsend	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics— Representative
HCPC Occupational Therapy and Podiatry panel members		
Emma Supple	Chiropodist / podiatrist (Prescription only medicines – sale / supply)	HCPC visitor
Patricia McClure	Occupational therapist	HCPC visitor
Ian Hughes	Lay	HCPC visitor
Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah	HCPC executive	HCPC – Occupation Therapy and Podiatry panel lead
HCPC Paramedic panel members		
Glyn Harding	Paramedic	HCPC visitor
Linda Mutema	Radiographer - Diagnostic radiographer	HCPC visitor
Joanne Watchman	Lay	HCPC visitor
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive	HCPC – Paramedic panel lead

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BA (Hons) in Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 July 2004
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01825

Programme name	MA Social Work
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Social worker in England
First intake	01 January 2016
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01827

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 programmes via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment.

The education provider submitted a major change notification flagging changes in two areas:

- From the academic year 2018–19, all their programmes will be taught at a new location, as the education provider will be moving to a new campus.
- In line with institution-wide policy changes (i.e. the education provider changed its pedagogy to Active Blended Learning (ABL)) programme learning outcomes will be rewritten, and the number of learning outcomes reduced. The education provider also indicated there will be amendments to assessment strategy.

From the major change, we decided to assess the programme via the approval process against all of the standards of education and training.

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 02 July 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 demonstrate that applicants have the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note on page 14 of the programme specification it states, "Applicants are selected for offer or invited to interview on the basis of information provided in the application form". From the information provided, the visitors were not clear if an applicant could be offered a place on the programme without being interviewed. In addition, the visitors note that the programme handbook for the BA programme refers to a 'suitability panel' as part of the admissions process. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what role the suitability panel had in the admissions process.

At the visit, the programme team confirmed that applicants for the programme must undergo an interview in order to be considered for a place on the programme, and no applicant would be offered a place without going through the interview process. The programme team also clarified that they no longer have a suitability panel for the admission process, and this should not be referred to in the documentation.

As such, the visitors note that the documentation currently contains information that may cause confusion for potential applicants on the admissions process. As such, the visitors require further information that demonstrates the documentation accurately reflects the admissions process, to ensure that applicants have the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the academic entry standards for the BSc programme and demonstrate how these are appropriate to the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided for the BSc programme, the visitors were not clear what tariff points the education provider would consider for academic entry requirements, as the documentation does not reflect current criteria for UCAS tariff points. At the visit, the programme team stated that the tariff points are set at 280 points, or 112 under the new UCAS tariff points system. However, the visitors found that documentation does not reflect this criteria. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear that the education provider has a set tariff entry requirements onto the programme, whether the entry requirements are appropriate to the level and content of the programme, or that this is clearly documented. As such, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the requirements for 'previous experience' for admission to MA programme, demonstrate how this is assessed per applicant, and how they ensure this is consistent, and appropriate to the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, for the MA programme, the programme specification states "applicants must demonstrate (100 days or equivalent) relevant previous experience in social care or a related area". From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what would constitute 100 days or equivalent (i.e. part time or full time), or how this would be assessed per applicant. The programme team confirmed there is a degree of flexibility involved when assessing this for applicants, and that they look at the length of time an applicant has in relevant previous experience. The visitors note that this may be confusing for applicants if they are not aware there will be flexibility, or how the 100 days is applied. The programme team confirmed they need to review the requirement to make it clear to an applicant what would be considered for the previous relevant experience. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear how the 100 days would be applied to applicants, and therefore could not determine that the professional entry standards would be appropriate to the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify how they assess academic entry requirements, such as UCAS tariff points, that will demonstrate an effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear what the process would be if there was an applicant for the programme who did not meet the academic entry requirements stated by the education provider, such as the UCAS tariff points. The programme team stated that it is the role of the admissions tutor to review academic qualifications on application, and they have not had an applicant previously who has not met the minimum UCAS tariff entry requirements. The programme team stated that if this were to happen, the admissions tutor would speak to the Dean about whether they would need to lower the requirement, however they have not experienced

this. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear how the education provider ensures that appropriate academic entry standards are applied.

As such, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

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

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

3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there are effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.

Reason: The SETs mapping document for the programmes made reference to a 'Personal Academic Tutor', who will provide academic and pastoral support to learners on the programmes. In the documentation provided, the visitors read that the personal academic tutor will meet with learners in the first week, and thereafter on a regular basis. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what is considered a regular basis.

At the visit, the visitors asked the learners about the personal academic tutor system, and how they provide academic and pastoral support. The visitors heard from a learner on the MA programme that they did not have a personal academic tutor, and has been told a number of times this would be put in place, however at this point it is the programme leader that learners would go to for this support. The visitors heard from learners on the BA programme that this has been inconsistent over the years, and the level of support received depends on the tutor you have been allocated.

The first year learners on the BA programme confirmed that they have met three times with a personal academic tutor this year. The programme team clarified that a learner should meet with a personal academic tutor at least once a semester. The programme team talked about an open door policy, where learners can come and speak to the programme lead or staff at any time they are in their office, and they talked of moving to a 'super personal academic tutor (PAT)' system.

The super PAT system works to identify those members of staff that are best at supporting learners, and have those members of staff dedicated to providing that support. However this process is not currently in place, and the visitors have not seen how the education provider plans to manage this. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear how this process would work for the number of learners on the programme, and how those members of staff chosen for the super PAT system would have time to manage this in their workload. From the information provided, the visitors could not determine that there are effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings. As such, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there is a thorough and effective process in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Reason: On their review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors found that the education provider has a fitness to practice policy in place in relation to this standard. At the visit, the visitors heard from learners and practice education providers that there have been instances in the past where learners have been delayed in starting their practice-based learning, or returning to practice-based learning after extended break, due to delays in receiving an up to date criminal conviction check.

The visitors heard from practice education providers that there had been a situation where a learner has come back from extended break in their studies, and found their criminal conviction check was out of date and therefore had to delay their start date for practice-based learning. As such, the visitors were not clear whether the education provider has effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health, when missing the criminal convictions checks results in delayed starts for learners going onto practice-based learning. Therefore, the visitors require further information on how the education provider ensures there are effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

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 that the learning outcomes ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for social workers in England.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided module specifications and a SOPs mapping document in their initial documentary submission.

The module specifications provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the programme will deliver the standards of proficiency for social work.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

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 will reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the programme specification and a SOPs mapping document in their initial documentary submission. On review of the module specifications provided for the submission, they gave a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how programme will reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

4.5 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how integration of theory and practice is central to the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the programme and placement handbook and a SOPs mapping document for the BA programme, and reference various modules specifications for the MA programme. The module

specifications provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to determine what is taught in each module, and therefore cannot see how that will be consolidated in practice-based learning that follows.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate what learning and teaching methods are used, and how these are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided module specifications in their initial documentary submission. The module specifications provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the learning and teaching methods used are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

4.7 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the delivery of the programme will support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided module specifications in their initial documentary submission. The module specifications provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not

provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the delivery of the programme will support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the delivery of the programme will support and develop evidence-based practice.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided module specifications in their initial documentary submission. The module specifications provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the delivery of the programme will support and develop evidence-based practice.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider did not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 4.

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 that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: In the SETs mapping document, the education provider notes that inter-professional learning primarily takes place while learners are in the practice-based learning environment and refers to the BA placement handbook, and some of the module specifications. At the visit, the visitors heard that currently there is no formal learning with and from, other relevant professions for social work learners in the

academic setting, but that learners may interact with other relevant professions in the practice based learning settings. From the information provided, the visitors could not see how this is formally part of the programme, or how the education provider ensures that this is happening, rather than relying on the learners having ad hoc opportunities in practice-based learning settings. The visitors heard from the programme team that there are plans for multi-disciplinary team working at the new campus, where they have plans to work with occupational therapists and the Police to build on inter-professional education. However, the visitors have not seen that the programmes are ensuring that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions. As such, the visitors require more information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there are effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from learners.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear what the consent process for learners on the programme would be. The SETs mapping document for the MA programme states that “where students participate as service users in practice and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols are used to obtain their consent”. The SETs mapping document for the BA programme refers to the programme handbook and practice placement handbook. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what the ‘appropriate process’ to obtain consent from learners on the programmes was. At the visit, the learners were not aware of any specific process for giving consent, and said that it is talked about in first year of the programme, and at the start they are told they can leave the room at any time if they feel uncomfortable. However, the visitors were unclear how this consent was given or recorded. Therefore, from the information provided, the visitors could not see there was a clear and effective process included in the programmes for obtaining appropriate consent from learners. As such, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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 that the assessment strategy and design will ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for social workers in England.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided a SOPs mapping document, some narrative on assessment procedures for the MA programme, and referred to the BA programme specification and BA programme handbook in their documentary submission. From a review of the information provided, the visitors found limited information on the assessments for each module. The module descriptors provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content or assessment for each module is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the assessment strategy

and design will ensure the standards of proficiency for social workers in England are met by successful learners.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider does not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content and assessment of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 6. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether the standard is met.

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

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

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided the programme specification for the programmes in their documentary submission. From a review of the information provided, the visitors found limited information on the assessments for each module. The module descriptors provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content or assessment for each module is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the assessments will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider does not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content and assessment of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 6. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether the standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided their assessment regulations and policy, which apply to all assessment on the social work programmes, and listed information about assessment requirements. On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear what modules, if any, are pre-requisite before

practice-based learning. In particular, the visitors were not clear if a learner would have to complete and pass the law module before beginning practice-based learning. At the visit, from the programmes team response, it was not clear to the visitors that this is clearly specified. As such, the visitors require further information that clearly specifies what modules are pre-requisite on the programme, in order to determine whether requirements for profession and achievement within the programme are clearly specified, in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

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

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider provided a SOPs mapping document, programme specification and module specifications for the MA programme, and referred to the BA programme specification and BA placement handbook in their documentary submission. From a review of the information provided, the visitors found limited information on the assessments for each module. The module descriptors provided a brief overview of the module, and listed the indicative content, but did not provide detailed information about modular content, and there was limited information about the assessments for each module. Therefore, from this information the visitors could not determine what the modular content or assessment for each module is in enough detail to enable them to make a judgement as to how the assessment methods used would be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

In the days before the visit, the education provider submitted a link with a log in to the online system, to enable the visitors to see the module handbooks, which the education provider does not provide paper copies of. However, the visitors were unable to gain access to this content on the online system. At the visit, the education provider provided some examples of the module handbooks. However, from this, the visitors were unable to gain all the information they require in order to make a judgement on this standard. As such, the visitors require further information on the content and assessment of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met, as well other standards in SET 6. As such, the visitors require further information on the content of the programme in order to make a judgement as to whether the standard is met.

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.

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.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider should strengthen how they prepare learners for all practice-based learning settings.

Reason: From review of the documentation and through discussion with learners and practice educators at the visit, the visitors were satisfied that the education provider has a process in place to ensure that learners and practice educators have the information

they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning. During the practice education provider meeting, the practice educators raised concerns that learners are not always prepared enough when they come onto practice-based learning, in particular for the statutory practice-based learning settings. The practice educators noted that sometimes learners are going onto their final practice-based learning setting, with limited exposure to some areas of social work, such as statutory practice-based learning, which means they are less prepared for what will be expected of them on their final placement.

The visitors note that while the education provider does ensure that learners and practice educators have the information they need in a timely manner to be prepared for practice-based learning, the education provider should consider how they could strengthen learner's preparedness for all types of practice-based learning.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The University of Northampton
Name of programme(s)	FDSc Paramedic Science, Full time BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	25 - 27 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-12254-H5L3V2

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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 the Paramedic assessment are as follows:

Joanne Watchman	Lay
Linda Mutema	Radiographer - Diagnostic radiographer
Glyn Harding	Paramedic
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

This was a multi-professional visit with three HCPC panels. One panel for the Social work programmes, one for the Paramedic programmes and one for both the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes. For the Paramedic programme there were representatives from the professional body, College of Paramedics. For the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes there were representatives from their respective professional bodies, College of Podiatry and Royal College of Occupational Therapists. For each profession assessed at this multi-professional event there were representatives from the education provider and the External panel members from their relevant professions. Outlined below are the details of the other groups in attendance at the approval visit. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Internal panel members		
John Sinclair	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Vivien Houghton	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Lyndsey Williams	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Sue Donnelly	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Clare Green	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Ashleigh Jones	Independent Student Panel Member	University of Northampton
Cathy Smith	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Social work panel)
Faith Tucker	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Aileen Cowan	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
James Underwood	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Paramedic panel)
Matthew Watson	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Terry Tudor	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Esther Olorunsomo	Independent student Panel member	University of Northampton
External panel members		
Robert Wu	External panel member	Birmingham City University—Social work
Mairghread Ellis	External panel member	Queen Margaret University – Podiatry
Anita Atwal	External panel member	London South Bank University – Occupational Therapy
Tom Davidson	External panel member	University of Cumbria – Paramedic
Professional body panel members		
Sally Abbey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Representative
James Coughtrey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Head of Education and Development
Alison Hart	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Officer
Anna Clampin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Representative
Clair Parkin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Officer

Kirsty Lowery-Richardson	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics—Representative
Paul Townsend	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics—Representative
HCPC Social work panel members		
Beverley Blythe	Social worker	HCPC visitor
Graham Noyce	Social worker (Approved mental health professional)	HCPC visitor
Manoj Mistry	Lay	HCPC visitor
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive	HCPC – Social work panel lead
HCPC occupational therapy and podiatry panel members		
Emma Supple	Chiropodist / podiatrist (Prescription only medicines – sale / supply)	HCPC visitor
Patricia McClure	Occupational therapist	HCPC visitor
Ian Hughes	Lay	HCPC visitor
Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah	HCPC executive	HCPC – Paramedic panel lead

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	FDS Sc Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2009
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01828

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2015
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01830

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 programmes via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment.

The education provider submitted a major change notification flagging changes in two areas:

- From the academic year 2018–19, all their programmes will be taught at a new location, as the education provider will be moving to a new campus.

- In line with institution-wide policy changes (i.e. the education provider changed its pedagogy to Active Blended Learning (ABL)) programme learning outcomes will be rewritten, and the number of learning outcomes reduced. The education provider also indicated there will be amendments to assessment strategy.

From the major change, we decided to assess the programme via the approval process against all of the standards of education and training.

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	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	This meeting was scheduled as part of the agenda. However, the person the programme team uses was unable to attend.
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 02 July 2018.

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

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

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

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

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

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were provided with a resource document which detailed the faculty commitment to the involvement of service users and carers in a range of learning and teaching. However, from the documentation, the visitors were unable to determine how specifically service users and carers are involved in the paramedic programmes. At the visit, the visitors heard that a service users and carers strategic group was set up in 2005 to ensure service users and carers are involved in the education of health and social care practitioners. In discussion with the programme

team, the visitors heard that for the paramedic programmes, the programme team utilise one member from the service users and carers strategic group and this individual is involved in teaching and learning actives such as talking to learners about their experience with paramedics. Whilst the visitors noted that the involvement described by the programme team appeared to be appropriate, they were unable to triangulate the information heard with the service user and carer as this person did not attend the relevant meeting. In addition, 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, particularly if the one service user employed is no longer able to contribute to the programme. The visitors therefore cannot determine:

- who the service users and carers are (or will be) particularly if the one service user employed is unable to attend or no longer able to contribute to the programme;
- 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 revisit programme documentation to ensure the terminology in use is reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation contained inaccuracies in relation to HCPC regulation. For example, the student handbook refers to HCPC's former name, 'registration with the Health Professions Council (HPC)'. In addition, module PSC1005 states, "Health Professions Standards of Performance, Conduct and Ethics". These references do not accurately reflect the HCPC as the regulatory body, and could potentially lead to misinterpretation as to its requirements and guidance for learners. 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.

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 submit programme documentation that has been revised in line with any changes made to meet the conditions set as a result of this approval visit.

Reason: Through discussion at the visit, and from the final conclusions of the external visiting panel from the College of Paramedics (CoP), it was clear that revisions will be

made to programme documentation to meet conditions set by the external panel. The visitors consider the programme documentation that learners routinely refer to as an important resource to support learners. In particular, the conditions set by internal panel referred to amendments to module descriptors, the programme specification document and the learner handbook. To ensure the programme meets this standard, the visitors need to review revised documentation to ensure the resources to support learners are effectively used. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to submit the revised programme documentation the learners routinely refer to.

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 service users.

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

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice-based learning settings will have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. At the visit, the visitors heard East Midland Ambulance Service (EMAS) hold a database of staff that can act as practice educators. In addition, the visitors were told that work is ongoing (via the East of England Paramedic Partnership Group meetings) to ensure that there will consistently be sufficient qualified and experienced staff at practice placement settings. Due to the evidence provided and the role of the regional partnership group, the visitors were unclear how much responsibility the education provider has and would continue to have for ensuring that the placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff in place. The visitors were therefore unable to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, and requires further evidence as to how the education provider ensures practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

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 programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice educators have undertaken regular training, which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise learners from this programme. In scrutinising evidence, such as supplementary documents and in discussions with the programme team and the practice-based learning providers, the visitors learnt that a mentorship programme has been developed by EMAS in partnership with the education provider. The visitors learnt that all practice educators will be expected to undergo the mentorship programme prior to supervising a learner undertaking this programme. The visitors were also aware that there is a variety of training courses for practice educators on offer once they have undertaken this initial mentorship training. However, the visitors were informed that the mentorship programme will be run by EMAS and as such, they were unclear as to how the education provider could be sure that the delivery of this training would ensure that practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors were also made aware that the education provider will not hold a register of practice educators and the training that they have undertaken, this will be held instead by EMAS. The visitors therefore had insufficient evidence to make a judgment about how the education provider would ensure that practice placement educators would have undertaken appropriate practice placement educator training and any relevant training after the initial mentoring training delivered by EMAS. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the programme can meet this standard.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The University of Northampton
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, Part time BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, Full time BSc (Hons) Podiatry, Full time
Approval visit date	25-27 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-12255-T2V5Z7

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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 the Podiatry and Occupational therapy assessment are as follows:

Emma Supple	Chiropodist / podiatrist (Prescription only medicines – sale / supply)
Patricia McClure	Occupational therapist
Ian Hughes	Lay
Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

This was a multi-professional visit with three HCPC panels. One panel for the Social work programmes, one for the Paramedic programmes and one for both the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes. For the Paramedic programme there were representatives from the professional body, College of Paramedics. For the Podiatry and Occupational therapy programmes there were representatives from their respective professional bodies, College of Podiatry and Royal College of Occupational Therapists. For each profession assessed at this multi-professional event there were representatives from the education provider and the External panel members from their relevant professions. Outlined below are the details of the other groups in attendance at

the approval visit. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Internal panel members		
John Sinclair	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Vivien Houghton	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Lyndsey Williams	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Sue Donnelly	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Clare Green	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Ashleigh Jones	Independent Student Panel Member	University of Northampton
Cathy Smith	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Social work panel)
Faith Tucker	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Aileen Cowan	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
James Underwood	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton (Paramedic panel)
Matthew Watson	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Northampton
Terry Tudor	Internal panel member	University of Northampton
Esther Olorunsomo	Independent student Panel member	University of Northampton
External panel members		
Robert Wu	External panel member	Birmingham City University—Social work
Mairghread Ellis	External panel member	Queen Margaret University – Podiatry
Anita Atwal	External panel member	London South Bank University – Occupational Therapy
Tom Davidson	External panel member	University of Cumbria – Paramedic
Professional body panel members		
Sally Abbey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Representative
James Coughtrey	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Head of Education and Development
Alison Hart	Professional body representative	College of Podiatry – Officer
Anna Clampin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Representative

Clair Parkin	Professional body representative	Royal College of Occupational Therapists – Officer
Kirsty Lowery-Richardson	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics— Representative
Paul Townsend	Professional body representative	College of Paramedics— Representative
HCPC Social work panel members		
Beverley Blythe	Social worker	HCPC visitor
Graham Noyce	Social worker (Approved mental health professional)	HCPC visitor
Manoj Mistry	Lay	HCPC visitor
Eloise O'Connell	HCPC executive	HCPC – Social work panel lead
HCPC Paramedic panel members		
Glyn Harding	Paramedic	HCPC visitor
Linda Mutema	Radiographer - Diagnostic radiographer	HCPC visitor
Joanne Watchman	Lay	HCPC visitor
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive	HCPC – Paramedic panel lead

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
[Proposed] First intake	01 September 2002
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01832

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Occupational therapist
First intake	01 September 2002
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01833

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Podiatry
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Chiropodist / podiatrist
Entitlement	Prescription only medicines – sale / supply Prescription only medicines – administration
First intake	01 January 2002

Maximum learner cohort	Up to 35
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01834

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 programmes via the approval process due to the outcome of a previous assessment.

The education provider submitted a major change notification flagging changes in two areas:

- From the academic year 2018–19, all their programmes will be taught at a new location, as the education provider will be moving to a new campus.
- In line with institution-wide policy changes (i.e. the education provider changed its pedagogy to Active Blended Learning (ABL)) programme learning outcomes will be rewritten, and the number of learning outcomes reduced. The education provider also indicated there will be amendments to assessment strategy.

From the major change, we decided to assess the programme via the approval process against all of the standards of education and training.

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 02 July 2018.

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

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

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

process for ensuring that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.

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

Condition: The education provider must articulate how they will ensure that learners will learn with, and from other learners and professionals in other relevant professions, and must define why these professions are relevant.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed to various documents including the Programme Specification, Self-Evaluation Document and Practice handbook. In this documentation, and in discussions with the programme teams, the education provider gave various examples of what they considered as ‘interprofessional learning’ on the programme, including learners:

- having the opportunity to work alongside other professions in (non-mandatory) projects when they learn British Sign language (BSL); and
- interacting with other professions whilst out on their practice-based learning areas.

The visitors were also informed that the education provider is working towards a collaborative curriculum, which will be ready in 16-18 months, where learners from these programmes will have the opportunity to learn with Nurses and Midwives.

They have also had conversations about collaborating with the social work team. The visitors noted that as plans are not yet in place, they could not use this information to determine whether this standard is met at this time.

From the discussions and documentation, the visitors could not determine how what the education provider presented is appropriate to ensure that learners on the programmes are able to learn with and from other professions. The visitors could not determine the appropriateness of the examples because:

- there is currently no clear strategy which outlines how the learning and teaching activities across professions will enable learners to learn with and from others;
- learning with and from others whilst on their practice-based learning will happen on an ad hoc basis rather than as a defined, measured, and assessed part of the programme; and
- the education provider has not identified what learner groups and professionals, learners from the programmes will be learning with and from, and why these other professional groups are appropriate.

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.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Sheffield
Name of programme(s)	MMedSci Vision and Strabismus, Distance learning PG Exemptions Course, Distance learning BMed Sci (Hons) Orthoptics, Full time
Approval visit date	27-28 March 2018
Case reference	CAS-12233-D4V3V8

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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 and our standards for the use by orthoptists of exemptions to sell and supply medicines (for education providers) (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:

Claire Saha	Orthoptist
Gordon Burrow	Chiropodist / podiatrist (Prescription only medicines – administration)
Susanne Roff	Lay
Eloise O'Connell	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.

Patty Cowell	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sheffield
Steph Allen	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sheffield

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BMed Sci (Hons) Orthoptics
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Orthoptist
Entitlement	Orthoptist exemptions
Proposed First intake	01 August 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 45
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01941

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 meets our standards of education and training, standards of proficiency for Orthoptists and the Standards for the use by orthoptists of exemptions to sell and supply medicines, for the first time.

The proposed new programme is intended as a pre-registration programme for Orthoptists, with a contained module to allow for the entitlement of 'Orthoptist exemptions' on completion of the programme.

Programme name	MMedSci Vision and Strabismus
Mode of study	DL (Distance learning)
Entitlement	Orthoptist exemptions
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01812

Programme name	PG Exemptions Course
Mode of study	DL (Distance learning)
Entitlement	Orthoptist exemptions
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01821

We undertook this assessment of a new post-graduate module 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 meets the Standards for the use by orthoptists of exemptions to sell and supply medicines for the first time. The module will be a shared module, which will be offered to registered Orthoptists, as both stand-alone and contained within the MMedSci Vision and Strabismus programme.

As mentioned in the tables above, the education provider are proposing the following:

- Postgraduate orthoptist exemption module to be included in the current non-HCPC approved MMedSci Vision and Strabismus programme.
- Standalone postgraduate orthoptist exemption module for registered Orthoptists

- New BMedSci (Hons) Orthoptics with an Orthoptist exemption module

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	We met with learners and graduates of the current HCPC approved BMedSci (Orthoptics) and graduates of the non-HCPC approved MMedSci (Vision and Strabismus).
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 23 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.

A.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that admission information is accurate and consistent, in order to give applicants the information they require so that they can make an informed choice about whether they take up the offer of a place on the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors found inconsistent information in relation to the interview process for applicants. The visitors read across the documentation that there will be three mini interviews, however noted that page 2 of ‘Appendix 4 – Admissions Interviewing procedures and Questions’ suggests four mini interviews, stating that “An individual candidate may start at any of the three stations and will rotate through all three in 20 minutes. In addition, there will be a further assessment where students guides will be asked to rate the candidates...” At the visit, the programme team clarified that the interview process has three mini interviews and two mini interviews for international applicants. The visitors noted that the documentation provided could cause confusion for potential applicants, and therefore the visitors require the education provider to revise the documentation to ensure clarity and consistency in the information provided to applicants.

A.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must revise documentation to demonstrate that the admissions procedures apply appropriate academic and professional entry standards.

Reason: For the postgraduate module for orthoptist exemptions, the visitors were not clear how applicants were made aware that successful completion of the exemptions module contained within the MMedSci Vision and Strabismus, would only allow registered Orthoptists to be eligible to apply for an annotation on the HCPC register. The visitors note on ‘Appendix 2 – Exemptions E1 Module Form’ states special restrictions on who is permitted to take this module “Restricted to students on OPHT01 or as stand-alone modules by qualified Orthoptists / eye-care practitioners.” Therefore, the visitors were not clear how learners would be aware that successful completion of the exemptions module would only lead to registered Orthoptists, and no other learners such as other “eye-care professionals” being eligible to apply for an annotation on the HCPC register. As such, the visitors require the education provider to amend programme documentation, to accurately reflect the entry requirements (special restrictions) that apply to the orthoptist exemption module.

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

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

Reason: The visitors were not clear from the documentation where the exit points were for learners on the BMedSci programme, and how applicants were made aware that only successful completion of the entire programme would lead to eligibility for admission to the Register. For example, the programme specification for the BMedSci, states under “Intermediate Qualification(s)” – “Not applicable”. However, page 7 of the programme specification states, “If a candidate fails to achieve honours the degree of BMedSci (Ocular Studies) will be awarded. This exit degree may be awarded without the candidate being successful in the Clinical Orthoptics part of the final examination provided all other components are successfully completed.” Page 23 of the student handbook states “Where a ‘pass’ degree is awarded this shall be BMedSci (Ocular Studies). This is not an honours degree”. Due to the disparity in the information provided, the visitors were unclear at what point learners would be awarded this exit award. Additionally, the documentation does not explicitly state that this exit qualification does not lead to eligibility for admission to the Register. As such, the visitors could not determine that applicants are made aware that a BMedSci (Ocular Studies) would not lead to eligibility for admission to the Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence from the education provider to demonstrate how learners are made aware at which point they may receive an exit award and that the exit award does not lead to eligibility to apply for Registration, to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there are effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from learners in the academic setting.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider referenced the ‘BMedSci (Orthoptics) Entry agreement’ form for obtaining consent for learners. The entry agreement includes a statement about learners agreeing to participate in practising clinical examinations on other learners and being willing to allow other learners to examine them. However, the visitors were not clear how this relates to obtaining consent for peer examination in training rooms for example, in the academic setting, as the visitors have not seen an explicit process for obtaining consent from learners in this setting. At the visit, the visitors asked the learners about their experience with consent procedures. It was the learners’ understanding that consent is implied, by going along to the sessions and agreeing to be on the programme, and that explicit consent giving was not necessary, as the testing is non-invasive. However, the visitors were not clear how implied consent or consenting through an entry agreement would demonstrate an effective process for obtaining appropriate consent from learners in the academic setting. As the visitors have not seen a consent procedure beyond the entry agreement for the programme, the visitors were not clear how learners are made fully aware of the implications of consenting and their options for choosing not to consent.

Therefore, the visitors require further evidence in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard has been met.

D.6 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators for the orthoptist exemption module have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: On review of the information provided, the visitors read that learners are required to ascertain the support and signature of a primary exemptions tutor, who will be a person who is currently able to supply and administer the medications exempted for orthoptists. The documentation states that this person will mentor and support the learner during the programme, and once qualified. At the visit, the visitors heard that the education provider will use ophthalmologists as the practice placement educators, until there are registered Orthoptists who have completed the qualification. However, the visitors were not clear what process the education provider has in place to ensure that the practice placement educators are appropriately registered, with the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors note that a learner signs a declaration that states they have an appropriately qualified practice placement educator, however the visitors are not clear how the education provider will quality assure this. In addition, the visitors were not clear if the practice educators for the orthoptist exemption module would undergo the education provider's training plan for practice educators. As such, the visitors were not clear how the education provider would train or quality assure the practice educators for the orthoptist exemption module to ensure that they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to assess learners on placement.

As such, the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard is met.

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

E.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must clearly specify the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear how many attempts at assessment a learner would have on the BMedSci programme. In some of the documentation, it is stated that learners will have five or more attempts, and elsewhere it is mentioned in the documentation that learners could have four attempts. In the external examiner guidance document, it is noted that where there are five fails, this can be referred to a student review. However, the visitors were not clear if that meant five fails on one subject, one academic year, or five fails on the programme in total. At the visit, the programme team clarified that the number of attempts learners have for each year, and that there is a "5-fail rule" over the period of the whole programme. However, due to the disparity in the information provided within the documentation the visitors could not see where this information is specified in the documentation provided, and therefore could not determine how learners would know the requirements for progression and achievement throughout the programme. As such, the visitors require further evidence of how this information is documented within the assessment policies in order to make a judgement about whether this standard is met.

For the postgraduate and undergraduate module for orthoptist exemptions, the visitors were not clear from the documentation if learners are required to pass all of the assessments in order to successfully complete the module. The visitors noted that 'Appendix 15 - Standalone handbook' states that if a module is failed, a learner has the opportunity to resit once. However, the visitors were not clear from the information provided whether a learner has to individually pass each assessment in order to pass the module. At the visit, the programme team clarified that as a learner must be competent in all areas, the learners are required to pass all of the assessments to complete the module. The visitors were satisfied by this response, however as this is not clear in the documentation, the visitors require further evidence to show how this is documented within the assessment regulations in order to make a judgement as to whether the standards are met.

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.

E.10 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that assessment regulations clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified.

Reason: The visitors note that under current arrangements for the BSc (Hons) Orthoptics programme, the education provider currently has arrangements in place for appointing an external examiner who is appropriately experienced, qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, is from the relevant part of the HCPC Register. However, as the education provider will now provide a module for orthoptist exemptions, the visitors were unable to see how the assessment regulations specify the requirement for the appointment of an external examiner appropriate to the programme considering the new module for orthoptist exemptions. As such, the visitors require further evidence from the education provider to demonstrate their requirements for the appointment of an external examiner who is appropriately qualified and experienced, in consideration of the new programme.

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.

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

B.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Recommendation: The education provider could strengthen specialist knowledge and expertise of current Orthoptist staff on the programme, in relation to the use by orthoptists of exemptions to sell and supply medicines.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note that the staff providing the teaching on the BMedSci and postgraduate module for orthoptist exemptions; will be taught by an Optometrist and an Ophthalmologist would provide practice education. The visitors agree that this is appropriate, however note that there is limited staff on the programme with the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge of orthoptist exemptions, as there are currently no Orthoptists staff on the programme with the entitlement. As such, the visitors recommend that the education provider consider how to increase relevant specialist knowledge and expertise of the staff team in relation to orthoptist exemptions.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Staffordshire University
Name of programme(s)	DipHE Operating Department Practice, Full time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Full time
Approval visit date	10-11 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-12220-Y0J1X5

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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:

Ian Prince	Lay
Joanne Thomas	Operating department practitioner
Julie Weir	Operating department practitioner
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.

Sandra Kirkham	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Staffordshire University
Chris Hanks	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Staffordshire University
Philip Shirley	Learner member of internal panel	Staffordshire University
Andrea Bedworth Cook	Member of internal panel	Staffordshire University

Cassandra O'Connell	Member of internal panel	External panel member
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Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	DipHE Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 September 2003
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 32
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP01807

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.

The education provider has informally notified the HCPC that they intend to close this programme, but have not yet submitted a programme closure form. Section 4 of this report includes a condition under SET 2.1 relating to the ambiguity over the status of this programme.

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
Proposed first intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 35
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01847

We undertook the 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	Not Required

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 08 June 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 all applicants receive accurate and clear information about whether the DipHE Operating Department Practice will admit a cohort in September 2018.

Reason: From the website for the DipHE programme, the visitors noted that the education provider was advertising for a cohort of learners to start the programme in September 2018. Elsewhere, the documentation stated that the programme had accepted its last learner cohort in September 2017. The education provider has previously informed the HCPC of its intention to close this programme, but has not yet

given formal notification of closure. The website did not give any indication to applicants that the programme might not run. The visitors sought to clarify the education provider's plans in discussions with the senior team and programme team. From these discussions, the education provider's final plans were not clear, but the visitors understood that the education provider's intent as of the time of the visit was to not admit a cohort onto the DipHE in September 2018. Learners had been accepted on to the DipHE with the intention of transferring them when the new BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice programme was approved. The visitors considered that this arrangement did not meet the standard as it was possibly preventing applicants from making an informed choice about whether to take up an offer on the programme. Applicants may enter one programme and then be forced to transfer to another programme which is both longer and at a higher academic level. The visitors therefore require that the education provider clarify the status of the DipHE in all information available to learners and, if they intend to transfer learners on to the new BSc (Hons), that they make this clear to all learners.

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 they have an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the minutes of a Placement Providers Group provided as evidence for this standard, and discussed practice-based learning capacity with the programme team and the practice educators. However, it was not clear from this information that there was a clear process for ensuring sufficient capacity. The practice educators said that going forward they expected practice-based learning capacity to be lower. The programme team said that they expected to have more capacity. The visitors were aware that some of the placement capacity was in settings that were theoretically available, but some distance from the education provider and therefore potentially hard to use because learners might not be able to travel a long distance. The visitors could not see that there was a system in place for maintaining up to date information on capacity in all placements. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence showing how they can ensure sufficient capacity in practice-based learning.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that learners are clearly informed of how they will be supported and protected, if they need to raise a complaint.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the complaints procedure submitted as evidence for this standard, and asked the learners whether they would feel comfortable raising complaints. The learners appeared to understand the procedure, although some of them were less clear about how they would be protected if they did raise a complaint. The visitors considered that the procedure itself, while generally appropriate, did not explicitly explain to learners that they would be supported if they raised complaints, and that they should feel able to raise complaints without any concerns about their studies being affected. The visitors noted that, if learners did not understand this, it might detract from the effectiveness of the process, as they might be reluctant to use it when

appropriate. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that learners understand that they will be supported and protected when raising complaints.

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 ensure that learners are clearly informed of how they will be supported and protected, if they need to raise a concern about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the procedure in the Practice Learning Handbook submitted as evidence for this standard, and asked the learners whether they would feel comfortable raising concerns about the wellbeing of service users and carers. The learners appeared to understand the procedure, although some of them were less clear about how they would be protected if they did raise a concern. The visitors considered that the procedure itself, while generally appropriate, did not explicitly explain to learners that they would be supported if they raised concerns, and that they should feel reassured that they can raise concerns without their studies being affected. The visitors noted that, if learners did not understand this, it might detract from the effectiveness of the process, as they might be reluctant to use it when appropriate. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that learners understand that they will be supported and protected if they raise a concern about the safety and / or wellbeing of service users.

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 will ensure that all service users and carers have a full understanding of consent, appropriate to their roles in the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted against this standard, including the Service User Code of Conduct, and discussed understandings of consent with the service user who attended the meeting. The visitors could not see how the Code of Conduct would ensure that all service users had a clear and full understanding of consent, including the right to withdraw consent, and the right to say as much or as little as they wished when sharing medical or personal histories. The service user to whom the visitors spoke at the visit had a good understanding of such issues, but she was a qualified medical professional and it was not clear how a service user without such a background would be enabled to achieve the same understanding. The visitors therefore require that the education provider submit further evidence showing they will enable all service users to understand consent.

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 will ensure that all staff carrying out assessment in practice-based learning have been appropriately trained to do so.

Reason: From discussion with the programme team, the visitors were aware that the education provider was planning changes to the roles and responsibilities of mentors for practice-based learning, and the required qualifications for supervision of learners. It was not clear how substantial these changes were intended to be. The visitors were not clear from these discussions how the education provider would ensure that anyone carrying out assessment in practice-based learning had received appropriate training to ensure consistency and fairness. They therefore require the education provider to clarify how the role of mentor will change, and how they will ensure that anyone carrying out assessment on placement will be trained to do so in accordance with the requirements of the programme.

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 will ensure that all learners have access to relevant materials issued by different Trusts where practice-based learning takes place.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team, learners and practice educators, the visitors were not clear about what materials were offered to learners to familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and expectations of different placement settings. Practice educators said learners did not seem to have access to Trust-specific information, while the programme team said that they did. The visitors could not see from the documentation provided for this standard how the education provider would ensure that such materials were available to learners going out on placement. They considered that it was important that learners did have access to such information, so that they could gain as much value as possible from their placements in terms of meeting the standards of proficiency. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that learners have access to learner-focused materials before they go on placement.

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 review their strategy for service user and carer recruitment, with a view to diversifying, and increasing the size of, the user group.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met at threshold, as there were service users and carers involved in admissions and teaching on the programme. The education provider had provided some rationale for their involvement and explained how their contributions improved the programme. However, the visitors noted that the service user group was relatively small, with six individuals, and that half of these individuals had an academic or healthcare professional background. They considered that this might mean that the group would not adequately represent a full enough range of the type of service users and carers that learners were likely to encounter. From

discussions with the programme team and senior team, the visitors were aware that there were plans to develop the service user and carer group. The visitors therefore suggest that the education provider ensures that they take these development plans forward.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review their staff planning to ensure that there continue to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met at threshold, as the staff currently in place for the programme were able to cover all the necessary curriculum areas and meet the teaching responsibilities of the programme. In determining that this standard was met, the visitors took into account the planned closure of the DipHE Operating Department Practice. This closure meant that in the medium- to long-term the new programme would not create significant new demand on staff time across the education provider's operating department practice provision. However, from discussions with the senior team and the programme team, and from review of the documentation, the visitors were aware that the staff on the programme all had significant teaching loads, in some cases on other programmes as well as this one, and that there was not a lot of spare capacity in the workload model. They considered that in the case of, for example, long-term sickness, or other staff losses, it was not clear that the standard would continue to be met. They therefore suggest that the education provider consider how best to ensure that their staff numbers continue to be appropriate to the requirements of the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Staffordshire University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	05 – 06 April 2018
Case reference	CAS-12249-G9M6G8

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Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

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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:

Frances Ashworth	Lay
Timothy Hayes	Paramedic
Susan Boardman	Paramedic
Eloise O'Connell	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.

Helen Chapman	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Staffordshire University
Andrea Jones	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Staffordshire University
Cassandra O'Connor	External Panel Member	Staffordshire University
Richard Hunter	External Panel Member	Staffordshire University
Holly O'Rourke	Student representative	Staffordshire 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 60
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP01849

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	We met with learners on the approved Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science offered at the education provider.
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 06 June 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 demonstrate that the admissions process will give the applicant the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on a programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were not clear if there would be an interview process for applicants, as the documentation did not make reference to one. At the visit, the programme team clarified that there is an interview process and information is in the documentation that is provided to applicants. The programme team explained the interview process in detail, and the visitors heard from learners what their experience had been of the interview process for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science, full time. However, as the visitors have not seen this in the information provided, so they were unable to determine whether applicants are given all of the information they require to make an informed choice about the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that information about the interview process is made clear to potential applicants. In addition, the visitors read in the documentation that learners would be required to pay for their own boots that are required for the programme. However, the visitors were not clear if this information was made explicitly clear to potential applicants. In discussion with learners, the visitors heard that a learner had learned this information later than expected. The learner was not informed prior to accepting a place on the programme but was informed before starting the programme. As such, the visitors could not determine that all potential applicants would have the information they require in order to make an informed choice about whether to take up a

place on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must revise documentation to demonstrate that the admissions process has appropriate requirements to ensure that applicants have a good command of English.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the entry requirements in the programme specification document states “IELTS level 7 or equivalent for students whom English is not their first language”. However, the visitors noted that in the HCPC standards of proficiency for paramedics, standard 8.2 requires registrant paramedics to “be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5”. As the education provider has not set requirements for the minimum level in each element of the IELTs, the visitors could not determine how the admissions process ensures that all applicants have a good command of English. At the visit, the programme team agreed that this could be revised in the documentation. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard has been met.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programme is sustainable and fit for purpose.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors read in the programme specification, “Alternative practice-based placement areas are also included within the curriculum...These may include: care homes; hospice wards; hospital wards; GP surgeries; urgent care centres; critical care areas”. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what arrangements were currently in place with the ‘alternative’ practice education providers. At the visit, the visitors heard that the alternative practice-based learning would be provided on a “one day per week” basis, during the academic period. The programme team confirmed that they had support agreed from some of the alternative practice education providers, however there are no formal arrangements in place with the providers. The visitors heard about how the programme team plans to incorporate the alternative practice-based learning within the curriculum, and were reassured about agreements with the providers. The visitors have not seen evidence of how the alternative placements have been incorporated into the curriculum, and there are no formal arrangements currently in place with alternative practice education providers. As such, the visitors could not determine that there are sufficient alternative practice based learning opportunities available for the learners on this programme or that the curriculum supports such placements. Therefore, the visitors could not determine whether this programme is sustainable and fit for purpose.

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

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

Reason: On review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors read that the education provider has a partnership agreement with the West Midlands Ambulance Service, and that there are consortium meetings with other higher education institutions (HEIs) in the region, HEI away days and working group meetings, and quarterly contract review meetings. However, in the documentation provided, the visitors could not see evidence that these meetings have taken place, or what the content of the meetings were. At the visit, the visitors heard from the practice education providers and the programme team about these meetings and what is discussed at the various meetings. The visitors heard that there appears to be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers, however the visitors have not seen evidence of this, or evidence that this will be regular and ongoing. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence from the education provider demonstrating what arrangements are in place to ensure that collaboration with practice education providers is regular and effective for continuously improving the programme, in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

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

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

3.12 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 revise programme documentation to ensure that information is accurate and consistent in relation to the delivery of the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the education provider had requested for a part-time, full-time and apprenticeship route for the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme to be considered for approval by HCPC. At the visit, the education provider confirmed that they are currently seeking approval for the full-time BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme only. The visitors noted that some of the documentation provided prior to the visit included reference to a part-time and apprenticeship route through the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme. As such, the visitors require the education provider to revise documentation to remove reference to a part-time or apprenticeship route, as the HCPC has not considered these programmes for approval. In addition, at the visit, the visitors were provided with a ‘course planning form’ that refers to the current foundation degree programme, and does not appear to have correct information relating to modules for the proposed new BSc programme. Therefore, the visitors require evidence that demonstrates the education provider has revised their programme documentation to ensure it reflects accurate and consistent information in relation to the proposed new programme, to ensure the resources to support learning in all setting are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the 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 that the learning outcomes will ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for paramedics.

Reason: This condition relates to the conditions set against standards 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4. On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved programme and the new programme. It was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. During the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors could not determine that the learning outcomes would ensure that learners who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for paramedics. Therefore, the visitors require further information to determine whether this standard is met.

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

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

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved programme and the new programme. It was not clear from the

modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. During the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors could not determine that the learning outcomes would ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics on successful completion of the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information to determine whether this standard is met.

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 as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved programme and the new programme. It was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. During the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors could not determine that the programme will reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance. Therefore, the visitors required further evidence which demonstrates that this standard is met.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved programme and the new programme. It was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. During the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors could not determine that the programme curriculum is relevant to current practice. Therefore, the visitors require further information to determine whether this standard is met.

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 that learners are able to learn with professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors read that learners will be taught by both experienced lecturers with a background in paramedic science and lecturers from a range of inter-professional backgrounds. The programme specification states, “the programme will take a multi-professional approach and the inclusion of learners and tutors from other relevant professions”. From the information provided, the visitors could see where learners would learn from professionals in other relevant professions. However, they were not clear how learners would be able to learn with learners in other relevant professions. At the visit, the programme team talked about ways that learners would learn with other relevant professions, including an example where midwifery and paramedic learners would work and learn with, and from each other on a scenario situation that is given after a lecture has been delivered. The visitors heard ways that the programme team intended to ensure that learners are able to learn with other learners and professionals in relevant professions, however the visitors have not seen evidence of how this would form part of the planned curriculum within the documentation. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there are effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Reason: On the SETs mapping document, the education provider referred to the programme specification, course handbook, and west midlands ambulance service student handbook to demonstrate meeting the standard. The documentation states “please bear in mind that during clinical skills sessions and scenarios you may be requested to take on the role of service users/patients to support your learning”. From the information provided, the visitors could not see a process in place that obtains the learners consent for participation in clinical skills sessions and scenarios, or how the education provider would obtain consent from service users. The visitors were also unable to determine the process in place should a learner opt not to consent to participating. At the visit, the visitors heard from the programme team that learners sign a document, which requests their consent, during their first week on the programme. However, the visitors have not seen evidence of this, or evidence of consent procedures for service users. Therefore, the education provider must demonstrate there are effective processes in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners in order to for the visitors to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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 clarify the attendance requirements for the programme, and demonstrate that this is communicated to learners.

Reason: On review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors read in the programme specification “100% of attendance is required for theory and practice”. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear how attendance would be monitored, or what the consequence would be for learners that did not have 100 percent attendance. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they will be revising the attendance requirement, to be 80 percent attendance for theory and practice. The programme team explained the process in place for monitoring attendance and the process for learners who fall below the threshold requirement for attendance. The visitors were satisfied that there are effective monitoring processes in place. Although the visitors understood that learners must attend 80 per cent of the programme they were still unclear about which elements of the programme learners must attend. As such, because the visitors have not seen the revised attendance requirements in the programme documentation, or which elements of the programme require compulsory attendance, the visitors could not determine how the education provider has identified and communicated to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Reason: On review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors reviewed the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning for the programme. However, as mentioned previously in the report, the visitors have not seen the final version of the module descriptors and learning outcomes for the programme. As such, while the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning appears to be appropriate, the visitors could not make a judgement as to whether this will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency, as the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to determine whether this standard is 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 there is a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: In the SETs mapping document the education provider referred to the placement learning handbook, and liaison with west midlands ambulance service organisational development team; through working group meeting, consortium meetings and quarterly review meetings. From the information provided, the visitors were not clear what process is in place to approve and ensure the ongoing quality of the practice-based learning environment, as this was not referred to in the documentation. In addition, the visitors have not seen evidence of the meetings that were referenced in the mapping document, and therefore do not know the content of these meetings. At the

visit, the practice education providers talked about the way in which the education provider approves and monitors the ongoing quality of practice-based learning, including a system that is agreed between education providers across the region. At the visit, the programme team provided a document to demonstrate this standard. On review of the document, the visitors noted it was a west midlands ambulance service ‘profile’ and did not provide information relating to approving or monitoring of placements. Additionally, the visitors did not see the process in relation to approval and monitoring of ‘alternative’ placements. Therefore, visitors were unclear about how the education provider is able to ensure that all practice-based learning environments are approved and monitored using criteria which they deem appropriate for ensuring the quality of all placements. As such, the visitors require evidence that demonstrates the education provider’s thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of all practice based learning, including for ‘alternative’ 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 there is a process in place to ensure the practice-based learning environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors were not clear what processes the education provider has in place to approve and monitor the ongoing quality of the practice-based learning environment. At the visit, the practice education providers talked about the way in which the education provider approves and monitors the ongoing quality of practice-based learning, including a system that is agreed between education providers across the region. At the visit, the programme team provided a document to demonstrate this standard. On review of the document, the visitors noted it was a west midlands ambulance service ‘profile’ and did not provide information relating to approving or monitoring of placements. The visitors saw no evidence of the process related to ‘alternative’ placements. As the visitors have not seen that the education provider has a process in place to approve and monitor the ongoing quality of all practice-based learning environments, the visitors could not determine whether all practice-based learning environments are safe and supportive 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 there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in alternative practice-based learning.

Reason: In the SETs mapping document, the education provider referred to the west midland ambulance service student handbook, the placement learning handbook and programme specification to demonstrate meeting this standard. On review of this information, the visitors found some information about the practice-based learning on the programme, and that the education provider works closely with the west midlands ambulance service, and that there will be alternative practice-based learning included in the programme. However, from the information provided, the visitors were not clear what number of practice educators would be available for the number of learners on the programme, or how the education provider ensures the practice educators are

appropriately qualified and experienced. At the visit, the visitors heard from the practice education providers about the number of practice educators there are for learners in the region, and how the education provider intends to ensure that the practice-based learning staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The programme team also confirmed that they had made some verbal agreements with some of the potential alternative practice education providers, however no formal arrangements are currently in place. As such, the visitors have not seen who the practice educators will be, or the number of practice educators for practice-based learning. Therefore, the visitors require further information about how the education provider will ensure there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff involved in practice-based learning, in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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 for alternative practice-based learning, have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note the education provider will offer 'alternative practice-based placements' in non-ambulance settings. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they had made some verbal agreements with some of the potential alternative practice education providers, however no formal arrangements are currently in place. The visitors were not provided further information on what knowledge, skills and experience the education provider requires practice educators to have or how the education provider ensures that practice educators meet those requirements. As the visitors have not seen information on the practice educators for alternative practice-based learning settings, the visitors could not determine whether the practice educators will have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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 practice educators for alternative practice-based learning undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors note the education provider will offer 'alternative practice-based placements' in non-ambulance settings. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they had made some verbal agreements with some of the potential alternative practice education providers, however no formal arrangements are currently in place. The visitors were not provided further information on how the education provider plans to ensure practice educators in the alternative practice-based learning setting undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to make a judgement as to whether this standard is met.

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 that the assessment strategy and design will ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for paramedics.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved foundation degree in paramedic science programme and the proposed new programme. It was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. At the visit, during the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module for the proposed new programme, and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. The practice assessment documents for years one and two were tabled at the visit, however the visitors did not have sight of the year three document. As the visitors did not have sight of the module descriptors and all of the practice assessment documents for this programme, they were unable to determine the following:

- the module content for this programme;
- which learning outcomes are contained in each module; and,
- how those learning outcomes would be assessed.

As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors were not clear how the final version of the learning outcomes would be assessed. As such, the visitors could not determine how the assessment strategy and design would ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the standards of proficiency 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 that assessment throughout the programme will ensure that learners will demonstrate that learners are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Reason: This standard relates to 4.2. On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that part of the assessment strategies include a 'Clinical Practice Assessment Document (PAD)' which is used to assess a learners clinical practice while in the practice-based learning environment, on a pass / refer / fail mark. The PAD document for year one, two or three was not provided as part of the education provider's documentary submission. At the visit, the programme team were able to provide the PAD document for years one and two, and noted that the year three document was currently still in the draft stage and had not been finalised. As the visitors have not seen what the clinical practice assessment document will be, they could not make a judgement that the assessment throughout the programme will ensure that learners

demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

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

Reason: On review of the documentation the visitors note that part of the assessment strategies include a 'Clinical Practice Assessment Document (PAD)' which is used to assess a learners clinical practice while in the practice-based learning environment, on a pass / refer / fail mark. The PAD document for year one, two or three was not provided as part of the education provider's documentary submission. At the visit, the programme team were able to provide the PAD document for years one and two, and noted that the year three document was currently still in the draft stage and had not been finalised. As the visitors have not seen what the clinical practice assessment document will be, they could not make a judgement that the assessment throughout the programme will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. Therefore, the visitors require further information in order to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the assessment policies will clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors read information about the currently approved foundation degree in paramedic science programme and the proposed new programme. It was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. At the visit, during the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module for the proposed new programme, and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need to be revised and updated to form the final version of the modules. The practice assessment documents for years one and two were tabled at the visit, however the visitors did not have sight of the year three document. As the visitors did not have sight of the module descriptors and all of the practice assessment documents for this programme, they were unable to determine the following:

- the module content for this programme;
- which learning outcomes are contained in each module; and,
- how those learning outcomes would be assessed.

As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors were not clear how the final version of the learning outcomes would be assessed or what learners would be required to achieve throughout the programme in order to progress. As such, the visitors could not determine how

assessment policies will clearly specify requirements for profession and achievement within the programme, as the visitors cannot currently see where progression and achievement will occur, or how this will be assessed.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: On review of the documentation provided, the visitors found that it was not clear from the modules presented, which modules were for the new programme, or for the current foundation degree programme, or both. As such, the visitors were not clear from the documentation provided, what the modules would be for the proposed new programme. During the programme team meeting the programme team went over each module for the proposed new programme, and clarified what would be the final content of the modules for the proposed new programme. The programme team noted that the modules would therefore need some revising and updating to form the final version of the modules. As the visitors have not seen the final version of the modules for the proposed programme, the visitors could not determine whether the assessment methods would be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

In addition, the visitors noted that part of the assessment strategies include a ‘Clinical Practice Assessment Document (PAD)’ which is used to assess a learners clinical practice while in the practice-based learning environment, on a pass / refer / fail mark. The PAD document for year one, two or three was not provided as part of the education provider’s documentary submission. At the visit, the programme team were able to provide the PAD document for years one and two, and noted that the year three document was currently still in the draft stage and had not been finalised. As the visitors have not seen what the clinical practice assessment document will be, they could not determine whether the assessment would be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes. As such the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates that the assessments methods used are appropriate and effective at measuring the learning outcomes.

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 consider how they can strengthen the implementation of their service user and carer policy, and should consider how they can increase the range of service users and carers that are involved in the programme.

Reason: On review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors could not find information related to service user and carer involvement on the programme. The SETs mapping document referred to the programme handbook, ‘The student voice’ which did not describe service user and carer involvement. At the visit, the education provider tabled a ‘service user carer involvement policy’ which detailed the ways in which service

users and carers are involved on the programme. The visitors were satisfied that the education provider were involving service users and carers, and had plans to involve them on teaching and admissions procedures for the proposed programme. However, the visitors note that the education provider could strengthen the implementation of the policy, as it is currently focuses on plans for involvement. In addition, the visitors noted that the service users and carers they met with were previous or current employees at the education provider.. The visitors noted that the education provider could consider broadening the range of service users and carers involved on the programme, to ensure that the involvement continues to be meaningful, and appropriate to the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Sunderland
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Blood Science), Full time BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Cellular Science), Full time BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Genetic Science), Full time BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Infection Science), Full time
Approval visit date	27-28 March 2018
Case reference	CAS-11960-T0D2Q7

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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:

Manoj Mistry	Lay
Carol Ainley	Biomedical scientist
David Houlston	Biomedical scientist
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.

Claire Hoy	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sunderland
Margaret Young	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sunderland
Alan Wainwright	IBMS Representative	Institute of Biomedical Sciences

Gillian Jaggar	IBMS Representative	Institute of Biomedical Sciences
Rachel Thomas	IBMS Representative	Institute of Biomedical Sciences

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Blood Science)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Biomedical scientist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 6
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01752

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Cellular Science)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Biomedical scientist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 6
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01753

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Genetic Science)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Biomedical scientist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 1
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01754

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Practice (Infection Science)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Biomedical scientist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 6
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01755

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 programmes 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 08 June 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 required information about the programme is available to potential applicants, so that they can make an informed decision about whether to take up a place on a programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors could not determine how the education provider would ensure that certain information would be communicated to potential applicants allowing them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme. For this standard, the visitors understood that the responsibility of ensuring the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or health requirements was the responsibility of the employer. However, in discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider would assess the criminal convictions checks with the other admission checks, before the learner starts the programme. Due to the difference in the information provided, the visitors could not see how learners are made aware of what the process is for assessing DBS and health checks or who is responsible for making those assessments. As such, the education provider will need to ensure that information provided to the learner regarding DBS and health checks is accurate so they can make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

Additionally, information was provided to learners around the End Point Assessment (EPA) informing them that it needs to be passed before the learner can complete the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that that the EPA may be assessed internally or by an organisation independent from the education provider. As the education provider was unable to provide clarification about who was responsible for conducting the EPA, the visitors were unable to determine who held the responsibility for conducting the EPA. As such, the education provider will need to ensure that this information is clearly contained within the admissions information so the applicant can make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

In addition to this, from discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that details of the duration of individual apprenticeships would be finalised between the employer, education provider and learner. The visitors heard that learners may be asked to complete their practice-based learning at the employer for an extended length of time and that it would be dependent on how quickly a learner is able to satisfy the learning outcomes and complete the required learning for the programme. As such, the visitors were unable to see how applicants are made aware that they may be required to extend their practice-based learning in order to meet the learning outcomes for the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of the information that is provided to applicants regarding the duration of practice-based learning and the possibility that this may be extended.

The visitors were unable to see how the education provider intends to communicate the following information to prospective applicants.

- the process associated with any Disclosure and Barring Service or health requirements and any associated costs to the learner;

- information about the end point assessment (EPA) for the programme, who would hold the responsibility of assessing this and where it would take place;
- the attendance requirements of the programme in the academic setting;
- the expectation that learners will undertake only one practice-based learning opportunity with one employer to complete this programme; and
- the required duration of individual learners' practice-based learning may be extended should learners not satisfy the requirements for successful completion of the programme by the expected end date.

Therefore, the visitors require further information, which demonstrates that applicants have the information they require to make an informed choice about the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is a process in place for assessing the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors understood that dealing with the criminal conviction checks is the responsibility of the employer. However, in discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider would assess criminal convictions checks with the other admission checks, before the learner starts the programme. Due to the disparity in the information provided, the visitors were unclear what the process is for dealing with applicants' criminal convictions checks and who would be responsible for assessing applicants' suitability. Therefore, the visitors require further clarification as to the process in place for assessing the suitability of applicants regarding criminal conviction checks, and who is responsible for ensuring that the process is completed. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is a process in place for ensuring applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided, the visitors noted that it was the responsibility of the employer to make applicants aware of and ensure that applicants satisfy any health requirements. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that this is the responsibility of the education provider and would form part of the admission checks, which would be complete before the learner starts the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further clarification as to the process, which is in place that ensures applicants' suitability regarding health checks and who is responsible for ensuring the process is completed. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine how the admissions process ensures that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

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 demonstrate that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the cellular pathology element of the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unable to see who would be teaching the cellular pathology element of the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors learned that the education provider will use visiting lecturers to teach the cellular pathology element of the programme. As there is a small number of teaching staff involved in the programme for this pathway, the visitors noted that the visiting lecturers are necessary in order to deliver an effective programme. The visitors considered that, if for any reason, the visiting lecturers were not in place there would not be an adequate number of appropriately qualified experienced staff in place to deliver the programme. Therefore, the visitors require evidence, which demonstrates that the education provider has visiting lecturers in place, for the start of the programme. In this way, the visitors can determine whether there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise in cellular pathology.

Reason: This relates to the condition on SET 3.9. From a review of the documentation, the visitors were unable to see who would be teaching the cellular pathology element of the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors learned that the education provider would have visiting lecturers to teach the cellular pathology element of the programme. As there is a small number of teaching staff involved in the programme for this pathway, the visitors noted that the visiting lecturers are necessary in order to ensure that subject areas are delivered by educator with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise. Therefore, the visitors require evidence, which demonstrates that the education provider has visiting lecturers in place with the requisite specialist knowledge and experience to deliver the cellular pathology element of 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 review the programme documentation to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors noted that some of the information contained within the documentation regarding HCPC requirements is inaccurate. Within the documentation, reference is made to HPC rather than HCPC. In addition to this, within the programme specification it states “completion of this programme entitles the graduate to join the HCPC register as a Biomedical Scientist”. However, this is not accurate as successful

completion of the programme gives the learner the eligibility to ‘apply for registration’ not entitlement to register with the HCPC. Consequently, the visitors require further evidence, which demonstrates that the documentation has been amended to reflect the correct information. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether the resources available to support learning in all settings are accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to ensure the information regarding practice-based learning is accurate.

From the documentation, the visitors understood that an extra practice-based learning opportunity would take place in addition to the apprenticeship placement with the employer (practice education provider). However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors heard that this was a mistake and the education provider confirmed that the expectation is that learners will undertake only one practice-based learning opportunity with one employer to complete the programme. As such, the visitors require further evidence, which, demonstrates that the documentation accurately reflects information about how many practice-based learning opportunities the learners will be expected to complete for this programme. In this way, the visitors can determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is a process is in place to monitor equality and diversity policies for non-NHS practice-based learning.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided, the visitors noted that there is a university policy in place for all programmes. In discussions with the practice placement providers, the visitors heard that equality and diversity policies were in place for NHS practice-based learning. However, the visitors were unable to establish what equality and diversity policies are implemented and monitored with regards to learners on practice based learning outside of the NHS. Therefore, the visitors require further clarification as to the process used to assess equality and diversity policies, which are implemented and monitored, in relation to learners, on non-NHS practice-based learning. In this way, the visitors will be able to determine whether this standard is met.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of the formal protocols to obtain informed consent from learners when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, and the protocols for managing situations when students decline from participating.

Reason: From reviewing the documentation, the visitors noted that the process for obtaining appropriate consent from service users was contained within the programme information. However, the education provider did not provide any information regarding

how they obtain consent from learners when they are asked to participate as service users in clinical teaching or what actions are taken when learners opt not to give consent. As such, the visitors were unclear about how the education provider manages the process and when, within this process, consent from learners would be obtained. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require evidence of the process used to obtain consent from learners, including how records of consent are maintained and the process used when consent is not given.

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 identify and communicate to learners the number of days the learners are required to attend both academic and practice-based learning.

Reason: From the programme documentation, the visitors noted that the attendance requirement for learners to attend sessions at the education provider was between one and three days per week. However, in discussions with the programme team, the visitors understood that learners would be expected to attend one day per week and the remainder of this would be spent in practice-based learning. As conflicting information was provided, the visitors could not see how applicants would have accurate information about the attendance requirements for the programme. Additionally, from discussions with the programme team, the visitors noted that learners may be expected to attend practice-based learning for an extended period, depending on their progress. As such, the visitors were not clear how learners would know the attendance requirement for practice-based learning. The visitors therefore require further information, which clarifies the number of days learners are required to attend both academic and practice-based learning for this programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learner's progression and achievement.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the EPA (End Point Assessment) may be assessed internally or by an organisation independent from the education provider. The visitors heard that the education provider intends to apply to the "Register of end-point assessment organisations" to enable them to conduct assessments internally at the education provider. However, the education provider could not confirm that this would be in place by the start of the programme. As the education provider was unable to provide clarification about who is responsible for conducting the EPA the visitors were unable to determine who is responsible for assessing the EPA. As such, they could not see how the assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of progression and achievement of learners. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence, which demonstrates that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the assessment policies allow learners to understand what is expected of them at each stage in the programme.

Reason: On a review of the documentation, the visitors learned that specific exit awards are outlined in the programme specification, which can be obtained if a learner does not successfully complete the entire programme. However, the information provided was not clear in detailing the required criteria to attain each award. The visitors were unsure when a learner might be eligible for an exit award and the process for a learner to gain that award. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence, which demonstrates what criteria a learner must satisfy in order to be eligible for an exit award, when they may gain an exit award and the process for doing so. Additionally, from reviewing the documentation, the visitors noted that the EPA (End Point Assessment) will be assessed at the end of the programme, and learners are required to pass the EPA before they can successfully complete the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the education provider agreed that they needed to update the documentation with information about the requirement for learners to pass the EPA. As such the visitors require further evidence of how the assessment policies clearly specify the requirements for learners to meet in order to achieve any exit awards and the full award for this programme. The visitors also require evidence, which demonstrates the process, which learners engage with in order to gain exit awards. In this way, the visitors can determine whether the assessment policies, clearly specify the requirements for progression at each stage of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further information to show that the assessment methods are appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not see what, learning outcomes are associated with the EPA, or the method for assessing the EPA. At the visit, the visitors heard that some learning outcomes would be linked to the EPA, however the visitors did not have sight of this information. As the visitors could not see which learning outcomes are associated with the EPA, they were unable to determine that the assessment method is appropriate, to and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes. As such, the visitors require further information to determine which learning outcomes are linked to the EPA assessment to determine whether the EPA is an appropriate assessment method to measuring those learning outcomes. In this way, the visitors can determine whether this standard is met.

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 ensure that they appoint an external examiner, which is appropriately qualified and experienced unless other arrangements are appropriate on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: From reviewing the documentation, the visitors noted could not determine how an external examiner is appointed for the programme. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider has access to a list of prospective candidates within a database, which the education provider can contact and determine if they are interested in taking on the role of an external examiner. However, the visitors could not ascertain from this the criteria used to select an external examiner to ensure that they have the appropriate qualifications and experience and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register. Therefore, the visitors require evidence of the process used to appoint an external examiner, which, ensures that the successful candidate meets the criteria as set out in this standard.