

HCPC major change process report

Education provider	University of Surrey
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time
Date submission received	22 September 2021
Case reference	CAS-17138-S6F5F9

Contents

Section 1: Our regulatory approach.....	2
Section 2: Programme details.....	2
Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment.....	3
Section 4: Outcome from first review.....	3
Section 5: Visitors’ recommendation	6
Section 6: Future considerations for the programme(s).....	6

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 major change process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programmes 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.

Through undertaking this process, we have noted areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes in section 6 of this report.

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).

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process report. 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:

Andrew Jones	Paramedic
Gemma Howlett	Paramedic
Niall Gooch	HCPC executive

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2016
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 80
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04955

We undertook this assessment to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards, following changes reported to us via the major change process. The following is an overview of the changes from the information received via this process.

The education provider has notified us of their intention to increase learner numbers on the programme to 80. This represents an increase of 60% on the 50 which we currently have recorded as the approved number.

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
Major change notification form	Yes
Completed major change standards mapping	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission, the visitors were not satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that our standards continued to be met at this time, and therefore require further evidence as noted below.

Further evidence required

In order to determine whether the standards continue to be met, the visitors require further evidence for the following standards for the reasons noted below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programme(s), and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the standards.

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

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

Reason: The education provider stated that there was no change in how they met the standards in these areas. However, given the scale of the increase in learner numbers, the visitors considered that it would be reasonable for them to request some clarification on whether the education provider’s mechanisms for regular monitoring would need to be amended. This applies both to monitoring of learning and teaching activities and to monitoring of practice-based learning. In particular the visitors wished to know whether any changes to the relationship between the education provider and practice partners were required, in order to ensure that monitoring processes continued to be effective. The visitors noted also that the education provider had stated that they would support additional training for practice partners as necessary, and they considered that it would

be reasonable to require further evidence demonstrating what kind of training was involved.

Suggested evidence: Documents showing any planned or known changes to monitoring and audit processes, for example correspondence with practice partners, minutes of meetings, or amended procedures.

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

Reason: The education provider provided evidence showing that they had taken some steps towards ensuring that their process in this area continued to be effective after the increase in learner numbers. For example, appendix one noted an application for funding for the additional places. Appendix two mentioned that there was a proposal underway for further provision of practice educators. However, the visitors were not clear about the status of these steps to manage the increase in learner numbers.

Additionally the visitors did not see clear evidence that practice partners would be able to provide all the required additional capacity in placement. Some correspondence was supplied but the visitors were not clear from this correspondence whether the education provider had definitively secured all the required additional capacity. They therefore require further evidence that the processes in place have been used effectively to secure the required additional placements.

In particular the visitors wished to see more information about how the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) would be able to manage the demand for additional placements.

Suggested evidence: Further correspondence with practice partners confirming availability and capacity of practice-based learning; timetables or similar documents showing placement planning for the increased numbers; narrative of where additional placements have been secured.

3.9 There must be 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.

Reason: The visitors were aware from the documentation that the education provider had added an additional 0.5FTE to their staffing. The education provider stated that this recruitment would enable them to maintain their current staff-student ratio even after the increase in learner numbers. However, it was not clear to the visitors from the evidence received that a single additional 0.5FTE would suffice to ensure that these standards continued to be met. The scale of the increase in learner numbers – an extra 30 per cohort, a 60% increase on existing numbers – was such that the workload for staff would significantly increase, with teaching, marking, assessment, supervision and other activities. It was not clear what planning had been done to manage the increases in numbers.

The visitors additionally considered that it was not clear how specialist topics would be delivered, specifically whether there would be time and capacity for the education provider to deliver them.

Suggested evidence: Evidence showing how the education provider will manage the additional staffing demands of the programme, for example workplans, workload management documents and any intentions around future recruitment.

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.

Reason: In their evidence the education provider stated that they would be able to expand online and physical resources to meet the extra requirements with the increase in learner numbers. They linked to a document showing facilities that would be available for learners on the programme.

The visitors considered that there was a lack of detail in how specifically the education provider would meet the requirement for extra teaching space. They were not clear, for example, on whether there would be sufficient clinical simulation and classrooms available for the significantly larger cohorts. They also noted that the evidence did not give a clear idea of how the education provider intended to ensure the availability of sufficient additional equipment.

Suggested evidence: Evidence showing how the education provider has met the need for increased space and equipment, for example resource planning documents, lists of equipment available, or records of approved requests for more equipment.

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

Reason: The education provider stated that there had been no change to the way in which the programme met these standards. However, given the scale of the increase in learner numbers, the visitors considered that it would be reasonable for them to request clarification about how the education provider intended to ensure that they were able to scale up the practice-based learning appropriately. In particular the visitors considered that it would be appropriate for them to see further evidence relating to how the education provider would ensure a sufficient number of practice educators in their placements.

This applies to both ambulance and non-ambulance placements. In particular the visitors wished to see more information about how the South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) would be able to manage the demand for additional practice educators.

Suggested evidence: Documents to demonstrate that the education provider's practice partners have sufficient staff resource to absorb the additional demand created by a 60% increase in learner numbers, for example correspondence confirming the practice partners' ability to manage this, or timetables/planning documents.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the request for further evidence set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the standards continue to be met and recommend that the programme(s) remain approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 07 December 2021 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

Section 6: Future considerations for the programme(s)

We include this section to note areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes. Education providers do not need to respond to these areas through this assessment, but should consider how to engage with the HCPC around these areas in the future, for example through the monitoring processes. When this programme is next assessed against our standards, visitors will have access to this report, and will consider this section when making their recommendation on continuing programme approval.

The visitors considered that the standards were now met at threshold. However, they did wish to emphasise their understanding that this major change focused on a temporary uplift in learner numbers, for the academic year 2021-22. They had not seen sufficient evidence to determine that the SETs would continue to be met if the increase in learner numbers were made permanent, and they therefore consider that in future processes visitors should be aware of this. Additionally they suggested that the Education executive should take into account the temporary nature of the uplift when considering future engagement with the education provider.

The visitors also noted that it was not entirely clear from the evidence exactly what outcomes were being achieved from the processes for securing additional capacity in practice-based learning. It would not have been proportionate to withhold approval for the proposed change based on this lack of clarity, but the visitors considered that it may be appropriate for visitors to be aware of it in future processes.