

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Bournemouth University
Programme name	FdSc Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	12 – 14 May 2009

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Executive summary

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

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 25 August 2009. At the Committee meeting on 25 August 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme continues to meet our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme retains open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

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

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes - BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy and Dip HE Operating Department Practice. The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitor and profession	Vincent Clarke (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	30
Initial approval	September 2007
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Catherine Symonds (Bournemouth University) Linda Byles (Chair for Paramedic Meetings)
Secretary	Nikki Finnes (Bournemouth University)
Members of the joint panel	Gary Venstone (External Panel Member), Bob Willis (College of Paramedics)

Sources of evidence

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

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

The visitor only received one external examiner report as there had been only been one report issued for the programme so far.

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

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

The HPC did not see the learning resources or the specialist teaching accommodation as the nature of the major change did not affect learning resources or specialist teaching accommodation, so there was no requirement to visit them.

Recommended outcome

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

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

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

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

The visitor also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

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

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

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must provide a signed copy of the service level agreement for the programme.

Reason: The service level agreement received by the visitor as evidence at the visit was unsigned. Therefore the visitor would like to receive a revised service level agreement to clearly demonstrate the partnership arrangement between the education provider and South West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SWAST).

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

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

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became clear that the curriculum vitae (CVs) received prior to the visit by the visitor were abridged. Therefore it was difficult for the visitor to determine if the CVs clearly demonstrated that staff had the relevant expertise and knowledge relevant to the subject areas taught. The visitor would like to receive revised documentation to demonstrate that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates how the following standards of proficiency are met.

Registrant Paramedics must:

3a.1 know and understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice

- know the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice
- understand the following aspects of biological science:
 - human growth and development across the lifespan
 - the main sequential stages of normal development, including cognitive, emotional and social measures of maturation through the human lifespan
 - normal and altered anatomy and physiology throughout the human lifespan

Reason: In discussion with the programme team it was clear that through the system of teaching and learning the area of “the human lifespan” was covered. However there were no indicative learning outcomes (ILOs) or indicative content within any of the modules for the programme seen by the visitor prior to the visit.

Therefore the visitor would like to receive revised documentation to demonstrate this SOP is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation to demonstrate how the following standards of proficiency are met.

Registrant Paramedics must:

3a.1 know and understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice

- know the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are relevant to their profession-specific practice
- understand the following aspects of clinical science:
- understand relevant pharmacology, including pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it was evident that in the module “Foundation Knowledge and Practice” the relevant pharmacology, including pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics, was delivered to only specific “technician” drugs level. Therefore the visitor would like to receive revised documentation which demonstrates the teaching of pharmacology to paramedic level throughout the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must remove reference to any HPC requirement stating the number of hours for practice placements.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitor prior to the visit stated that the HPC required 1500 hours of practice to be completed during placement. This is not the case as the HPC does not make such statements. During discussions with the programme team, it was acknowledged that this statement had been erroneously attributed to the HPC and would be removed from the relevant documents. Therefore the visitor would like to receive revised documentation that this statement has been removed.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that identifies the number and range of placements undertaken by the students.

Reason: The documentation received prior to the visit did not detail the number, duration and range of placements to be undertaken by students. During discussions with the programme team it was clear that students would be required to undertake a number and range of different placements in various healthcare settings, including drug rehabilitation and mental health in the community. Therefore the visitor would like to receive documentation that details

the information regarding the placements to ensure that students receive parity of experience throughout their placement activity.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation to demonstrate that the assessment methods employed measure the required learning outcomes.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the use of Objective Structured Clinical Examinations to assess certain learning outcomes for modules as detailed in the documentation received prior to the visit was inappropriate. Therefore the visitor would like to receive revised documentation that clearly identifies appropriate assessment methods for ILOs.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider updating the key texts on reading lists to include all relevant core paramedic books.

Reason: The students and the programme team stated that Nancy Caroline's "Emergency Care in the Streets" was a key text. The text was issued to students, but it did not appear on any key text lists for any of the module descriptors. The visitor felt that the lists should be updated to reflect that this book and other key texts that were part of the indicative reading material for the students.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider revising the title of the module "Advanced Paramedic Practice".

Reason: The visitor considered that the current title of this module did not reflect the content of the module. Advanced paramedic is a level of practice recognised by the College of Paramedics, which was not represented by the current content of the module described. In discussions with the programme team, it was recognised that the title of this module should be revised to reflect more appropriately the content currently contained within the module.

Vincent Clarke