

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Bournemouth University
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	24 – 25 March 2015

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'paramedic' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 27 August 2015. At the Committee meeting, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets 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 is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Frances Ashworth (Lay Visitor) Graham Harris (Paramedic) Mark Nevins (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Alex Urquhart
Proposed student numbers	35 per cohort
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Philip Ryland (Bournemouth University)
Secretary	Lianne Hutchings (Bournemouth University)
Members of the joint panel	Paul Eyre (College of Paramedics) Paul Townsend (College of Paramedics) Michael Jones (Internal panel member) Tristan Henderson (External panel member)

Sources of evidence

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

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

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

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

The HCPC met with students from the Foundation Science Degree in Paramedic Science, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

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

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 48 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 10 SETs.

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

The visitors have also made a recommendation for the programme.

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

Conditions

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

Condition: Considering the planned increase in number of teaching staff the education provider is required to provide further evidence demonstrating that new staff members have the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge to teach the subject areas.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors reviewed staff curriculum vitae along with the document that outlines how staff are allocated to modules to support this standard. During the visit the education provider stated that they would be recruiting a new member of teaching staff to accommodate the increased student numbers. However the visitors could not identify, from the evidence provided, what specialist expertise and knowledge the new member of staff would need to have so that they could teach the subject areas in the curriculum. The education provider is therefore required to provide further evidence of what specialist expertise and knowledge the new member of teaching staff will have so that they can teach the subject areas in collaboration with the current members of teaching staff.

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

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

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider contained several instances of incorrect terminology. For example, the programme handbook, on page 6 states "...apply to register with the Health Care Professions Council". There is reference to 'The health Care professions Council'. All reference such as these must be updated to the 'HCPC' or 'Health and Care Professions Council'. Also, the "Programme specification" states "The HCPC have recommended that the minimum qualification required for registration be increased to BSc level by 2019." This is an incorrect statement as The HCPC has not made this recommendation but is a recommendation of the College of Paramedics. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation submitted. Incorrect and inconsistent statements have the potential to mislead potential applicants and students. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, and ensure that the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence demonstrating how students give consent when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching and that they are aware that they have the right to withdraw during teaching sessions.

Reason: The visitors, in reviewing the evidence provided noted that on page 24 of the student handbook it stated that “At the start of each academic year students sign a declaration of confidentiality and consent to participate in practical classes form. During the visit the visitors were given the consent form used for the current FdSc programme but not the BSc (Hons) programme. This consent form stated that the student understood the range of practical activities and agreed to participate in practical classes and that it was the responsibility of the students to inform the programme leader or tutor if they feel unable to undertake practical teaching sessions.

The visitors agreed that although the students clearly give consent to practical teaching sessions, the opportunity to withdraw at any session is not clear. This was reflected in the meeting with the students where the students noted that they felt that they would be able to abstain from practical sessions if they felt they would be unable to do so for whatever reason, they were unaware that they were entitled to withdraw in line with the consent form. Therefore the education provider must provide further evidence that demonstrates that the student has the right to withdraw from practical teaching sessions where they participate as service users for the BSc (Hons) programme.

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 is required to map the learning outcomes against the 2014 standards of proficiency (SOPs).

Reason: The visitors noted that the education provider had mapped the learning outcomes with the 2007 standards of proficiency. As such the visitors could not determine how the programme ensures that those who successfully complete the programme meet the current standards of proficiency as published in 2014. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence, of how the learning outcomes ensure that successful graduates can meet the relevant standards of proficiency.

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

Condition: The education provider is required to demonstrate how the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: The visitors noted that the education provider had mapped the learning outcomes with the 2007 standards of proficiency. As such the visitors could not determine how the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance. Therefore the education provider is required to demonstrate that the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- the learning outcomes to be achieved;

- the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;
- expectations of professional conduct;
- the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and
- communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence as to how students are made aware of the learning outcomes for non-ambulance practice placements.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation outlining how students were made aware of the learning outcomes for practice placements prior to the visit, this evidence was demonstrated in the 'Practice Assessment Documents' (PADs) and the 'Practice Placement Handbook' where the learning outcomes are clearly identified as well as the assessment methods. However it was noted in discussion with the programme team that the PADs were specifically designed for the ambulance placements. The visitors noted that there was no document which identified the learning outcomes for the non-ambulance placements, such as those based in a hospital setting such as accident and emergency. The students informed the panel that during these non-ambulance placements it was the students who decide the learning outcomes for when they are in the non-ambulance placement setting. As such the visitors noted that a student or a practice placement educator could potentially be in the placement setting without a clear understanding of the learning outcomes that need to be met in order for a student to successfully complete the placement. The education provider should therefore provide further evidence to demonstrate how they prepare students, and practice placement educators, to undertake placements in the non-ambulance setting. In particular they should provide further evidence as to how learning outcomes for these placements are identified.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider is required to demonstrate how the assessment strategy and design ensures that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the 2014 standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted that the education provider had mapped the learning outcomes with the 2007 standards of proficiency. As such the visitors could not determine how the programme ensures that those who successfully complete the programme met the current standards of proficiency as published in 2014. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence of how the assessment strategy and design ensures that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the current standards of proficiency as published in 2014.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence demonstrating how the assessment process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Reason: From the evidence submitted regarding this standard the visitors could not fully establish how the assessment procedures meet any relevant external-reference frameworks. The visitors were directed to the 'University's Academic Procedures documentation', however the visitors could not find any information regarding external-reference frameworks such as the QAA Paramedic Science Benchmark or College of Paramedics Paramedic Curriculum Guidance specifically in relation to assessment. The visitors noted that the education provider has made reference to the QAA Paramedic Science Benchmark and College of Paramedics Paramedic Curriculum Guidance in appendix 5 where the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (SOPs), QAA Paramedic Science Benchmark and College of Paramedics Paramedic Curriculum Guidance are mapped against the modules. However the mapping included the 2007 HCPC SOPs which need to be updated, therefore based on this mapping the visitors are unsure as to how the assessment procedures will meet the referenced external frameworks. Moreover the visitors were not presented with the assessment procedures and learning outcomes for the non-ambulance specific placements, therefore they are unable to understand how the external-reference frameworks assessment procedures are measured in assessment in all settings including practice placements.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider is required to demonstrate that Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting as outlined in the current standards of proficiency.

Reason: The visitors noted that the education provider had mapped the learning outcomes with the 2007 standards of proficiency. As such the visitors could not determine how the programme ensures that professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting. Therefore the education provider is required to provide further evidence, of how the programme ensures that Professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting as outlined in the current standards of proficiency.

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

Condition: The education provider is required to provide evidence to demonstrate that the external examiner is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The education provider submitted the external examiner reports from the previous two academic years, not for this programme, but for the FdSc paramedic programme. During the visit it became apparent that the education provider had appointed a new external examiner for this programme, but information about this appointment was not provided at the visit. The visitors also could not identify, from the evidence provided, how any regulations in place ensured that this new external examiner is appropriately experienced, qualified and from the relevant part of the Register. Therefore the education provider is required to provide evidence of the requirements in place that ensures any external examiners appointed to the programme

are appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that the education provider develop the involvement of service users and carers on the programme.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the service users and carers are involved in the programme and so determined that this standard is met. During discussions with the service users and carers, it was indicated that they would like to enhance their involvement in different aspects of the programme, such as involvement with the selection process. The visitors recommend that the programme team consider developing service user and carer involvement and looking into new ways for involvement. The visitors suggest that a more robust service user and carer involvement will allow a greater depth to students' learning and other aspects of the programme.

Frances Ashworth
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Mark Nevins