

Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	St George's, University of London
<b>Programme name</b>	Foundation Science Degree in Paramedic Science
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time Part time
<b>Relevant part of HPC Register</b>	Paramedic
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 – 14 July 2010

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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 15 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. The education provider has until 26 August 2010 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 16 September 2010. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 2 August 2010. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 16 September 2010.

## 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, programme management and resources, curriculum, practice placements and assessment. 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. The education provider 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

## Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Glyn Harding (Paramedic) Jane Topham (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	21 Full time 48 Part time with two cohorts per year
Initial approval	September 2006
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2010
Chair	Sean Hilton (St George's, University of London)
Secretary	Derek Baldwinson (St George's, University of London)
Members of the joint panel	Adele Atkinson (Internal Panel Member) Elizabeth Miles (Internal Panel Member) Andrew Singleton (Internal Panel Member)

## 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' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self evaluation document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme Definitive document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 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"/>

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors 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 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 48 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 9 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 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 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 visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

## Conditions

### **3.15 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clearly articulate within the attendance policy where it is mandatory and where flexibility exists in the policy.

**Reason:** The attendance policy submitted as evidence for the visit stated that attendance was mandatory for all parts of the programme. However during discussions with the programme team it became evident that there was some flexibility in attendance if for example, a student was sick or a student experienced bereavement or other life issue. The visitors felt that the policy did not reflect this and should therefore be updated to provide students with full and clear information.

### **3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must revise the policy for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct, to formally recognise other regulatory bodies.

**Reason:** The visitors were satisfied that the document provided for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct was appropriate. However it referred solely to the General Medical Council (GMC) throughout. The visitors determined that a student on this programme could say that the policy does not apply to them as it does not mention the HPC.

The visitors discussed this with the programme team and the team reported that they always informed students that it was applicable to them should student conduct issues arise.

The visitors would like to receive a revised document or statement that clearly states that the policy also relates to students on HPC approved programmes, in order for the visitors to be assured that this standard is met.

### **5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide revised documentation that clearly identifies the number of relevant placements to support the delivery of the programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved.

**Reason:** At the visit the visitors received documentation that listed the ambulance placements for the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust (LAS). However there was no information regarding the hospital placements for students. Also there was no information regarding ambulance or hospital placements for South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SECamb).

During the meeting with students, they described their placements both on the ambulance and the hospitals for both ambulance services. In the meeting with the practice placement educators and in the meeting with the programme team it was clear that these placements took place and that the practice placement educators and the programme team were taking proactive action in finding different hospital placements to provide students a well rounded experience and to ensure that the students could meet the learning outcomes for the programme.

For the visitors to be assured that the number of relevant placements to support the delivery of the programme and the learning outcomes to be achieved are appropriate they would like to receive documentation that clearly articulates all the placement areas used by both LAS and SECamb.

### **5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation that shows how practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw some audits provided at the visit, they only applied to LAS ambulance stations. There were no hospital placement audits for LAS and no information for SECamb in terms of ambulance or hospital placements. Therefore the visitors were unclear if all the placements used provided a safe and supportive environment.

In the meetings with the practice placement educators and the programme team it was evident that placement settings were monitored to ensure that they were providing a safe and supportive environment. Therefore the visitors would like to see documentation that shows how placements would be monitored so that they can be assured that there is a relevant process in place to meet this standard.

### **5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation to show how all placements are approved and monitored.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw evidence of some monitoring of practice placements for ambulance placements with LAS at the visit, there was no evidence how all practice placements were being approved and monitored or audited consistently for hospital placements or for any placements used by SECamb.

In the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed the arrangements for students on placements. It was clear that placements were regularly audited and monitored and the partner ambulance services were also monitored. The visitors learnt that students taking the full time version of the revised programme would be on hospital placements at St George's Hospital. The programme team said these placement areas would still be approved and monitored even though the placement was on site. For those students coming in as direct entrants from the two partner ambulance services for the part time route all placements for both

ambulance and hospital sites would be audited to ensure the placements were appropriate.

The programme team informed the visitors that a revised practice placement agreement was to be put in place to ensure that all placements were approved and monitored effectively.

The visitors would therefore like to receive revised documentation to show how the education provider plans to approve and monitor all practice placement areas and an indication as to when this will be put into practice.

### **5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that placement providers have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw evidence of some monitoring of practice placements for ambulance placements with LAS at the visit, there was no evidence how all practice placements were being approved and monitored or audited consistently for hospital placements or for any placements used by SECamb.

Therefore the visitors were unable to determine how the equality and diversity policies in relation to students would be implemented and monitored.

In the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed the arrangements for students on placements. It was clear that placements were regularly audited and monitored and the partner ambulance services were also monitored. The visitors learnt that students taking the full time version of the revised programme would be on hospital placements at St George's Hospital. The programme team said these placement areas would still be approved and monitored even though the placement was on site. For those students coming in as direct entrants from the two partner ambulance services for the part time route all placements for both ambulance and hospital sites would be audited to ensure the placements were appropriate.

The programme team informed the visitors that a revised practice placement agreement was to be put in place to ensure that all placements were approved and monitored effectively to take account of equality and diversity policies that relate to students.

The visitors would therefore like to receive revised documentation to show how the education provider plans to approve and monitor all practice placement areas and an indication as to when this will be put into practice to ensure that this standard is met.

### **5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw evidence of some monitoring of practice placements for ambulance placements with LAS at the visit, there was no evidence how all practice placements were being approved and monitored or audited consistently for hospital placements or for any placements used by SECamb. Therefore the visitors were unable to determine that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

In the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed the arrangements for students on placements. It was clear that placements were regularly audited and monitored and the partner ambulance services were also monitored. The visitors learnt that students taking the full time version of the revised programme would be on hospital placements at St George's Hospital. The programme team said these placement areas would still be approved and monitored even though the placement was on site. For those students coming in as direct entrants from the two partner ambulance services for the part time route all placements for both ambulance and hospital sites would be audited to ensure the placements were appropriate.

The programme team informed the visitors that a revised practice placement agreement was to be put in place to ensure that all placements were approved and monitored effectively that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

The visitors would therefore like to receive revised documentation to show how the education provider plans to approve and monitor all practice placement areas and an indication as to when this will be put into practice to ensure that this standard is met.

### **5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw evidence of some monitoring of practice placements for ambulance placements with LAS at the visit, there was no evidence how all practice placements were being approved and monitored or audited consistently for hospital placements or for any placements used by SECamb. Therefore the visitors were unable to determine that practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

In the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed the arrangements for students on placements. It was clear that placements were regularly audited and monitored and the partner ambulance services were also monitored. The visitors learnt that students taking the full time version of the revised programme would be on hospital placements at St George's Hospital. The programme team said these placement areas would still be approved and monitored even though

the placement was on site. For those students coming in as direct entrants from the two partner ambulance services for the part time route all placements for both ambulance and hospital sites would be audited to ensure the placements were appropriate.

The programme team informed the visitors that a revised practice placement agreement was to be put in place to ensure that all placements were approved and monitored effectively that show how practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

The visitors would therefore like to receive revised documentation to show how the education provider plans to approve and monitor all practice placement areas and an indication as to when this will be put into practice to ensure that this standard is met.

### **5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide documentation to show that practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

**Reason:** Although the visitors saw evident of some monitoring of practice placements for ambulance placements with LAS at the visit, there was no evidence how all practice placements were being approved and monitored or audited consistently for hospital placements or for any placements used by SECamb. Therefore the visitors were unable to determine that show that practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

In the meeting with the programme team the visitors discussed the arrangements for students on placements. It was clear that placements were regularly audited and monitored and the partner ambulance services were also monitored. The visitors learnt that students taking the full time version of the revised programme would be on hospital placements at St George's Hospital. The programme team said these placement areas would still be approved and monitored even though the placement was on site. For those students coming in as direct entrants from the two partner ambulance services for the part time route all placements for both ambulance and hospital sites would be audited to ensure the placements were appropriate.

The programme team informed the visitors that a revised practice placement agreement was to be put in place to ensure that all placements were approved and monitored effectively to indicate that practice placement educators are appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

The visitors would therefore like to receive revised documentation to show how the education provider plans to approve and monitor all practice placement areas and an indication as to when this will be put into practice to ensure that this standard is met.

## Recommendations

### **6.5 The measurement of student performance must be objective and ensure fitness to practise.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should review its policy on using objective criteria in assessments during practice placement to improve the measurement of student performance for fitness to practice.

**Reason:** In the meeting with the practice placement educators the use of guidelines rather than protocols within ambulance placements was discussed with the visitors.

The visitors were content that the standard was met and that the practice placement educators were fully aware of the education provider's guidelines for assessing student performance and ensuring the student's fitness to practice. The visitors recommend that the education provider reviews its policy on using objective criteria in the assessment to take account of different guidelines that might affect the ambulance service partners to the programme.

Glyn Harding  
Jane Topham