

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Staffordshire University
Programme name	Foundation Degree in Professional Development in Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Paramedic
Date of visit	24-25 June 2008

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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 approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 25 September 2008. At the Education and Training Committee's meeting on Thursday 25 September 2008, 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 HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 validated the programme. The visit also considered the following programme – Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science. 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. 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 programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Paul Bates (Paramedic) Glyn Harding (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
Proposed student numbers	15
Proposed start date of programme approval	October 2008
Chair	Professor Mike Goodwin (Staffordshire University)
Secretary	Andrea Jones (Staffordshire University)
Members of the joint panel	Richard Benefer (Staffordshire University, Internal Panel Member) Dr Mark Forshaw (Staffordshire University, Internal Panel Member) Peter Jones (Staffordshire University, 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Validation Support Document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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 (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the operating department practice and nursing programmes, 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 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 55 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 8 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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

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

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation and advertising materials for the programme to follow the guidance provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

Reason: From the documentation submitted by the education provider it was clear that the documentation did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, the HPC is not a professional body and should not be referred to as such in any materials related to an HPC approved programme. It should also be made clear throughout all of the documentation that completion of the programme provides eligibility to apply for HPC registration. In addition, there are a number of items referred to as HPC requirements in the documentation that it needs to be clarified are professional body recommendations, in particular references to the amount of time that mentors should supervise students on placements and the guidance regarding the 24-hour cycle of care. Finally, references to the HPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics should be updated to the most recent version of this publication throughout the documentation. Therefore, in order to provide students with the correct information to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme and to prevent confusion amongst students on the programme, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be amended.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that the programme has a secure place in the education provider’s business plan and is guaranteed to run.

Reason: During the senior team meeting it was apparent that the education provider was waiting for confirmation from the strategic health authority regarding commissioned numbers to the programme to ensure that the funding would be in place to run the programme. Once this confirmation has been received by the education provider, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate that this is the case to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate that one of the planned paramedic personnel is recruited to the programme team before the start of the first programme, and that the other paramedic role is recruited to at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reason: From the programme team meeting it was clear that the programme team was already in place with the exception of the paramedic staff. Whilst the

visitors recognised that the job descriptions had been written and that initial advertising for the roles had already begun, they felt that in order for this programme to run at least one of these roles must be in position by the start of the programme. The visitors would therefore need confirmation of the recruitment of one of these individuals and details of their expertise and knowledge to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate that one of the planned paramedic personnel is recruited to the programme team before the start of the first programme, and that the other paramedic role is recruited to at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reason: From the programme team meeting it was clear that the programme team was already in place with the exception of the paramedic staff. Whilst the visitors recognised that the job descriptions had been written and that initial advertising for the roles had already begun, they felt that in order for this programme to run at least one of these roles must be in position by the start of the programme. The visitors would therefore need confirmation of the recruitment of one of these individuals and details of their expertise and knowledge to ensure that this standard is being met.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation in order to provide evidence that the resources available for the learning and teaching of the students on this programme would be sufficient.

Reason: From the tour of the facilities and the planned equipment for purchase by the education provider the visitors could not determine whether the equipment resources would be sufficient for the number of students on this programme. Indeed, from the equipment list supplied and from the resources seen on the tour the visitors felt that these would not provide sufficient learning and teaching resources. The visitors therefore require details of the equipment that is currently available to this programme and an updated list of the type and quantity of equipment that the education provider is planning to purchase to ensure that this standard is being met.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation to provide evidence of a formalised agreement between the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) for the education provider to access WMAS clinical skills facilities.

Reason: From the meetings with the programme team and the placement providers it was evident that there had been close co-operation and involvement in the development of this programme, and that WMAS had agreed that the programme team could utilise their clinical skills facilities. To ensure that these facilities are guaranteed to be accessible to the education provider as planned, the visitors require a formalisation of this agreement in order to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to demonstrate that the stock of subject texts will be sufficient to support the learning of the students on this programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team it was apparent that there were plans to purchase the books listed in the module descriptors as required reading. To ensure that this standard is being met the visitors require evidence regarding the quantity of the resources that are being purchased. The visitors also need to see the recommended reading lists for the programme and demonstration of the plans to purchase these resources, including the amount of each of the texts.

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 revisit the programme documentation to clarify the policy on preceptorship following completion of the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation submitted by the education provider it was clear that the information in the documentation was misleading regarding the programme policy on preceptorship after completing the programme. The documentation needs to be updated to clarify that a period of preceptorship was recommended as best practice after completion of the programme, and that preceptorship is not a requirement as is currently stated.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to provide evidence of the education provider taking full responsibility over placements on the programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that the education provider planned to initially utilise Coventry University's placement audits for the first year of the programme before commencing their own audits. The visitors require evidence of a formal agreement between the two education providers and endorsement of

Staffordshire University's responsibility for placements for the period that the information in the Coventry University's audits is utilised.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation to provide evidence that the placement audits that are planned to be utilised are tailored to paramedic placements.

Reason: In the programme documentation submitted by the education provider an audit was provided that would be adapted and utilised in the future to approve and monitor paramedic placements on the programme. The visitors require evidence that this audit has been adapted to be suitable for assessing paramedic placements to ensure that this standard is being met.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors wished to recommend that a wider range of paramedic texts is available to the students on the programme.

Reason: From the resources seen at the visit and the texts proposed for purchase by the education provider, the visitors felt that a wider range of paramedic texts could be made available to aid the research and learning of the students on the programme.

Paul Bates
Glyn Harding