

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Swansea University
Programme name	Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC register	Paramedic Science
Date of visit	15 – 16 April 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. The education provider has until Thursday 29 May 2008 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 on Tuesday 10 June 2008. 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 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 Friday 18 July 2008. At the Education and Training Committee's meeting on Monday 18 August 2008, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. 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 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 and the professional body outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr David Whitmore (Paramedic) Mr Robert Dobson (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Abigail Creighton
Proposed student numbers	50
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2008
Chair	Dr Michael Isaac (Swansea University)
Secretary	Mrs Jayne Walters (Swansea University)
Members of the joint panel	Mrs Diane Mort (Swansea University, Internal Panel Member) Mrs Anita Davies (Swansea University, Internal Panel Member) Mr James Petter (College of Paramedics/British Paramedic Association)

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"/>
Educational clinical audit document	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years 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 BSc (Hons) Pre-Hospital Care 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 61 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 2 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 did not make any recommendations for the programme. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are often suggested when it is felt that the standards of education and training have been met at the threshold level.

The visitors have also made a commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of the partnership agreement between the education provider and the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust (WAST).

Reason: Throughout all of the meetings, there was clear collaboration between the education provider and WAST. In particular, senior and programme team members demonstrated a clear understanding of the lines of responsibilities and communication, both within and between the two parties. The education provider explained that there was a contract with WAST to cover the steering group process which had guided the programme design and development to date. They also explained that they were currently in the process of finalising a formal memorandum of understanding. The visitors were confident that this formal agreement would clarify the individual and joint responsibilities for the ongoing delivery of the programme. However, given the critical role of WAST, they felt that final written confirmation of the partnership was needed to ensure that areas such as teaching, learning and assessment, resources, placements and staff development were managed effectively in the future.

5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of an indicative timetable to show that identified practice placement educators will be appropriately trained before the programme commences.

Reason: In the meetings with the senior and programme teams, the visitors discussed the arrangements for ensuring that there were an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced practice placement educators. The education provider and their partner, WAST, explained that they intended to train appropriately 100 practice placement educators before the programme starts using an in-house module entitled 'Mentorship Preparation for Health Care Professionals'. They explained that a new role 'Clinical Team Leader' (CTL) had been developed in WAST and that all Clinical Team Leaders would be trained as practice placement educators. However, the recruitment of Clinical Team Leaders was not yet complete, with just 30 of the expected 120 posts filled. The education provider explained that WAST hoped to recruit all Clinical Team Leaders within the next few months and then they would arrange delivery of the in-house module. Whilst the visitors were confident that the identified actions could be delivered, they required assurance that the recruitment and training of practice placement educators would be prioritised and achieved by both the education provider and their partner, WAST. It was felt that a detailed timetable would provide evidence of both parties' commitment to ensuring that an appropriate number of practice placement educators were trained and fully operational before the programme commences.

Commendations

The visitors wish to commend the following aspect of the programme.

Commendation: The visitors commended the range of e-learning packages (eg e-ward) available at the education provider.

Reason: During the tour of resources, the visitors were shown the range of e-learning packages which had been developed and designed by the education provider internally. These packages support the development of students' clinical skills and clinical decision-making. Unlike the majority of e-learning packages available, these packages are based on UK ambulance practice and the Joint Royal Colleges Ambulance Service Liaison Committee (JRCALC) guidelines.

Mr David Whitmore
Mr Robert Dobson