

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Open University
Programme name	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC register	Paramedic Science
Date of visit	18 and 19 March 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 Monday 18 August 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 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Mr Andrew Newton (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Ms Charlotte Urwin
Proposed student numbers	100
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 October 2008
Chair	Professor Trevor Herbert (Open University)
Secretary	Ms Caroline Neeson (Open University)

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 for S110 course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbooks for individual courses	<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"/>
Collaborative agreement for S110 course	<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 (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the pilot programme of the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences. The students were all registered Paramedics undertaking the programme as a trial before it is rolled out nationwide.

The HPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the education provider offers programmes by supported open learning. The specialist teaching accommodation is therefore provided by the student's employer (Sponsor).

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 21 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 42 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 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.

Conditions

SET 2 Programme admissions

- 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 submit draft advertising material for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent there was confusion about whether advertising material could be produced for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme prior to it gaining approval. As such the education provider took the decision not to produce any material until the programme had gained approval. The visitors felt that in order to fully assess whether the programme meets this standard, draft advertising material must be submitted.

- 2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure applicants meet the English language requirements of the programme at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement, between the education provider and the Sponsor, requires the Sponsor to ensure that applicants 'meet minimum English language requirements'. The agreement provides the Sponsor with guidance on the level the education provider expects students to have attained. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure applicants had a good command of written and spoken English. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the

visitors felt the education provider could not ensure that criminal conviction checks were undertaken. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.3 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate health checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'all appropriate health status checks required for the Student's role are met'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the appropriate health requirements were met. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 3 *Programme management and resource standards*

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that the practice based courses are appropriately quality assured.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was apparent the Collaborative Agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Sponsor and the education provider. However, the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement and the visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management. The visitors felt that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must submit the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) course.

Reason: In the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team and senior team it was clear that the Collaborative Agreement for the second practice based module (S211) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme, the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 course must be submitted.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit a strategy for appointing an adequate number of appropriately qualified Associate Lecturers for the practice based courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences award.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and students it was clear the Associate Lecturer plays an important role in supporting the student. One Associate Lecturer has been appointed for the first practice based course (S110 – Health sciences in practice) of the pilot Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. The visitors recognise that prior to the programme being rolled-out nationwide it is difficult to predict student numbers and therefore the number of and location where Associate Lecturers will be needed. However, the visitors felt that until they received further information, in the form of a recruitment strategy, they were unable to fully assess this standard of education and training.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that resources are available and used effectively during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources were provided or used effectively. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure student consent is obtained during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'obtain Student consent for participation as patient or client in any practical or clinical teaching activity' and that further guidance is provided in the Information for Mentors publication. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that student consent was being obtained. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that

mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 3.11 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 redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the practice placement attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: From the discussion with the programme team it was clear that students are required to undertake all of the placements recommended by the British Paramedic Association (BPA). This was not clearly articulated in the submitted documentation for courses S110 and S211 and as such, the visitors were unclear of the attendance policy surrounding these placements and the monitoring mechanisms which are in place to assess whether students gain this mandatory experience.

- 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 redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the resources adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources provided adequately supported the programme's learning and teaching activities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are 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 update and submit evidence that the online library includes Paramedic specific texts and journals.

Reason: From searches of the online library and the discussions with the library staff and programme team, it was clear there were no Paramedic specific texts or journals available for students to view. The visitors recognise that much of the information students require is provided to them in the form of textbooks and that there are plans to introduce Paramedic specific material once the pilot programme enters the second year. However as there was no Paramedic specific information in the library at the time of the visit, the visitors felt that to

provide students with full support throughout the duration of the programme, the online library must be updated to include Paramedic specific material.

- 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 redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate IT facilities are provided during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'the Student with access to computing facilities' which meet the education provider standard specification. The visitors were satisfied the education provider standard specification is appropriate, however, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that students had access to appropriate IT facilities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 4 Curriculum standards

- 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 draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessments, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether graduates would meet the standards of proficiency for Paramedics and as such, the course guides must be submitted.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the requirement to undertake the BPA recommended placements.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the education provider requires students to complete the BPA recommended placements. However, the practice placement documentation does not reflect these discussions and to allow the visitors to fully assess this standard, the practice placement documentation must be updated.

- 4.6 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate learning and teaching approaches are used during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide suitable Practice Placements that enable the Student to complete Continuous Assessment and the End of Course Assessment'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate to the subject. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 5 Practice placement standards

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the student during Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe environment during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided a safe environment. The

visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure safe and effective practice during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement' and 'carry out regular audits'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided safe and effective practice. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the number, duration and range of placements is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was unclear what placements the students were expected to undertake. However, from discussions with the programme team and placement providers it became clear that students are expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements. HPC does not set the number, length or range of placements which a student must undertake and it does not stipulate that students studying to become Paramedics must undertake the BPA recommended placements. However, as the programme team confirmed that students would be expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to clearly articulate how the BPA recommended placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a thorough and effective system of monitoring is undertaken for the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'carry out regular audits of Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that regular

audits were carried out or that they were part of a thorough or effective system. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with each practice placement.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that these competency lists were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient detail about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

The visitors felt that in order for students and placement providers to be fully prepared for placement, the programme documentation must be updated to provide further information about the specific learning outcomes required during the practice based courses.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the timings and duration of the placements and any associated records to be maintained.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and the placement providers it was clear that students are required to undertake the BPA recommended placements. However it is not clear in the programme documentation when these placements should occur; how long they should be; or what records must be kept. In order to provide students and placement providers with clear information, the visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated.

5.7.3 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the expectations of professional conduct.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors felt that more information must be included regarding expectations of professional conduct. In particular, the visitors felt the S110 course guide must be updated to reflect that students would be expected to meet HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Information must also be provided to students and placement providers on what will happen in the event of students behaving in an unprofessional manner.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that information was included in the practice placement documentation regarding assessment procedures. However, the visitors felt that more information must be provided regarding the options available for a failing student.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate to students and placement providers the lines of communication and responsibility.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that all parties were confident of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitors recognised that all three groups, to varying degrees, had been involved in the development of the programme. The visitors were unclear how any new students or placement providers would be informed about lines of communication and responsibility and as such, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately qualified and experienced.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide

students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria provided by the education provider. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the Workplace Mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.2 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria as provided by the education provider; and advise the education provider of the 'name and professional registration number of the Workplace Mentor'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors were appropriately registered. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure Workplace Mentors receive appropriate educator training.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the Student'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors received appropriate educator training. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the placement providers.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that the processes to provide information to the placement providers were working well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors were concerned that this could be due to the close relationship between the education provider and the Trust who had helped to develop the programme. The visitors would therefore like to see further information about the mechanisms which are in place to provide all placement providers with necessary information.

5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate when the placement providers must pass information to the education provider and students.

Reason: From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the placement providers were confident of the information to be passed to the education provider and to the student. The placement providers recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new placement providers may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new placement providers would be informed about the information they needed to pass to the education provider and to the student.

5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the learning and teaching methods used during the practice based courses respect the rights and needs of patients, clients and colleagues.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to schedule 7 of the Collaborative Agreement. Schedule 7 does not demonstrate how the learning and teaching methods of the practice placements respect the needs of patients, clients or colleagues. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to provide evidence of this.

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to have in place

non-discriminatory policies, though there is no requirement for the Sponsor to monitor their policies. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the anti-discriminatory policies were implemented and monitored accordingly. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 6 Assessment standards

- 6.1 The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them to fully determine whether the assessment design and procedures allowed students to demonstrate fitness to practise.

- 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 redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the assessment methods measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten lists of competencies were too wide reaching and did not allow students to be assessed against the specific learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to ensure the assessment methods adequately assess the learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211

(Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether all the assessment methods were thorough and effective.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how professional aspects of practice will be integral to assessment procedures.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publications states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten competencies were too wide reaching and did not provide the detail necessary to assess a student's familiarity with the idea of their professional responsibility for their own actions, values and ethics, or their understanding of the nature of professional regulation, and the responsibilities this involves.

6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specific assessment regulations to clearly state that an aegrotat award does not provide eligibility to apply for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: From the documentation it was clear the rules surrounding aegrotat awards are available to students on the website. However, the visitors felt that programme specific information must be made available to students.

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must submit the assessment regulations which clearly specify the education provider's External Examiner arrangements.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that there are External Examiners for all courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. However, the visitors were unable to view the assessment regulations stating the education providers

External Examiner policy and would like the opportunity to review them to finalise their assessment of this standard.

Recommendations

- 6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Recommendation: The education provider should submit as part of annual monitoring the interim reports for S210 and S2xxx.

Reason: The visitors noted that the external assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented to ensure effective mechanisms are in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment of students. The visitors felt that these mechanisms were sufficient to meet the standard to assure appropriate standards of assessment. As these reports will not be available until 2009/10 it is recommended that this is seen as part of the annual monitoring process.

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