

## Visitors' report

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Name of education provider</b>         | University of Bedfordshire               |
| <b>Programme name</b>                     | BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice |
| <b>Mode of delivery</b>                   | Full time                                |
| <b>Relevant part of the HCPC Register</b> | Operating department practitioner        |
| <b>Date of visit</b>                      | 25-26 March 2015                         |

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## Executive summary

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

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 27 August 2015. At the Committee meeting, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

## Introduction

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

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

## Visit details

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Name and role of HCPC visitors            | Joanne Thomas (Operating department practitioner)<br>Julie Weir (Operating department practitioner)<br>Kathleen Taylor (Lay visitor)   |
| HCPC executive officer (in attendance)    | Hollie Latham  |
| Proposed student numbers                  | 24 per cohort, per year  |
| Proposed start date of programme approval | 1 September 2016   |
| Chair                                     | Juliet Fern  |
| Secretary                                 | Richard Hearing  |
| Members of the joint panel                | Alexander Kofinas (Internal panel member)<br>Tim Gregory (Internal panel member)<br>Hannah Abbott (External panel member)<br>Andrea Cooke (External panel member)<br>Angela Baker (Student representative)<br>Philip Rodell (Student representative) |

## Sources of evidence

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

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

The HCPC 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 HCPC saw the following groups or facilities:

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

The HCPC met with students from the Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

## Recommended outcome

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

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

The visitors agreed that 45 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 13 SETs.

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

The visitors did not make any recommendations for the programme.

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

## Conditions

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide confirmation of the proposed student numbers for the programme.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to page 12 of the supporting evidence documents which states "The projected student numbers are dependent on commissioning activity. We have confirmation that there are 27 places agreed for the September 2015 intake and we project that there will be a subsequent intakes following approval of this course." However, page 12 of the same document states "For the financial year 2015-16 HE EoE have committed to support 23 places..." In addition to this, in a meeting with the senior team, it was stated that in addition to the aforementioned commissioned places students could also apply to the programme on a self-funded basis, subject to placement availability. The senior team were not able to confirm a maximum student intake for the programme. The visitors were therefore unable to clearly identify how many students could be on the programme at any one time. The visitors note that without clarification on student numbers they are unable to confirm if the education provider is committed to providing sufficient resources to deliver the programme, and subsequently, that there is a future for the programme. The visitors therefore require further information to clarify the maximum student intake for the programme and how this will be appropriately supported to ensure that the programmes will have a secure place in the education providers business plan.

### **3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence to state the confirmed staff numbers for the programme and that this is appropriate to support student learning.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed to page seven of the supporting evidence document which states "...currently has an advertisement in press to appoint a fifth specialist lecturer to the team. It is envisaged that we will need to appoint another member of staff to the teaching team as outlined in the new course proposal form, as student numbers increase." However the visitors were not provided with any confirmation for the recruitment of the aforementioned additional staff members. In addition to this, the visitors were unclear on the proposed student numbers for this programme as stated under condition 3.1 of this report. Without clarification of both staff and student numbers the visitors were unable to make a judgement on whether the programme has an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. The visitors therefore require further documentation which confirms the staff and student numbers for this programme and how this is appropriate to support the effective delivery of the programme.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence to state the confirmed staff numbers for the programme and their individual responsibilities.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to page seven of the supporting evidence documents which states "...currently has an advertisement in press to appoint a fifth specialist lecturer to the team. It is envisaged that we will need to appoint another member of staff to the teaching team as outlined in the new course proposal form, as student numbers increase." However the visitors were not provided with any confirmation for the recruitment of the aforementioned additional staff members and were therefore unable to comment on their skills, knowledge and expertise appropriate to the delivery of this programme.

In addition to this the visitors were provided with the programmes Course and Unit Information Booklet which highlights the content for each unit alongside the individual unit co-ordinators. However, the visitors noted that not all units were currently assigned a unit co-ordinator. Specifically 'Post Anaesthetic Care' and 'Medicines Management and Pharmacology' stated the unit co-ordinator as "tbc".

The visitors note that without confirmation of all staff members for the programme and their unit responsibilities they are unable to make a judgment on whether subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. The visitors therefore require further evidence which states the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge for all staff members to the programme and clarification of their unit responsibilities.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit programme documentation to ensure consistent and accurate references to statutory regulation and the HCPC.

**Reason:** In a review of the programme documentation the visitors noted a number of inaccuracies. For example page 1 of the course handbook states "This course will enable you to register with the Health and Care Professions Council as a Operating Department Practitioner". This is incorrect as all students who complete an approved programme will be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC, subject to approval. In addition to this, the visitors noted several references to our previous name, Health Professions Council (HPC). For example Page 3 of the Year 1 Skills Register States "...the regulatory body, Health Professions Council (HPC)."

The visitors consider this information could be misleading to students on the programme and therefore require the education provider to revisit programme documentation to ensure consistency and accuracy in line with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

### **3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide confirmation of the proposed student numbers for the programme in line with the appropriate resources to support student learning.

**Reason:** The visitors noted page 12 of the supporting evidence document states “The projected student numbers are dependent on commissioning activity. We have confirmation that there are 27 places agreed for the September 2015 intake and we project that there will be a subsequent intakes following approval of this course.” However, page 12 of the same document states “For the financial year 2015-16 HE EoE have committed to support 23 places”. In addition to this, in a meeting with the senior team, it was stated that in addition to the aforementioned commissioned places, students could also apply to the programme on a self-funded basis, subject to placement availability. The senior team were not able to confirm a maximum student intake for the programme. The visitors were therefore unable to clearly identify how many students could be on the programme at any one time. The visitors note that without clarification on student numbers they are unable to confirm if there are adequate resources to support student learning in all settings. The visitors therefore require further information to clarify the maximum student intake for the programme and how this will be appropriately supported with resources to support student learning.

### **3.10 The learning resources, including IT facilities, must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide confirmation of the proposed student numbers for the programme in line with available learning resources.

**Reason:** The visitors noted page 12 of the supporting evidence documents states “The projected student numbers are dependent on commissioning activity. We have confirmation that there are 27 places agreed for the September 2015 intake and we project that there will be a subsequent intakes following approval of this course.” However, page 12 of the same document states “For the financial year 2015-16 HE EoE have committed to support 23 places”. In addition to this, in a meeting with the senior team, it was stated that in addition to the aforementioned commissioned places, students could also apply to the programme on a self-funded basis, subject to placement availability. The senior team were not able to confirm a maximum student intake for the programme. The visitors were therefore unable to clearly identify how many students could be on the programme at any one time. The visitors note that without clarification on student numbers they are unable to confirm if there are adequate learning resources that will be readily available to students and staff. The visitors therefore require further information to clarify the maximum student intake for the programme and how this will be appropriately supported with learning resources.

### **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 clarify the minimum number of attendance hours required for a student to successfully complete the programme.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation the visitors were unable to locate any information which stated the minimum number of total hours students would need to attend in order to successfully graduate from the programme. The senior and programme teams were also unable to clarify this. The visitors noted that without a clear minimum total hours attendance requirement they could not be certain that students would attend enough hours on the programme to enable them to meet the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners. The visitors therefore require clarification on the minimum number of attendance hours required of students on the programme to successfully graduate. In this way the visitors can ensure that those who successfully complete the programme are able to practice safely and effectively.

#### **5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the year 3 skills register in relation to practice placements.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the skills registers which are used to measure and monitor student progression and performance in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and whilst on placement. However the visitors were only able to locate the skills registers for years one and two of the programme. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that the year three skills register was not yet complete and this is why visitors were unable to review it. The visitors note that without seeing the seeing this specific document they are unable to identify which skills are taught and assessed on the year three placement. The visitors therefore require documentation to evidence the year three skills register to ensure that learning teaching and supervision encourages safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct in the placement environment.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the year 3 skills register in relation to the assessment of the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs).

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the skills registers which are used to measure and monitor student progression and performance in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and whilst on placement. However the visitors were only able to locate the skills registers for years one and two of the programme. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that the year three skills register was not yet complete and this is why visitors were unable to review it. The visitors note that without seeing the seeing this specific document they are unable to identify which SOPs are assessed in the year three OSCEs and placements. The visitors therefore require documentation to evidence the year three skills register. In this way the visitors can determine if the assessment design in both OSCEs and the placement setting is appropriate to ensure that students who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the year 3 skills register in relation to the assessment of professional aspects of practice.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the skills registers which are used to measure and monitor student progression and performance in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and whilst on placement. However the visitors were only able to locate the skills registers for years one and two of the programme. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that the year three skills register was not yet complete and this is why visitors were unable to review it. The visitors note that without seeing this specific document they are unable to identify how professional aspects of practice are assessed in the year three OSCEs and placements. The visitors therefore require documentation to evidence the year three skills register to ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to the assessments procedures in both OSCEs and the placement setting.

### **6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the year 3 skills register in relation to the assessment of learning outcomes.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the skills registers which are used to measure and monitor student progression and performance in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and whilst on placement. However the visitors were only able to locate the skills registers for years one and two of the programme. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that the year three skills register was not yet complete and this is why visitors were unable to review it. The visitors note that without seeing this specific document they are unable to identify which skills and learning outcomes are assessed in the year three OSCEs and placements. The visitors therefore require documentation to evidence the year three skills register. In this way the visitors can determine if the assessment methods in both OSCEs and the placement setting is appropriate to measure the learning outcomes.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the year 3 skills register in relation to students' fitness to practice.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the skills registers which are used to measure and monitor student progression and performance in Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and whilst on placement. However the visitors were only able to locate the skills registers for years one and two of the programme. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that the year three skills register was not yet complete and this is why visitors were unable to review it. The visitors note that without seeing this specific document they are unable to identify where student performance is measured to ensure fitness to practice in the year three OSCEs and placements. Furthermore, without evidence of a document which is to be consistently applied for all students, the visitors are unable to see how the assessments will remain objective. The visitors therefore require documentation to evidence the year

three skills register to ensure that the measurement of student performance is objective and ensures fitness to practise in both OSCEs and the placement setting.

### **6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the regulations and restrictions around student resits on the programme.

**Reason:** To evidence this standard, the visitors were directed the university of Bedfordshire's Academic Regulations: October 2014 which states "Students who have a non-submission at level 4 resulting in grade 0/G for one or more of the elements of assessment will be permitted an attempt at a referral of an assignment or resit of an examination. For non-submission at level 5 or level 6, students will only be permitted a referral or resit attempt where the Board of Examiners confirms satisfactory engagement with the unit." Section 5a.19. The visitors were satisfied that this statement showed in which circumstances students would be able to resit, however, they could not find any evidence on restrictions to the number of times a student could resit a module. In a meeting with the programme team it was stated that students are allowed a maximum of two attempts at a resit under any circumstances. However, they were unable to direct the visitors to this information within the programme documentation. Therefore the visitors were unable to see how students on the programme will be made aware of the restrictions to the number of resits available. Furthermore, without a clear statement in the assessment regulations the visitors cannot be certain that this policy will be applied consistently throughout the lifetime of the programme. The visitors therefore require further documentation show where it is stated that students are restricted to a maximum of two resits, and, how this is communicated to students on the programme.

Kathleen Taylor  
Joanne Thomas  
Julie Weir