

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Radiographer
Date of visit	11-12 February 2009

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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 'Radiographer' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 20 May 2009. At the Committee meeting on 20 May 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. 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 to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme resources standards, curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme 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	Shaaron Pratt (Radiographer) Martin Benwell (Radiographer)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
HPC observer	Brendon Edmonds
Proposed student numbers	70 (split between Lancaster and Carlisle)
Initial approval	January 1992
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Alan Smith (University of Cumbria)
Secretary	Caron Jackson (University of Cumbria)
Members of the joint panel	Ashley Tiffen (Internal Panel Member) Amanda West (Internal Panel Member) Julie Woodley (External Panel Member, University of the West of England) Caroline Adams (Society of Radiographers) Jennifer Edie (Society of Radiographers)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stage 1 validation documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Critical review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports prior to the visit as the education provider did not submit it. However, they did table these at the visit itself.

During the visit the HPC saw the following groups or facilities:

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

Recommended outcome

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

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

The visitors agreed that 58 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 SETs.

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

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme. Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

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 revisit all the programme documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, HPC 'approves' educational programmes. We do not 'accredit' or 'validate' programmes. In the submitted documentation, there were instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to the registered status of individuals such as "state registered". It should also be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. The visitors considered the terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation (including website information) to be thoroughly reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide assurance of how effective onsite clinical/practice education will be delivered in this programme and evidence that the education provider is committed to providing enough resources to deliver the programme.

Reason: At the visit there was an indication that there were planned changes to the way that clinical learning and teaching is carried out onsite in the programme. In discussions it was apparent that the development of the clinical skills facilities at both sites would form an essential resource for the programme. To ensure that this standard is being met the visitors require confirmation and further detail of the extent and nature of the developments. In particular, the visitors require evidence of the facilities required to deliver the programme, plans to implement the development of the clinical skills labs at both Lancaster and Carlisle, and confirmation of the sustainability of the facilities. The education provider must also provide clarification of how the site at Carlisle in its current form will deliver the programme until the clinical skills lab resource is completed at this site.

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 provide assurance of how the onsite resources will support the required learning and teaching in this programme.

Reason: At the visit there was an indication that there were planned changes to the way that clinical/practical learning and teaching is carried out onsite in the programme. In discussions it was apparent that the development of the clinical skills facilities at both sites would form an essential resource for the programme. To ensure that this standard is being met the visitors require confirmation and further detail of the extent and nature of the developments. In particular, the visitors require evidence of the facilities required to deliver the programme, plans to implement the development of the clinical skills labs at both Lancaster and Carlisle, and confirmation of the sustainability of the facilities. The education provider must also provide clarification of how the site at Carlisle in its current form will deliver the programme until the clinical skills lab resource is completed at this site.

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 revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards for the programme. The visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the documentation to ensure that this standard is being met.

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 revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners appointed to the programme must be HPC registered unless alternate arrangements have been agreed with the HPC.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the external examiner recruitment policy for the programme. The visitors were happy with the current external examiner arrangements for the programme but need to see evidence that HPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of this requirement.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the programme documentation to clearly articulate the guidelines to students around consent for participation in the programme.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding student participation in practical sessions could be confusing to the students. They recommend that the programme team review the information provided within the programme documentation to ensure that the guidance is consistent.

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.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the module descriptors to articulate which modules in the programme have mandatory components.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding mandatory components could be enhanced further by including this detail in the relevant module descriptors. The visitors felt that this would further ensure that students are clear where attendance is required within the programme.

6.7.2 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for awards which do not provide eligibility for inclusion onto the Register not to contain any reference to an HPC protected title in their title.

Recommendation: The visitors wish to recommend that the programme team revisits the programme documentation to clearly articulate that exit awards do not provide eligibility to apply for registration.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation the visitors felt that the information regarding exit awards could be confusing. The visitors recommend that it is made explicit within all documents that the exit award BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Imaging Theory does not provide eligibility to apply for registration in order to prevent any confusion.

Shaaron Pratt
Martin Benwell