

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Cumbria
Programme name	FdSc Paramedic Practice
Mode of delivery	Full Time Part Time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	22–23 January 2013

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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. The HCPC is a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HCPC currently regulates 16 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 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 March 2013. At the Committee meeting on 27 March 2013, 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 of HCPC visitors and profession	Gwyn Thomas (Paramedic) Vincent Clarke (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Abdur Razzaq
HCPC observer	Vineeta Patel
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort, once per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	May2013
Chair	Rob Charters (University of Cumbria)
Secretary	Suzanne Parkes (University of Cumbria)
Members of the joint panel	Susan Shaw (Internal Panel Member) Kären Mills (Internal Panel Member) Lisa Curatolo (External Panel Member) Matthew Cooper (External Panel Member)

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 from the last two years prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new. However, the visitors did review external examiners' reports from the last two years for Graduate Diploma Advance Paramedic Practitioner programme.

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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from Cert HE Pre-Hospital and Emergency Care programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

The HCPC did not see specialist teaching accommodation facilities as this programme will be delivered off site but visitors reviewed documentary evidence provided by the education provider and were satisfied with the arrangements.

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 39 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 18 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 observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval.

Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation including admission procedures to clearly state that this programme is only open to the HM Armed Forces.

Reason: During the visit it was clearly articulated that HM Armed Forces would be the sole provider of potential students for this programme and that this programme is not open to anyone else. However the documentation provided did not reflect this information. Therefore the visitors require the programme team to revisit programme documentation especially admission materials to clearly demonstrate that students will only be recruited from the HM Armed Forces.

2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of the criminal convictions checks applied through the admissions procedures and clearly articulate that criminal convictions checks are carried out by the HM Armed Forces.

Reason: During meetings with the senior team and the programme team it was noted that criminal convictions checks are carried out by the HM Armed Forces before potential students are recruited on the programme. The visitors noted that the education provider will not carry out the checks. The visitors require this information to be clearly stated in the programme documentation and admission procedures for applicants to the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the programme fits into the education providers' business plan and what commitment is being made with the HM Armed Forces to ensure that the programme is secure.

Reason: During meetings at the visit, the senior team and the HM Armed Forces made it clear that the programme has a secure place in the education provider's business plan. Visitors were provided with a draft copy of agreement between the education provider and the Army Medical Directorate Training (AMDT) articulating the arrangements made to deliver an existing programme. In discussion with the senior team it was clarified that similar arrangements were being agreed with the HM Armed Forces for this programme too. The visitors however have not seen evidence of the agreement for this new programme. In order to determine this standard is met visitors require documentary evidence of these arrangements to see how the programme fits into the education providers' business plan and what commitment is being made with the HM Armed Forces to ensure that the programme is secure.

3.4 There must be a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme who must be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to indicate the newly appointed programme leader will be well supported during the early stages of his appointment and demonstrate how these methods of support given.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were unable to determine who would have overall professional responsibility for the programme. It was clarified at the visit that a new programme leader had been officially appointed to the role, who was from the relevant part of the Register. The visitors noted that the new programme leader has limited experience in similar roles, and may therefore need to be supported by the programme team. In order to ensure the effective delivery of the programme the visitors require evidence of the methods of support that will be given to this newly appointed programme leader.

3.11 There must be adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that demonstrates mechanisms in place to allow students in practice placement to access facilities that support their welfare and wellbeing.

Reason: From the documentation received, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensured the facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students who are in practice placement settings are accessible. In the programme team meeting, the visitors were made aware that policies and procedures were in place for these students. The visitors considered this to be important information for students and so these policies and procedures should be clearly articulated in the programme documentation. The visitors therefore require further evidence to show procedures are in place for students to access facilities that support their welfare and wellbeing whilst they are in practice placement settings.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence to show formal protocols to obtain informed consent for when students participate as service users and for managing situations when students decline from participating as service users, in practical and clinical teaching.

Reason: The visitors noted through discussions with the students and the programme team that verbal consent had been sought for participation as a service user in practical simulation and role play activities. But there were no formal protocols for obtaining informed consent from students before they participated as a service user in practical and clinical teaching. Therefore visitors were concerned that without consent protocols in place it would be hard to mitigate any risk involved in trainees participating as service users. The visitors could not determine how students were informed about participating within the programme, how records were maintained to indicate consent had been

obtained or how situations where students declined from participation were managed with alternative learning arrangements so there would be no impact on their learning. The visitors therefore require the programme team to provide evidence of formal protocols for obtaining informed consent from students (such as a consent form to be signed prior to commencing the programme or annually) and for managing situations where students decline from participating in practical and clinical teaching.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The programme team must provide further clarification of how the scheme of placements, including the number, duration and range of placements, will work in practice and identify which learning outcomes will be achieved in each placement.

Reason: From discussions at the visit and from the programme documentation the visitors noted that the programme's scheme of placements is designed to provide students with sufficient placement experience to meet relevant learning outcomes. However the visitors could not determine how the practice placements arrangements will work. A detailed breakdown of each placement that students are required to complete is not clearly articulated in the programme documentation and it is also unclear as to which of the learning outcomes will be achieved in each placement. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the scheme of placements will work in practice to be sure that the duration and range of practice placements are appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of identified learning outcomes.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and outline the processes in place to ensure practice placements are safe and supportive.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure all practice placements provide a safe and supportive environment for student learning. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the auditing process in place to ensure that the education provider has responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements and is able to ensure practice placements provide safe and supportive environments.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the programme documentation and outline the processes in place, to demonstrate evidence of the audit tool and supporting mechanisms used to approve and monitor all placements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure the quality of all practice placements. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence that demonstrates the programme has a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure equality and diversity policies are in place within practice placements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that practice placements have equality and diversity policies in place. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence that demonstrates how the programme ensures equality and diversity policies are in place within practice placements.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement settings.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that all placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of the auditing processes to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure that all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of the auditing processes to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must ensure practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with

the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements including whether the practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that all practice placement educators have undertaken the required training activities. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of the auditing processes to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken required training activities.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure placement educators are appropriately registered or how other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the HM Armed Forces secure the practice placements with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and will have an agreement in place with the education provider to deliver the programme. There was no evidence in place to show an agreement between the education provider and the practice placement provider. It was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not find evidence of any formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of practice placements before they are used. From discussions with the programme team and practice placement providers the visitors noted that a number of informal mechanisms are used to check and monitor the quality of practice placements. The visitors highlighted that formal arrangements should be in place so that the education provider is able to ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered or agree other arrangements with the students and practice placement provider. The visitors require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure placement educators are appropriately registered or how other arrangements are agreed.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the plans in place for formal collaboration between practice placement educators and the education provider.

Reason: During the meeting with the programme team it was made clear that the HM Armed Forces will secure placements but overall responsibility for the placements lies with the education provider. The visitors noted that education provider has no formal documented process for such agreement in place. Therefore the visitors require further

evidence to articulate clearly that education provider has the overall responsibility of placement and show how this formal collaboration will continue in the future. In this way the visitors can be sure that there is regular and effective collaboration between the practice placement providers and the programme team and that this standard continues to be met.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- the learning outcomes to be achieved;
- the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;
- expectations of professional conduct;
- the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and
- communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence which shows how they ensure students, practice placement providers and educators are fully prepared for each placement.

Reason: The documentation received included a practice placement handbook. However, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensured students, practice placement providers and educators are fully prepared for each individual placement particularly including the students' scope of practice. Within the programme team meeting, the visitors were made aware that students will be fully prepared for placements by undergoing a practice placement briefing. The visitors have not seen a copy of the student briefing so are unable to determine its appropriateness. The visitors therefore require information about the mechanisms in place which demonstrates how the education provider ensures students are fully prepared for placement and practice educators are made aware of students' scope of practice for each placement.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how students' placements assessments criteria, including clinical skills profiles and students' competencies are applied consistently, objectively and ensure fitness to practice.

Reason: From the documentation received, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensured students will be assessed while they are at placements and how their clinical skills profiles will be assessed. During the programme team meeting, the visitors were told the education provider has assessment criteria for assessing students while on placement. The visitors have not seen the assessment criteria and so were unable to determine how students will be assessed and how the education provider will ensure students could achieve competencies. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how students' placements assessments criteria, including clinical skills profiles and students' competencies are applied consistently, objectively and ensure fitness to practice.

6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately

experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the regulations in place to ensure that at least one external examiner is on the HCPC Register and is an experienced paramedic unless alternative arrangements have been agreed.

Reason: Through discussions with the programme team it was highlighted that the education provider will appoint an external examiner who will be on the paramedic part of the Register. However, through their review of the programme documentation the visitors could not determine if the proposed external examiner is from the relevant part of the Register and the external examiner has the appropriate experience to be an external examiner for this programme unless alternate arrangements have been agreed. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the criteria the education provider recruits external examiners against and what they consider appropriate experience. In this way the visitors can determine how the regulations specify the requirements for the appointment of an external examiner who has appropriate experience and is on the relevant part of the Register.

Gwyn Thomas
Vincent Clarke