hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Portsmouth
Programme name	Fd Sc Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	27 -28 January 2009

Contents

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 (Committee) on 29 July 2009. At the Committee meeting on 29 July 2009, 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.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2009-08-18	d	EDU	RPT	Fd Sc Paramedic Science Full time - Post Panel	Draft	Public
					DD: None	RD: None

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	Vincent Clarke (Paramedic) Robert Dobson (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mandy Hargood
Proposed student numbers	15
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2009
Chair	Steven Arkle (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Karen Yates (University of Portsmouth)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☐	☒	☐

The HPC did not review external examiner reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new. However the visitors were able to review external examiner reports for the part time route.

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

The HPC met with students from the part time Fd Sc Paramedic Science programme, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

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

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

The visitors agreed that 51 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 12 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 the 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

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 update the programme documentation to ensure that the admissions procedures do not contain any reference to state registration or reference to the HPC as a professional body.

Reason: When the visitors reviewed the documentation prior to the visit, clear reference to state registration and the HPC as a professional body were found in the documentation relating to the application and admission procedures for the programme. State registration is no longer used as a term by the HPC and the HPC is a regulatory body and not a professional body and therefore such references were misleading. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation with these references removed.

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 update the admissions procedures documentation to clearly identify where if any, driver training takes place within the programme.

Reason: In reading the documentation it was noted that in the information provided to applicants there was information on driving that was unclear. The visitors felt that the current information was misleading and did not give the applicant sufficient information to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme.

In the meeting with the programme team the ambulance trust representative proposed that the information on driving could be removed. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation to reflect this proposed change to the admissions procedures.

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 update the programme documentation given to applicants to clearly articulate what driving requirements may be expected for future employment within an NHS ambulance trust.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, the visitors noted that information about the driving requirements which an applicant could expect within NHS employment were included in the admissions documentation. From the programme team meeting the visitors sought clarification regarding this as they felt that it was not made clear to applicants what the driving requirements may be for their future employment within NHS ambulance trusts. It was also not clear that it was not a requirement for admission to the programme for an applicant to have the required driving skills for any potential future employment. The visitors were informed that it was made clear that the relevant ambulance trusts involved with the programme would provide this information to an applicant. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly articulates the information given to applicants regarding the current driving requirements of an NHS ambulance trust employed paramedic.

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 documentation which clearly articulates to applicants that practice placements are undertaken in varied locations including both urban and rural settings, and the organisation and cost of travel to placement locations is the responsibility of the student.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent that placements may be in rural areas as well as more urban areas. This was not evident in the documentation provided for the visit. The visitors would like to see revised documentation that clearly informs applicants that placements may be in rural areas and that the provision and costs of transportation to all placements would be the responsibility of the student.

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 update the programme documentation to clearly articulate to applicants that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

Reason: On reading the documentation the visitors could not find reference to manual handling. During the meeting with the programme team it was discussed that applicants were informed of the requirement for manual handling and the strenuous nature of the profession. To ensure that applicants receive full and clear information prior to taking up a place on a programme, the visitors would like to receive revised documentation provided to applicants that clearly identifies that manual handling is an integral part of the programme.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly articulates the revised service level agreements for the full time mode of the programme and for each ambulance trust.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were provided with draft service level agreements by the programme team. During the meeting with the programme team the visitors were informed that the service level agreements were in the process of being revised to reflect the full time programme and to incorporate the changes for the revised part time programme. The visitors would like to receive revised documentation to include the revised service level agreements for both modes of study for the programme and for each ambulance trust.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that demonstrates how the delivery of the full time programme will take place.

Reason: In the documentation provided for the visit the template for how the programme would be delivered was not clear and only related to the full time mode of study. The programme team in discussion with the visitors talked through how the programme would be delivered. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that shows how both modes of study would be delivered.

3.4   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 documentation that clearly articulates how paramedic teaching hours on the programme are protected.

Reason: In the meeting with the programme team it was noted that the ambulance trusts provide paramedic tutors for integral sessions on a secondment basis. As there are no registered paramedics on the full time university staff, the visitors would like to see documentation to ensure that this secondment arrangement continues regardless of any operational or other pressures placed upon the ambulance trusts.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on

practice placements effectively supported the required learning activities. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation which demonstrates how the resources to support student learning are used effectively whilst on practice placements.

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 provide documentation which clearly identifies where attendance is mandatory.

Reason: On reading the documentation it appeared that only attendance at placements was mandatory. However during discussions with the programme team it was clear that there was a policy for attendance and that attendance was monitored by the taking of registers. Therefore the visitors would like to receive revised documentation that clearly details the attendance policy for the programme.

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 revised documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were unable to determine from the incomplete audit documentation provided that the resources the students accessed whilst on practice placements were adequate to support the required learning activities of the programme. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that demonstrates how the resources provided off site, adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation to demonstrate how it will ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at all practice placements.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate clearly the staffing at placements, nor did they detail the experience of staff at placements. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that there are sufficiently qualified and appropriate staff at all of the placement sites.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation which demonstrates how it will ensure that the practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate that the placement settings were safe environments. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that practice placement settings provide a safe environment.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide revised documentation which demonstrates how it will ensure that the practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

Reason: The audits received by the visitors at the visit did not indicate that the placement settings were providing safe and effective practice. During discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that the audits were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive completed documentation that clearly articulates that practice placement settings provide safe and effective practice.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide clearly articulated documentation that demonstrates that the number, duration and range of placements are appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitors did not include information regarding placements in different areas of hospitals. In the meeting with the students, it was clear that placements in hospitals were undertaken and the students knew where they had to go and the learning outcomes to be achieved. This was confirmed in the meeting with the programme team. The programme team said that the documentation only included the ambulance placements at the moment as the placement structure was being reviewed in the light of adding the full time mode of study. Therefore the visitors would like to receive documentation that clearly details the number, duration and range of placements that are to be undertaken as part of the programme and how these are appropriate to the learning outcomes to be achieved.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide documentation that clearly
articulates a thorough and effective system of how practice placements are
approved and monitored.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, it was not clear if the
practice placement staff were appropriately qualified and experienced; if the
resources were in place to support student learning whilst on placement; or if the
placements provided a safe environment or safe and effective practice. During
discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed that the audits
were being updated. Therefore the visitors would like to receive updated
documentation that clearly articulates a thorough and effective system of how
practice placements are approved and monitored.

**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 provide clearly articulated
documentation for students and practice placement educators that demonstrates
the learning outcomes to be achieved whilst on placement.

Reason: The documentation received by the visitors did not include information
regarding placements in different areas of hospitals. In the meeting with the
students, the students clearly had placements in hospitals and knew where they
had to go and the learning outcomes to be achieved. This was confirmed in the
meetings with the programme team and the practice placement educators. The
programme team said that the documentation only included the ambulance
placements at the moment as the placement structure was being reviewed in the
light of adding the full time mode of study. Therefore the visitors would like to
receive documentation that clearly demonstrates the learning outcomes to be
achieved whilst on placement within various hospital areas.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider amend the practice assessment document to include the assessment of endotracheal intubation.

Reason: The documentation provided to visitors at the visit relating to the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), demonstrated that endotracheal intubation was assessed only as part of the Advanced Life Support OSCE, having been removed from the airway management OSCE of previous years.

In discussion with the NHS ambulance trust representatives it was clear that endotracheal intubation was a skill that the trusts would expect an employed paramedic to undertake on the road and, as such, competency in this skill would be expected of a graduated from a paramedic Foundation Degree.

It is recommended that this skill be written into the practice assessment document to give students the opportunity to undertake the skill in the operating theatres phase of their hospital placement in a safe, controlled environment where the practice can be developed prior to undertaking the intervention in the pre-hospital environment.

Vincent Clarke
Robert Dobson