

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Portsmouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science
Mode of delivery	Full time and part time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	13-14 December 2011

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Biomedical scientist' 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 10 May 2012. At the Committee meeting on 10 May 2012 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 management and resources, curriculum, and assessment. 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 as the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered a BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programme. 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 all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. 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 professional body, outlines their decision on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	David Houlston (Biomedical scientist) Peter Ruddy (Biomedical scientist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	20
First approved intake	October 2008
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2012
Chair	Darren Mernagh (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Nicola Noyce (University of Portsmouth)
Members of the joint panel	Alan Wainwright (Institute of Biomedical Scientists) Christine Murphy (Institute of Biomedical Scientists) David Eccleston (Institute of Biomedical Scientists)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

The visitors agreed that 55 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 2 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 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 ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the changes made to the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes affect how students can meet the standards of proficiency for Biomedical scientists.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit and in discussion with the programme team the visitors noted that changes had been made to how the programmes are delivered. These changes have been made as the result of a re-alignment of the curriculum to better meet new education provider requirement for modules to be 20 credits where possible. These changes have also been influenced by the commencement of the BSc (Hons) Healthcare science programme with which these programmes share some teaching. However, the visitors could not determine how these changes had affected the learning outcomes of these programmes and subsequently how students are able to meet the relevant standards of proficiency. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how these changes have affected where teaching is delivered within the programmes and how students can still meet all of the learning outcomes. In this way the visitors can be sure that students who successfully complete the programmes can meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register and that this standard continues to be met.

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 further evidence of how any changes to BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes' assessment strategy affects how students who successfully complete the programmes meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, and in discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that changes had been made to how the programmes are delivered. These changes have been made as the result of a re-alignment of the curriculum to better meet new education provider requirement for modules to be 20 credits where possible. These changes have also been influenced by the commencement of the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programme with which these programmes share some teaching. However, the visitors could not determine how these changes had affected the assessment strategy of these programmes. In particular the visitors could not determine what impact these changes had had on how the programme team ensures that successful students meet the relevant standards of proficiency. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how these changes have affected where assessment is undertaken and how successful completion of this assessment ensures that students meet all of the learning outcomes. In this way the visitors can be sure that students who successfully complete the programmes meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register and that this standard continues to be met.

Peter Ruddy
David Houliston