

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Worcester
Programme name	FdSc Paramedic Science (Tech to Para)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	9 – 10 June 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 '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 24 September 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 an HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their endorsement of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Bob Fellows (Paramedic) Paul Blakeman (Chiropracist / podiatrist) Ian Hughes (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	100 per cohort, 3 cohorts per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2015
Chair	Robert Herbert (University of Worcester)
Secretary	Teresa Nahajski (University of Worcester)

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 examiner's 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 'FdSc Paramedic Science Direct Entry' 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 41 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 17 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 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 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

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 is required to provide further evidence of the information made available to potential applicants.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes. 'Direct entry' or via the 'Tech to Para' route. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the 'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS, before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation, the visitors were not given any information that would be provided to potential applicant taking an offer of a place via the 'Tech to Para' route. In addition, the visitors were unsure from the discussions at what point the admission procedures will begin as applicants will complete one year's training with WMAS and then using Accreditation of Prior Experiential learning (APEL) will join the one year programme delivered by the education provider. The visitors, therefore, require documentation detailing both the admissions procedures and the underpinning course programme for the FdSc Paramedic Science (Tech to Para). In this way, both the education provider and the applicant can have the necessary information to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme. This condition is linked to other standards in SET 2.

2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding any language requirements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes, 'Direct entry' or 'Tech to Para'. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the 'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS, before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation the visitors were unable to find any information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding any language requirements. The visitors were provided with additional information around admission procedures during the visit, but due to time constraints, they were unable to review these. As such, the visitors were unclear what the admission procedures for this programme is and how these procedures provide the

education provider with the information they require as part of the process to offer an applicant a place on the programme. Therefore the education provider must provide further evidence regarding the admissions procedure for this programme and how the education provider ensures that successful applicants meet the relevant requirements, including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure to detail how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes, 'Direct entry' or 'Tech to Para'. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the 'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS, before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation the visitors were unable to find any information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding health requirements. The visitors were provided with additional information around admission procedures during the visit, but due to time constraints, they were unable to review these. As such, the visitors could not determine how the procedures of WMAS will work with those of the education provider, and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with by the education provider to ensure that they are dealt with consistently to determine if any issue arising would prevent an applicant from completing the programme. In particular the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a student onto this programme if any issue does arise as the information provided at the visit articulated that applicants would have already employed by WMAS. Therefore the visitors require further information about the DBS checks that are applied at the point of admission for this programme. In particular the visitors require further evidence of how WMAS's processes would work with the education provider's process, and clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme if an issue arises.

2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure to detail how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's health requirements.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes, 'Direct entry' or 'Tech to Para'. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the

'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS, before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation the visitors were unable to find any information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding health requirements. The visitors were provided with additional information around admission procedures during the visit, but due to time constraints, they were unable to review these. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider's own procedures to apply health checks, will work with WMAS. Nor could the visitors determine how the education provider will identify what adjustments could or could not reasonably be made if health conditions were disclosed, and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with consistently, since applicants would have already been accepted onto the training employment programme delivered by WMAS. In particular the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a student onto the programme if adjustments would be required. Therefore the visitors require further information about how the health declarations that are applied at the point of admission to this programme are used by the education provider to determine if a student can take up a place on this programme. In particular the visitors require clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme if adjustments are required, at the point of entry onto this programme.

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes, 'Direct entry' or 'Tech to Para'. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the 'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS, before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation the visitors were unable to find any information about the admissions procedure or the underpinning "technician" course for this programme and how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards. The visitors were provided with additional information around admission procedures during the visit, but due to time constraints, they were unable to review these. As such the visitors, were unsure how the education provider, working with the employer, could apply selection and entry criteria for the programme, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards. Therefore the education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it, as the education provider, ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements, including appropriate academic and / or professional entry standards.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the admissions procedure for this programme applies selection and entry criteria including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted that potential applicants are able to enter this programme via two routes, 'Direct entry' or 'Tech to Para'. Prior to the visit, the visitors understood that the 'Tech to Para' route is delivered in partnership by the University of Worcester, who act as the education provider and the West Midlands Ambulance Services (WMAS) acting as the 'employer'. The visitors heard during discussions with the programme team that applicants entering via the 'Tech to Para' route will be expected to be working for WMAS as technicians, and to have completed a pre – programme training delivered by the WMAS (stated as equivalent to 120 points at level 4), before undergoing the education provider admission processes. In assessing the documentation the visitors were not presented with WMAS selection criteria for employment with the trust. As such, the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that appropriate accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms will be applied as part of the entry criteria. From the discussions at the visit, it was clear that WMAS will manage the academic and professional selection and entry criteria for employment and therefore this would act as the entry criteria for the programme. From the discussions, the visitors could not determine how Worcester, as the education provider, ensures that appropriate accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms are being applied and how any decisions to offer a place on the programme would be managed based on these mechanisms. The visitors did not see any overarching policies, systems and procedures for managing WMAS approach to academic and professional selection and entry criteria. As such, the visitors were unsure how the education provider, working with the employer, could apply selection and entry criteria for the programme, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms. Therefore the education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it, as the education provider, ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements, through the use of appropriate accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure for this programme and how it ensures that it applies selection and entry criteria including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) and other inclusion mechanisms.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the documentation submitted indicated that the education provider would be involved in the training delivered in students' first year of employment at WMAS and that subsequently the students would be admitted to the education provider as students in accordance with Worcester's AP(E)L policy to study the second year of the programme. As such the visitors were clear that the in-work-training that a student would undergo in their first year of employment would attract the equivalent of 120 academic credits at level 4 of an undergraduate degree and that are required by

students who wish to start the second year at level 5. However, during the course of the visit, the visitors learnt that the education provider would not have any role in delivering the training to potential students in the first year of employment at WMAS and instead would be responsible for a one year programme of study at level 5 for any of these potential students who successfully completed their year of training at WMAS. As such the programme subject to this approval would only be the one year programme at the education provider and will not include the previous year's training at the employer

During discussions with the programme team, the visitor learnt that all applicants would be assessed by completing 175 hours at practice and an online care and compassion course. However, the visitors were not provided with any information on the content of the online course or what the 170 hour should consist of. As such, the visitors were unable to see how the AP(E)L process would be implemented to ensure that applicants from WMAS would have undertaken training equivalent to that of a full year of undergraduate study. In particular the visitors could not identify how the education provider could ensure that anyone admitted to the programme through this process would have met the required learning outcomes associated with the training programme at WMAS. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the AP(E)L process that will be implemented by the education provider. This evidence should demonstrate how Worcester, as the education provider, will ensure that prospective students will be consistently judged to determine how they have met the required learning outcomes for successful application to this programme, equivalent to those of a first year undergraduate degree.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit information that includes details of the module leaders for this programme.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included programme team staff CV's and descriptions of the modules. The documentation did not have accurate details of who would be the module leaders. During discussion at the visit it was highlighted recruitment for staff to the programme was on-going and the final arrangements as to the module leaders and module contributors were on-going. In order to be assured there is enough profession specific input to the programme to ensure subject areas will be taught by staff with the relevant specialist expertise and knowledge, the visitors require further evidence. The visitors therefore require details of the module leaders and where contributions made from external or associate tutors will be in order to determine how this standard can be met by the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider contained several instances of incorrect terminology. For example, FD Paramedic Science Tech to Para 201-15 CH, page 13 "be successful in each of the summative assessments in order to achieve registration on HCPC Professional Register". This does not clearly articulate the

fact that completion of approved programmes gives students 'eligibility to apply' for HCPC registration, but students will still need to go through the application process. The visitors also noted, FD Paramedic Science Tech to Para 201-15 MS, page 6 "Health Professions Council (HPC)". This should read as 'Health and Care Professions Council' or HCPC. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation submitted. Incorrect and inconsistent statements have the potential to mislead potential applicants and students. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, and ensure that the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were sign-posted to module FDPH2001 to evidence how service users and carers are involved in the programme. Upon reviewing the evidence, the visitors were unsure how service users and carers are involved in the programme. Discussions with the programme team at the visit indicated that the dedicated service users and carers who contribute to the other health programmes at the education provider will also contribute to this programme in a similar way. However, in discussions with the dedicated service user and carers that are involved in other health programme, it was clear that discussions to get involved in this programme has not begun. The service users and carers spoke about their future involvement with the development of the BSc (Hons) Paramedic programme but it was clear that they were not involved with this programme. The visitors recognised that the involvement of service users and carers is still at the early stages for this programme and that there is an intention to develop a bank of service users and carers to be involved in the programme in the future. However, the visitors were provided with limited information regarding how this group would be developed, and how service users and carers would be involved in the programme in the future. The visitors were therefore unable to determine from the evidence provided that a plan is in place on how service users will be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for service user and carer involvement in this programme.

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 demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document giving information about how students who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs. However, the SOPs mapping made very broad references, rather than specific references to the modules and did not map onto the learning outcomes. In addition, the visitors noted that 14 of the learning outcome were not mapped against a module or indicated where in the curriculum these learning outcomes were being covered. Therefore, the visitors were unclear how each of the module learning outcomes linked to each of the SOPs, to ensure that a student

completing the programme can meet the SOPs for paramedics. From discussions with the programme team the visitors heard that the necessary learning outcomes had been determined but the programme documentation did not reflect this. Therefore, the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to demonstrate that this standard was met. The visitors therefore require further documentation to clearly evidence how the learning outcomes that will ensure that students can meet the relevant SOPs on successful completion of the programme. The visitors require the education provider to submit further evidence, such as revised documentation, to clearly define the link between the learning outcomes associated with all aspects of this programme and how these outcomes will ensure that students completing the programme can meet all of the relevant SOPs for paramedics.

4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Condition: Further evidence to demonstrate how students completing the programme are able to practise safely and effectively.

Reason: From the documentation submitted, the visitors noted that the programme reflected the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge articulated in the College of Paramedic (CoP) 2008 (version 2) curriculum guidance. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that the education provider is currently developing an undergraduate programme in paramedic, as a result there is no future plans to develop the curriculum for this programme and map the programme against the latest curriculum guidance produced by CoP 2015 (version 3 rev 1). From the discussions the visitors were unable to determine how, without the reflection of the most current curriculum guidance, student completing this programme are able to practise safely and effectively. The visitors therefore, require further information determine how the programme team ensure students completing the programme are safe and effective in the absence of the programme not being mapped to the most latest curriculum guidance.

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 in relation to students are in place within practice placements.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included the procedures for approving and monitoring practice placement providers. However, the visitors were not provided with West Midlands policies around equality and diversity. From the information provided the visitors were unable to determine how the education provider ensures that practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place in relation to students. Discussions with the programme team indicated that there is a process in place to ensure practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place, but the visitors were unsure what these processes were and how this process formed part of the auditing and approving of all placements. In order to determine how the programme continues to meet this standard the visitors require the education provider to provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place.

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 further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. For this standard, the education provider referenced the “Mentor registers held by Trust” in their SETs mapping document, but the visitors were unclear how this statement ensured this standard was met. From discussions with the programme team and the practice placement provider, the visitors learnt that the West Midlands Ambulance Trust hold a database of staff. Also, the visitors were told that local and regional work is currently on going to ensure that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff at practice placement setting via the HEI consortium, working group. The visitors acknowledge that this group is still at early development stage. However, it was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for ensuring all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified, experienced and, where required, registered staff.

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 further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. For this standard, the education provider referenced the “Mentor registers held by Trust” in their SETs mapping document, but the visitors were unclear how this statement ensured this standard was met. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that there are two types of mentors available to the education provider. A ‘1 day mentor’ and a ‘5 day mentors’, the visitors were told that the ‘5 day mentors’ known as Clinical team mentor (CTM) were preferably the ones to sign off student passports. The visitors were provided with a list of registered practice educators available to take on students. From the list, the visitors noted that majority of the practice educators were ‘1 day mentors’ as opposed to ‘5 day CTM mentors’ who can sign students off. In discussions with the practice educators, the visitor noted that there was some concerns raised by the CTM that with the increase in student number there might not be enough CTM mentors to sign off student passport. From the information provided, the visitors were unsure with the increase in student’s number, how the education provider will ensure all placement settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff who can sign off student’s competencies.

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

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

Reason: From the initial documentation and information provided regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise students from this programme. In scrutinising evidence, and in discussions with the programme team and the practice placement provider, the visitors learnt that a mentorship programme has been developed by West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (WMAS) in partnership with the education provider. The visitors learnt that all placement educators will be expected to undergo the mentorship programme prior to supervising a student undertaking this programme. The visitors were also aware that there is on offer a variety of training courses for placement educators once they have undertaken this initial mentorship training. However the visitors were informed that the mentorship programme will be delivered locally and as such they were unclear as to how the education provider, University of Worcester, would play a role in this local delivery to ensure that the delivery of this programme would ensure that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience having undergone the programme. The visitors were also made aware that the education provider will not hold a register of practice placement educators and the training that they have undertaken, this will be held instead by the employer, WMAS. The visitors therefore had insufficient evidence to make a judgment about whether this standard is met, and require further information to demonstrate how the education provider will ensure all practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise students from this programme.

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

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the initial documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures practice placement educators undertake appropriate practice placement educator training. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that there are practice educators training options that are offered to practice educators including a general update review and a 5 day mentorship programme. The visitors acknowledged that there are training opportunities and workshops provided by the education provider for practice placement educators but were unable to see how each individual placement educator's training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feeds into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken by the education provider to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for students. The education provider tabled documentation on the second day of the visit with information about practice placement educators, but the visitors were unable to review this documentation due to time constraints. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate the training requirements for placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice placement setting.

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 demonstrate how the assessments of learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document giving information about how the assessment procedures for the programme will ensure that students who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs. However, the SOPs mapping made broad references, rather than specific references to the modules and did not map on to the learning outcomes. In addition, the visitors noted that 14 of the learning outcomes were not mapped against a module or indicated where in the curriculum these learning outcomes were being covered or assessed. Therefore, the visitors were unclear how each of the assessment of modules and the associated learning outcomes were linked to each of the SOPs, to ensure that a student completing the programme has demonstrated that they meet the SOPs for paramedics. From discussions with the programme team the visitors heard that the necessary learning outcomes and associated assessments were in place but were yet to be finalised throughout the documentation. Therefore, the visitors did not have sufficient evidence to demonstrate that this standard was met. The visitors therefore require further documentation to clearly evidence how the assessment of the learning outcomes that will ensure that students meet the relevant SOPs on successful completion of the programme. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence, such as revised documentation, to clearly define the link between the assessment of students associated with all aspects of this programme and how these assessments will ensure that students completing the programme have demonstrated that they have met all of the relevant SOPs for paramedics.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The programme team must revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not lead to registration with the HCPC.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine where in the assessment regulations there was a clear statement regarding aegrotat awards. This standard requires that the programme documentation clearly states that an aegrotat award will not provide eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register to avoid any confusion. The visitors could not determine from the documentation how the programme team ensured that students understood that aegrotat awards would not enable them to be eligible to apply to the Register. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be updated to clearly specify that an aegrotat award would not provide eligibility for admission to the Register. This is to provide clarity for students and to ensure that this standard is met.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should keep the staff numbers within the programme team under review to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From assessing the documentation and the discussions with programme team and senior team, the visitors noted that there is an appropriate number of qualified and experience staff in place to deliver an effective programme. Therefore, the visitors are satisfied this standard is being met. However, the visitors would encourage the programme team to keep the staff numbers within the programme team under review to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme as student numbers increase in the coming years.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the role play consent form so that the information provided is clear and easy to understand.

Reason: The visitors were provided with the role play consent form, which allows students to give their consent to participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. The visitors were therefore satisfied that this standard has been met. However, the visitors suggest that the programme team considers reviewing how they communicate the requirements around signing the consent form and what it entails. This will contribute to a greater understanding from students as to what they are signing for and why.

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.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend the programme team continue to review and monitor the range of placements available for students on this programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussion with the programme team that students had the opportunity to experience a suitable number and range of placements. The visitors were therefore content this standard was met. In the meeting with the students, it was highlighted that not all students had the same opportunity to experience as much variation in their placements between urban and rural areas. The visitors therefore recommended the programme team continues to develop further the variety of placements available to students so that all students experience a wide range of different placement settings.

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