

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Worcester
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	17-18 May 2017

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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 August 2017. At the Committee meeting on 24 August 2017, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the conditions 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 body 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 and role of HCPC visitors	Glyn Harding (Clinical psychologist) Paul Blakeman (Chiropodist / podiatrist) Roseann Connolly (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer	Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah
Proposed student numbers	50 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2017
Chair	Marie Stowell (University of Worcester)
Secretary	Sara Gibbon (University of Worcester)
Members of the joint panel	Kerry Whitehouse (Internal Panel Member) Abbey Ballard (Internal Panel Member) Tom Davidson (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 the external examiner 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 and FdSc Paramedic Science (Tech to Para), programmes 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 50 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining eight 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 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 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 must clarify who will pay for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and how this will be communicated to applicants.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the programme website and the programme specification. The visitors noted that as part of the entry requirements, applicants will only gain admission onto the programme with a satisfactory enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check. The visitors noted that this criminal convictions check was appropriate for the programme, however, from documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not see any information regarding additional costs for applicants, such as the costs associated with the DBS checks. During the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were told that the applicants would be responsible for paying for the DBS checks. The visitors therefore require evidence to demonstrate how the education provider tells applicants about the additional costs associated with DBS checks.

3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate that there is an appropriate programme for continuing staff professional and research development in place.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the staff curriculum vitae. From the documentation, the visitors were unable to determine how the teaching staff maintained their research, teaching and professional development to enable them to deliver an effective programme. In the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were told that the programme team engages in some research and that staff research development had not yet been formalised for the programme. The visitors were therefore, not able to gain a full understanding of the current participation from staff in research and continued professional development. The visitors were in particular unclear about how the programme team will be supported through their staff development to deliver the research element of the BSc programme as they have all previously taught on the FdSc programmes at the education provider. The visitors therefore require further information to evidence how the education provider ensures that staff are involved in professional and research development to show that they will continue to deliver the programme effectively.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the documentation available to students to ensure that it is accurate and supports student learning.

Reason: From a review of the documentation the visitors noted various instances of inaccurate, or mis-referenced information. For instance in the practice assessment handbook, students are directed to look on pages 8 and 9 for the medications list they

are not allowed to administer as student paramedics. However this list is not on pages 8 and 9 it is on pages 15 and 140 of practice assessment document instead. There were also examples of inaccuracies in the documentation submitted. For example in the student handbook it states “Given the professional HCPC requirements of equal weighting between theory and practice, clinical practice is mandatory”. With reference to this example the HCPC does not require equal weighting between theory and practice and instead requires integration of theory and practice. The visitors therefore require that the programme team revises the programme documentation available to students to ensure that this information is accurate to effectively support student learning.

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the resources, in particular the lecturing facilities will effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Reason: As part of the visit the visitors were taken on a facilities tour. The visitors were satisfied that the simulation suites and practical facilities were sufficient for the number of students this programme is proposed for. However, during the meeting with the students the visitors were told that the lecture rooms used for academic teaching was mostly insufficient for the number of students. The students also told the visitors that because of the size of the rooms, there has been instances where the students could not see the presentation on the board so were required to use print outs. To triangulate the answers the visitors asked the programme team about this issue raised by the students. The programme team explained that this was an ongoing problem and had come across it through student feedback. The programme team said they had raised the issue with their senior managers and have been told this is a centralised timetabling issue as the rooms are booked for the exact number of students leaving no spaces. The visitors were told that although in theory the number of seats correlates to the number of students, in practice it means that the students are cramped together. As such, the visitors cannot determine that there are adequate teaching facilities to support student learning and the teaching activities of the programme. The visitors therefore, require evidence to demonstrate that the physical resources in place, especially the lecturing rooms, to support student learning are appropriate to support the learning and teaching activities of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they communicate to students what would happen if they do not sign the role play consent form.

Reason: For this standard the visitors were directed to the student handbook and consent form which outlines the process for obtaining consent when students participate as service users in practical activities and simulations. However the consent form did not outline the right a student has to withdraw consent for any practical or clinical teaching sessions or how alternative teaching and learning methods would be arranged to ensure how the learning outcomes would be met. During the meeting with the students the visitors were told that they remember signing a consent form when they first started on the programme but did not know if there would be any consequences if they did not sign the form. On the form it states “as part of the

educational requirement of the course you will be required to participate in practical activities and simulations". During the meeting with the programme team it was clarified that a student could withdraw their consent when acting as service users in practical activities and simulations. As such, the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensure that students understand that they are able to withdraw their consent from participation in practical teaching. Therefore, the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate the protocols used to obtain consent when students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. This evidence should also demonstrate how they communicate to students what would happen if they chose to withdraw their consent.

5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate that there are formal arrangements in place to secure non-ambulance placements for students.

Reason: During the visit, the visitors had discussions with the programme team and the practice placement providers regarding the formal agreements they have in place before the commencement of the programme. The education provider identified a number of partner organisations they would use for placements. The visitors noted that the education provider had formal agreements with an ambulance service. However, during the practice placement provider and programme team meeting the visitors were clear that there are currently no formal agreements in place to secure non-ambulance placements that the programme intends to use for the programme. The visitors were told that there were verbal commitments between the education provider and the non-ambulance placements to take students from this programme. However, from the evidence provided, the visitors could not determine how the programme could ensure that there would be placements offered at non-ambulance service sites for all students. As such they are unable to make a judgment about whether non-ambulance placements are integral to the programme for all students. The visitors therefore require evidence of any formal arrangements that the programme will have to secure non-ambulance practice placements for all students.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the programme documentation clearly articulates that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register.

Reason: The visitors are aware that the institution does award aegrotat awards as set out in the Academic regulations and procedures: taught course regulatory framework. To evidence that this standard is met by the programme the visitors were directed to the programme specification and course handbook. However, the visitors could not see in the programme documentation where it clearly states that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register. The visitors were also unclear on how the education provider ensures that students are aware that this is the case. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how the assessment regulations clearly specify that aegrotat award do not provide eligibility for admission to the HCPC Register.

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 to demonstrate that the assessment regulations clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who is from a relevant part of the HCPC Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were referred to the University Assessment policy, course handbook and external examiner curriculum vitae. The visitors could not find any information in the evidence provided which specified the requirements for appointing external examiners for this programme. Furthermore, the visitors could not be certain from this evidence that the HCPC standard would be met as it is not defined in the assessment regulations as to whether the external examiners would have to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register and, if not, that there is an appropriate reason for appointing an examiner who is not from the relevant part of the Register. As such, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate that the assessment regulations for this programme specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who is from a relevant part of the HCPC Register, and, if not, that there is an appropriate reason for appointing an examiner who is not from the relevant part of the Register.

Glyn Harding
Paul Blakeman
Roseann Connolly