

HCPC major change process report

Education provider	Birmingham City University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Full time BSc Hons Operating Department Practice (South West), Full time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Degree Apprenticeship, Full time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (South West) Degree Apprenticeship, Full time
Date submission received	17 September 2020
Case reference	CAS-16197-C2H9R9

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Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the major change process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programmes detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC).

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process report. The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Rebecca Helen Lowes	Operating department practitioner
David Bevan	Operating department practitioner
John Archibald	HCPC executive

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 August 2016
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04707

Programme name	BSc Hons Operating Department Practice (South West)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 January 2020

Maximum learner cohort	Up to 50
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04726

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 March 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04775

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (South West) Degree Apprenticeship
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 March 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 50
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04776

We undertook this assessment to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards, following changes reported to us via the major change process. The following is an overview of the changes from the information received via this process.

The education provider has informed us of their intention to run a degree apprenticeship programme based on their BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice provision, at both sites in Birmingham and in the South West. The selection and entry criteria will change to incorporate those learners who undertake a portfolio route. The education provider has also informed us that practice-based learning strategies will need to be developed, which may involve changes to the programme.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Major change notification form	Yes
Completed major change standards mapping	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission, the visitors were not satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that our standards continued to be met at this time, and therefore require further evidence as noted below.

Further evidence required

In order to determine whether the standards continue to be met, the visitors require further evidence for the following standards for the reasons noted below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programme(s), and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the standards.

2.1 The admissions process 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.

Reason: To evidence this standard, the visitors were informed there had been no change to the way the SET was met and that a joint interview process for recruitment and selection remains in place. However, the visitors were aware of the employed status of learners and were unclear what the impact is on the employment status of learners who are unable to continue on the programme. For example, for the failing or failed learner, or the learner whose circumstances have changed. The visitors considered applicants need to be provided with all the information they need to make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on the programme, and considered this information was not made available for learners. The visitors therefore need to be sure that information provided throughout the admissions process is clear and thorough, and allows for informed decision-making.

Suggested evidence: The education provider needs to demonstrate that information provided throughout the admissions process is clear and thorough, and allows for informed decision-making.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Reason: To meet this standard, the visitors were informed that a programme apprenticeship lead will be appointed, and that the faculty lead for apprenticeship programmes will liaise with the head of department and programme lead for regular review of the programme. However, the visitors were unclear about the management of the apprentice learners, as they will be employees working primarily in the workplace setting as opposed to the academic setting. The visitors therefore were unclear of the structures to take into account the workplace setting of learners.

Suggested evidence: The education provider needs to provide further evidence that there is effective management and clear responsibility for the programme, that the structures within the workplace are clear, and that there are transparent processes to deal with any issues or problems which arise in the workplace.

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

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Reason: To evidence these standards, the education provider informed the visitors staff were in post, and that when the apprenticeship programme is approved, there will be a senior lecturer in post for the Apprenticeship lead and staff numbers increased to reflect an increase in learner numbers. The visitors were also informed all learners have access to learner, IT, library and academic services provided by the education provider.

However, the visitors were made aware that the education provider has proposed up to an additional 40 learners at the site in Birmingham and up to 50 learners additional in the South West.

The visitors were unclear what the impact of such an increase in learner numbers will be in regards to whether there is an adequate number of staff who are able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively.

The visitors were also unclear how the education provider ensures that programme resources are readily available to learners and educators to support learning and teaching given such an increase in learner numbers.

Suggested evidence: The education provider needs to provide further evidence of how:

- they will ensure there are an appropriate number of staff able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively; and
- programme resources are readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively to support the learning and teaching activities of the programme.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Reason: The education provider informed the visitors there is no change to the way the programme meets these standards.

However, the visitors were made aware that the education provider has proposed up to an additional 40 learners at the site in Birmingham and up to 50 additional learners in the South West.

The visitors are therefore unclear whether the number of staff involved in practice-based learning are adequate due to the proposed increased numbers of learners. The visitors were also unclear whether the staff involved in practice-based learning are trained appropriately and have appropriate information to be prepared for the change in delivery of the programme to the apprenticeship.

The visitors need further evidence that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning; practice educators are appropriately prepared and trained; and practice educators have the information they need to be prepared for practice-based learning, so they understand their roles and what is expected and required for practice-based learning to be safe and effective.

Suggested evidence: The education provider needs to provide further evidence to demonstrate:

- there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning;
- practice educators are appropriately prepared and trained; and
- practice educators have the information they need to be prepared for practice-based learning, so they understand their roles and what is expected and required for practice-based learning to be safe and effective.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the request for further evidence set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the standards continue to be met and recommend that the programme(s) remain approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 27 January 2021 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).