

HCPC major change process report

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| Education provider | University of Bedfordshire |
| Name of programme(s) | BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Full time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Integrated Apprenticeship, Full time |
| Date submission received | 30 March 2021 |
| Case reference | CAS-16940-B1W4T0 |

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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:

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|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Luke Ewart | Operating department practitioner |
| David Bevan | Operating department practitioner |
| Temilolu Odunaike | HCPC executive |

Section 2: Programme details

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|------------------------|--|
| Programme name | BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice |
| Mode of study | FT (Full time) |
| Profession | Operating department practitioner |
| First intake | 01 September 2016 |
| Maximum learner cohort | Up to 24 |
| Intakes per year | 1 |
| Assessment reference | MC04860 |

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|----------------|--|
| Programme name | BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Integrated Apprenticeship |
| Mode of study | FT (Full time) |

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Profession | Operating department practitioner |
| First intake | 01 September 2021 |
| Maximum learner cohort | Up to 40 |
| Intakes per year | 1 |
| Assessment reference | MC04870 |

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 developed a new degree apprenticeship route, which is being introduced to be delivered alongside the current approved BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice programme. The new degree apprenticeship programme has been developed in line with the current approved programme with the only difference being the integrated End Point Assessment to meet the requirements of a degree apprenticeship. The education provider is also proposing a decrease in the number of annual programme hours for both the existing and the new programmes.

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: The education provider stated no changes to how the degree apprenticeship programme meets this standard as the same recruitment process would remain in place with the Trust providers. However, the visitors noted in their review that there was no information about what the implications are if a learner decides to discontinue from the programme. For example, if the discontinuation was due to failure of assessments or changes to the learner's personal life which then impacts on their ability to continue on the programme. As this information was not provided explicitly in the programme documentation, the visitors could not determine that applicants would have the relevant information they need to make a decision about the programme. The visitors therefore request further information to determine whether this standard is met.

Suggested evidence: Information for potential applicants to clarify the implications of discontinuation from the programme. For example, return to a substantive role with the employer or other employment.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Reason: As evidence for this standard, the education provider referred the visitors to the staff curricular vitae (CVs). The mapping document also stated that the current programme lead will be supported by an Apprenticeship lead who will oversee the new learners and support the programme lead as learner numbers increase. The visitors noted that the CVs submitted did not identify the apprenticeship programme lead and as such, they were unable to determine how the degree apprenticeship programme would be effectively managed. Therefore, the visitors request that the education provider submit additional evidence that demonstrates effective management and clear responsibility for the degree apprenticeship programme.

Suggested evidence: CVs for the HPLs and paramedic science lecturers along with an identified programme lead for the degree apprenticeship programme. Additionally, visitors would like confirmation of what does HPL stand for, as it was not clear from the documentation what it means.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: As evidence for this standard, the education provider referred the visitors to the staff curricular vitae (CVs). Although the mapping document stated that the current lead meets this standard and that the new apprenticeship programme lead would also meet the standard, the education provider did not provide evidence that demonstrates how the standard would be met for the degree apprenticeship programme. The visitors also noted that the CVs provided did not identify the programme lead for the degree apprenticeship. As the education provider did not demonstrate there is an appropriate and effective process of identifying a suitable person to lead the degree apprenticeship programme, and if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement, nor did they identify the lead, the visitors were unable to determine whether the standard was met.

Suggested evidence: Evidence demonstrating that the education provider has a process for ensuring that the persons appointed to have overall professional responsibility for the programme are appropriate. The education provider could consider

providing evidence such as person specification, expression of interest or their recruitment and selection policy to demonstrate how recruitment to the role would be undertaken. The education provider should also identify the programme lead for the degree apprenticeship programme.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: The education provider stated no changes to how the degree apprenticeship programme meets this standard. They explained that current placements will be continuing for the new apprenticeship learners. From their documentary review, the visitors noted that there was mention of “External learning opportunities”. However, it was not clear if these opportunities are external to the Operating Department or external to the employing Hospital / Trust. If external to the employing Hospital / Trust, it was not clear how this will be managed. The visitors therefore require clarification around the different providers that would be delivering practice-based learning and evidence, to demonstrate the agreement in place with the providers to ensure availability and capacity of practice-based learning.

Suggested evidence: Evidence, such as a memorandum of agreement or a reciprocal agreement between practice education providers and the education provider.

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

Reason: The visitors noted from their review of the documentary submission that the number of staff has decreased from five to three since 2018, although they noted that staffing is supported by HPLs and paramedic lecturers. Given the increase in learner numbers with the introduction of the degree apprenticeship, the visitors were unable to determine how the same number of staff would be able to deliver both programmes effectively. They therefore require the education provider to evidence how they will ensure both programmes are adequately staffed.

Suggested evidence: CVs for the HPLs and paramedic science lecturers that would be delivering both programmes. The evidence submitted should also show the proportion of the staff’s time spent working on the BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice and the BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Integrated Apprenticeship programmes.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: The visitors noted that section 3.3 of the programme handbook states that there is a minimum number of hours required to complete the programme, but it is unclear what the minimum number of hours is, as it was not explicitly stated in the documentation, although a breakdown of hours for each year was provided. As such, the visitors could not be certain that the learning and teaching methods used would appropriately and effectively deliver the learning outcomes. In addition, the visitors also noted that the Course Information Form identified 20 academic credits to the End Point Assessment (EPA) which brings the total number of level 6 credits to 125. However, they noted that the full-time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice programme has a total of 120 credits. The visitors considered that there is a discrepancy in the number of academic credits on the degree apprenticeship programme and the full-time

programme. Therefore, they require the education provider to provide a rationale for this so they can determine the appropriateness of the teaching and learning methods to deliver the learning outcomes.

Suggested evidence: Evidence of the rationale for the increased number of academic credits on the degree apprenticeship programme. If this was an error, the education provider should submit an amended documentation.

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

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The education provider indicated no changes to how the degree apprenticeship programme meets these standards. However, in their documentation review, the visitors noted that the information provided in the Practice Learning Partners Commitment Statement was not specific to the ODP programme and HCPC but is relevant to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). The visitors noted that the document was signed on behalf of the practice education provider, East and North Herts NHS Trust, however, it related to nursing students and learners on NMC approved programmes. As such, the visitors were unable to determine that there is commitment specific to the Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) programmes and therefore, they could not determine whether these standards are met.

Suggested evidence: Evidence such as a reworded statement that articulates the commitment from the practice education providers relevant to ODP and the HCPC.

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 06 July 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](#).