

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Liverpool John Moores University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Liverpool John Moores University, FT (Full time)
Approval visit date	13-14 September 2017
Case reference	CAS-11971-Z1N4K4

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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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) 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). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). 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:

Manoj Mistry	Lay
Glyn Harding	Paramedic
Jasmine Pokuaa Oduro-Bonsrah	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Andrew Baker	Chair	Liverpool John Moores University
Lucy McKenzie	Event officer	Liverpool John Moores University
Seamus O'Brien	University representative	Liverpool John Moores University
Cameron Muir	Student representative	Liverpool John Moores University
Chris Moat	External panel member	Teesside University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
Proposed first intake	01 September 2018
Maximum student cohort	Up to 50
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01738

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

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	Reason(s) for non-submission
Programme specification	Yes	
Module descriptor(s)	Yes	
Handbook for learners	Yes	
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes	
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes	
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Not Required	This is a new programme

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Reason(s) not met
Learners	Yes	The HCPC met with learners from the Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic Practice programmes as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any learners enrolled on it
Senior staff	Yes	

Practice education providers and educators	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that 43 of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 20 November 2017.

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.

Condition: The education provider must clarify who will pay for the additional costs associated with the programme, and how this will be communicated to applicants.

Reason: During the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were made aware that learners on this programme will have to cover the costs associated with the criminal convictions checks and the occupational health checks. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors could not see any information about these costs for learners in the information for applicants. Furthermore, in the learners meeting, the learners were unsure about who was responsible for paying for the criminal convictions checks and occupational health checks. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that applicants to this programme have all the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on this programme. As such, the education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they let applicants know about the costs associated with the programme, in particular the additional cost associated with criminal convictions checks and occupational health checks.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that demonstrates the commitment and future plans for this programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine what the current and future plans are for this programme. The visitors could not determine what commitment the education provider had towards this programme and how this programme will be supported. From discussions with the senior and programme team, the visitors were informed that the education provider will be developing a 'new Masters programme and thinking about developing degree apprenticeships as a part time route, and will be keeping the DipHE programme'. The visitors could not however see how the whole paramedic provision, in particular the BSc programme, fits in to the education provider's business plan. Furthermore, the visitors could not determine what commitments, plans and support the education provider has towards this programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence, which documents the education providers' commitment to this programme, what the plans are for the paramedic provision, and how this programme fits into the overall business plan, in order to determine the viability and sustainability of the 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.

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation to ensure that the resources to support learning is accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors noted various instances of inaccurate and out-of-date information. In the Programme Document, for example, the Standards of conduct, performance and ethics and Guidance on conduct and ethics for students referenced were the 2009 versions. However, there are more recent versions of these publications, published in 2016. Furthermore, the visitors noted that the programme guide states "On successful completion of the programme, you will be eligible to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)". These statements could be misleading to learners, as learners are only eligible to apply for HCPC registration. The visitors were not sure how the education provider ensures that the learners have the accurate up-to date information they require in order to support their learning. . The education provider must therefore revise the programme documentation to ensure that the resources to support learning is accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they will make learners and educators aware of the exit awards, and that they will not lead to eligibility to apply for admission to the Register.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the Website Factfile and the SETS Descriptor document. In the documentation, the visitors noted that the exit awards for this programme are the Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) and the Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE). Firstly, the visitors were unsure what the names of these exit awards were as there were no programme titles attached to the award. The visitors were aware that the education provider had an approved Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic practice programme. The visitors were therefore unsure

whether the DipHE exit award for the proposed programme will lead to the Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic practice qualification. During the programme team meeting the visitors were informed that the names of the exit awards had not yet been finalised but will not include the title of the approved and proposed programmes. However, the visitors did not see any evidence of what the exit awards for this programme would be, how they will be communicated to learners and educators and how these learners and educators will be made aware that these exit awards will not lead to eligibility to apply for admission to the Register. The education provider must therefore provide further evidence about what the exit awards will be for this programme, how they will be communicated to learners and educators, and that they do not lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must communicate any changes to the programme learning outcomes, and demonstrate that these ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were satisfied that the current learning outcomes for the programme ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs for paramedics. However, throughout the visit it was stated that the internal validation panel would require the programme team to rewrite some learning outcomes to reflect the varying academic levels across the programme. Whilst the HCPC does not stipulate the level at which learning outcomes should be delivered the visitors noted that there could be significant changes to the learning outcomes as a result of the internal panel requirements. Without seeing the changes to the finalised learning outcomes, the visitors cannot make a judgement on how they enable learners to meet the SOPs for paramedics. The visitors therefore require the education provider to communicate any changes to the learning outcomes, and demonstrate that these ensure that those who successfully complete the programme are able to meet the SOPs for paramedics.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must articulate what interprofessional learning there will be on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the SETS Descriptor and Programme Document. The Programme Document states “At each level particular modules have periods when interprofessional learning and engagement is possible...the paramedic and midwifery team will blend their programmes giving an opportunity for learner midwives to work collaboratively with learner paramedics during a series of workshops and scenario based exercises”. From the information provided the visitors could not determine what these interprofessional sessions consisted of. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors were told that there will be ‘opportunities for interprofessional learning’ including shared teaching with the midwifery learners and some lectures will be delivered by midwifery lecturers. Furthermore, the programme team informed the visitors that as part of the DipHE programme they run a patient journey session from the pick up call to the rehab process for a cerebrovascular

event. However, from the visitors understanding, this session was a one-day extracurricular activity as opposed to required learning. Additionally the visitors could not determine how paramedic learners learning from midwifery lecturers and having shared teaching sessions with midwifery learners constituted paramedic learners learning with and from professionals and learners in other relevant professions. The education provider is therefore required to articulate what interprofessional learning there will be on the programme, and how they will ensure that learners on this programme will learn with, and from professionals in other relevant professions.

5.1 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate what formal arrangements there are in place to secure practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: To evidence this standard the visitors were directed to the Programme Document, Practice placement Handbook, Programme specification and SETS Descriptor document. The visitors were also shown the 'Placement Learning Support System'. The placement management system for the health care learners at the institution. However, the visitors could not see in the documentation provided whether there were any formal arrangements in place to secure placements for all learners on this proposed programme. During the programme and practice education provider meeting the visitors were informed that there will a similar arrangement in place for the proposed BSc programme as there is for the currently approved DipHE programme. The visitors were shown a Health Education England 'Schedule 8' document, which highlights the placement provision places for the DipHE paramedic learners for the 2017-18 academic year. The programme team informed the visitors that they were unsure about whether these commissioned places will remain for the BSc programme and cannot currently determine what the funding model will be. In the placement education provider meeting the visitors were informed that they anticipate that there will be a transition in contracts the formal arrangements they currently have will follow the same format as highlighted in the learning development agreement. The visitors however did not see any formal agreements in place to secure placements for all learners on the programme. The education provider must therefore provide further evidence to demonstrate what formal arrangements there are in place to secure practice-based learning for all learners.

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.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure practice educators undertake appropriate regular training.

Reason: From the documentation provided and at the visit, the visitors noted that new practice educators must have a level five mentorship before supervising learners. The education provider informed the visitors that they have not planned to have regular training sessions for practice educators. Therefore, the visitors could not determine how the programme team ensure that practice placement educators keep up-to-date with developments on the programme. In particular, the visitors could not determine how the practice educators would be aware of changes to the programme such as changes to the Practice Learning Assessment Document (PLAD). The education provider must therefore provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice educators

undertake appropriate regular training, in order to sufficiently support the learners' needs and to ensure that they are kept up-to-date with the expectations of their role.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must communicate any changes to the assessment strategy and design, and demonstrate that these ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for paramedics.

Reason: In reviewing the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors were made aware of the assessment strategy and design for the programme, which is designed to ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs for paramedics. However, during the meeting with the programme team and the informal feedback meeting at the visit it was stated that the internal validation panel will require the programme team to make some changes to parts of the assessment strategy and design, in particular, the assessment of the research and dissertation modules. As such, the visitors have not had the evidence of the final, confirmed, assessment strategy and design for the programme. Therefore, they cannot determine how the final, confirmed, learning assessment strategy will ensure that successful graduates can meet the SOPs for paramedics. The visitors will therefore require the education provider to provide additional evidence, which will communicate any changes to the assessment strategy and design, so they can make determinations about how the programme can meet this standard.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how best communicate to learners what happens to their videos once they complete their assessments and marks have been finalised.

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussions at the visit, the visitors learnt that there was a video/photo/audio consent form used to obtain consent from service users and learners, and used as a learning and assessment tool. The visitors reviewed the appropriateness of the form and agreed it was adequate to obtain consent from learners and service users and were therefore satisfied that this standard was met. However, the learners mentioned that they 'had not really thought about what happens to the video recordings after their assessment'. The programme team informed the visitors that these video recordings were deleted after the assessment marks had been ratified and finalised. The visitors therefore recommend that the education provider considers clearly communicating to learners what happens to their videos once they complete their assessments and the marks have been finalised.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 18 January 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

Section 6: Future considerations for the programme(s)

At the visit, the education provider mentioned they might move buildings. This will have an impact on a number of our standards. These facilities will be different from the ones assessed at the visit therefore the education provider should inform the HCPC once this change occurs.

Furthermore, the visitors recommend that the education provider monitor their resources. The visitors were told that they will not close the DipHE programme and it will run alongside the BSc (Hons) as an option for learners who want to join the programme at level 5 using the recognition of prior learning route. The education provider should consider monitoring the resources to ensure that they are sufficient to support student learning across the paramedic provision and should inform the HCPC about any changes.