

## HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Teesside University
Name of programme(s)	MSc Dietetics (Pre-Registration), Full time accelerated
Approval visit date	07-08 June 2018
Case reference	CAS-13048-V4K3Q9

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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:

Sara Smith	Dietitian
Angela Duxbury	Radiographer - Therapeutic radiographer
Frances Ashworth	Lay
Jasmine 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.

Keith Hurst	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Teesside University – Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching), School of Social Sciences, Humanities & Law
Steven Gibson	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Teesside University – Senior Administrator (Documentation, Modularity & Assessments)
Paul Taylor	Internal validation panel member	Teesside University – Principal lecture (Learning & Teaching), School of Health &

		Social Care
Joanne Almond	Internal validation panel member	Teesside University— Quality Manager, Academic Registry
Jill Foley	Internal validation panel member	Teesside University— Principal Lecturer (Programmes), School of Health & Social Care
Duane Mellor	External validation panel member – part of internal validation panel	Coventry University
Tim James	Internal validation panel member	Teesside University
Wendy Wiles	Service User Representative – Internal validation panel member	Teesside University
Jackie Bishop	Professional body representative	The British Dietetic Association
Jane Wilson	Professional body representative	The British Dietetic Association
Najia Qureshi	Professional body representative	The British Dietetic Association

## Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Dietetics (Pre-Registration)
Mode of study	FTA (Full time accelerated)
Profession	Dietitian
First intake	1 January 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01889

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 and therefore there are no external examiners' reports.

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As this programme is not yet approved we had discussions with learners from the food science and nutrition programme delivered by Teesside University.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	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 a number 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 July 2018.

## **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 ensure that appropriate information about the programme is provided to potential applicants, allowing them to make an informed decision about taking up a place on a programme.

**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 programme, including criminal convictions checks and travel costs to practice-based learning. The visitors were also informed that the programme will be delivered at both the Darlington and Middlesbrough campuses. However from discussions at the visit and documentation including the programme website, the visitors were unsure how applicants will be informed about the costs to enable them to make an informed choice about taking up an offer of a place on the programme. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how potential applicants will be given the appropriate information about costs to learners on this programme, to allow them to make an informed choice about taking a place on 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 programme team must revise the programme documentation to ensure that the resources to support teaching and learning are accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit and clarification at the visit, the visitors noted various instances of inaccurate information. Examples include:

- references to other education providers in the documentation
- incorrect hours attached to modules, for example the hours attached to module DTC4000-N states zero hours but also states learners can access tutorial support.

These are only some examples of inaccurate information identified in the programme documentation, which will be made available to both learners and educators. Considering these and other instances, the visitors were not satisfied the education provider has ensured that learners will have the accurate information they require in order to support their learning. The internal validation panel also required the programme team to amend various parts of the documentation which will be made available to learners and educators. The programme team must provide the visitors with the amended, final version of the documentation to enable them to determine whether it is appropriate for all.

## **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 exit awards will not lead to eligibility to apply for admission to the Register.

**Reason:** For this standard the visitors were directed to the Course Handbook and Course Approval document. From the visitors' review of the documentation prior to the visit, they noted that the named fall back award will be the "PgDip Dietetics (Pre-registration) Dietetics... which would provide [learners] with eligibility to apply for HCPC". The senior team informed the visitors that they did not require approval for the PgDip programme and it will therefore not lead to eligibility to apply to the HCPC Register. Furthermore, the visitors noted that "all interim awards will contain the title 'in health and social care". However, the visitors were unsure what the full name of the interim awards will be or how learners can achieve these interim awards. To enable the visitors to determine whether this standard is met, the education provider must provide further evidence, which demonstrates the following:

- what the exit awards will be for this programme;
- exit awards do not contain HCPC protected titles;
- that information about exit awards clearly states that they do not lead to eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC; and
- how information about exit awards will be communicated to learners and educators.

#### **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 they ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for dietitians.

**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 dietitians. However, throughout the visit it was stated that the internal validation panel would require the programme team to review the learning outcomes. 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 dietitians. 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 dietitians.

#### **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 demonstrate how any changes to the assessment strategy and design, ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for dietitians.

**Reason:** In reviewing the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors reviewed 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 dietitians. However, during the meeting with the programme team and the informal feedback meeting at the visit the visitors noted that the internal validation panel will require the programme team to make some changes to parts of the assessment strategy and

design. As such, the visitors have not seen the final, confirmed, assessment strategy and design for the programme. Therefore, they cannot determine how the amended learning assessment strategy will ensure that successful graduates can meet the SOPs for dietitians. 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 a determination about whether the programme meets this standard.

### **6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate how they will guide practice educators into making objective, fair and reliable decisions about the progression of learners.

**Reason:** For this standard the visitors were directed to the module specifications. At the visit there were discussions with the programme team regarding how practice educators make objective, fair and reliable decisions based on the progression of a struggling learner. From the discussions the visitors could not get a clear understanding of how decisions such as whether a learner would have to repeat a whole practice-based learning opportunity or hours to make up the failed parts of that practice-based learning opportunity, would be made. The visitors were unclear how the practice educators assessing the learners are given clear guidelines on how to make decisions about the progression of a learner through their practice-based learning experiences. As such, the education provider must demonstrate how they will provide guidance, which ensures that practice educators have the information they require to make objective, fair and reliable decisions about the progression of learners.

### **6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clearly articulate the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

**Reason:** For this standard the visitors were directed to the assessment regulations. The visitors noted in the documentation that "If students fail the placement, at the assessment board they will be offered a reassessment. They would normally be given a further four weeks of practice placement to achieve the assessment criteria which they had failed". From the discussions however, the programme team informed the visitors that there are possibilities where learners would have to retake the whole placement module or have fewer than four weeks to achieve the practice-based learning competencies that they failed. From the disparity in the information provided the visitors could not see how learners or staff would know which information was accurate. Additionally, from the documentation the visitors were unclear how the learners would progress between stages of the programme or what the maximum duration that learners could be on the programme would be, if a learner interrupts their studies or fails an element. As such, the education provider must clearly specify the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

**6.7 The education provider must ensure that at least one external examiner for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that there will be at least one external examiner for the programme, who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

**Reason:** For this standard, the visitors were directed to the Course Handbook and the University's External Examiners process. From the documentation provided, the visitors could not see how the External Examiners process defines whether the external examiners would have to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register and, if not, that there are other arrangements in place, which are appropriate. In conversations with the programme team, the visitors were informed that they were currently in the process of recruiting an External Examiner. This standard is concerned with the process of appointing an appropriately qualified examiner who is from the relevant part of the Register, unless other appropriate arrangements are made. As such, the visitors require evidence to demonstrate that there will be at least one external examiner for the programme, who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

## 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 23 August 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](#).