

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Portsmouth
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	21 - 22 April 2012

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction.....	3
Visit details	3
Sources of evidence	4
Recommended outcome	5
Conditions.....	6
Recommendations.....	9

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 27 August 2015. At the Committee meeting, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) 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 as the professional body considered their endorsement of the programme. The professional body 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 professional body, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Bob Fellows (Paramedic) Mark Nevins (Paramedic) Susanne Roff (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Ben Potter
Proposed student numbers	50 per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2015
Chair	Jason Oakley (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Nikki Coleman (University of Portsmouth) Beckie Isaia (University of Portsmouth)
Members of the joint panel	Graham Harris (College of Paramedics) Samantha Hogan (College of Paramedics)

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 examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as this programme is new and currently has no external examiner.

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 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 54 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 4 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 have also made a number of 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 provide further evidence as to how they ensure that applicants to the programme are aware of the requirement to have achieved certain GCSE's in order to successfully gain a place on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the documentation provided prior to the visit that there was no explicit statement in the programme documentation which outlined the requirement for applicants to have any GCSE's in order for them to successfully be offered a place on the programme. In discussions at the visit the visitors were made aware that it was an institutional policy not to include the requirements for GCSE's in programme documentation or on programmes' advertising material. Programmes are instead required to set out their requirements for entry such as any university and college admissions service (UCAS) points or any requirement for 'A' levels or equivalent awards in specific subjects. In further discussions the visitors were made aware that there is an institutional requirement for applicants to have a minimum of three GCSE passes (at A*-C) and that applicants should have passed GCSE English and mathematics. However the visitors could not determine, from the evidence provided, how applicants would be made aware of the requirements for them to have achieved the relevant GCSE's in order to be offered a place on this programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence about how the education provider will ensure that applicants are aware of the requirement to have achieved certain GCSE's in order to be offered a place on this programme. In this way they can then determine how the programme may meet this standard.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence as to how and when they will implement the areas of the strategic plan which will involve the recruitment of additional staff to supplement the delivery of the programme.

Reason: From the evidence provided prior to the visit, the visitors were aware that the programme team would be delivering this programme in addition to their current roles delivering a foundation science degree (FdSc) programme in paramedic science. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that the FdSc programme would not continue to recruit new students if this programme was successful in gaining approval from the HCPC. As such the programme team would have a brief period of time when both programmes would run together. The programme team also clarified that there would be an increased number of students, in total, studying this three year programme when compared to the two year FdSc programme due to the additional cohort of students. In discussion with the senior management team the visitors highlighted this increase in workload for the current programme team and it was clarified that there was a strategic plan in place to recruit additional staff to ensure that the team were of a sufficient size to deliver this programme going forward. However, the visitors were not provided with any documentary evidence regarding this and were unclear from the discussions how and when the plan to recruit additional staff to the programme would be implemented. The visitors therefore require further evidence to

demonstrate how, and when, the education provider will recruit additional staff to the programme team to supplement the delivery of the programme. In this way the visitors will be able to determine if there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver the programme going forward.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators in non-ambulance settings have the required knowledge, skills and experience to educate students from this programme.

Reason: From the evidence provided prior to the visit the visitors were aware that students will be expected to undertake placements in both ambulance trust settings and in non-ambulance trust settings. The visitors were made aware at the visit that the placement provision in ambulance trust settings is centrally co-ordinated between the education provider's faculty placement office and the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS). They were also informed that there is a process and policy in place whereby paramedics employed by SCAS are put forward to be trained by the education provider and become practice placement educators for students on this programme. These practice placement educators are then held on a list by SCAS who inform the education provider as and when students have been allocated placements where they will be supervised by these trained members of staff. In discussion with the practice placement educators the visitors were made aware that the arrangements in non-ambulance settings were not the same and could vary from one setting to another. They heard that the local NHS trusts offering non-ambulance placements maintain lists of those people in hospitals who act as placement educators for students from other professions and as such they would determine who is available to mentor students from this programme when the placements are required. The visitors also heard that there currently aren't any arrangements in place to train all of the placement educators in non-ambulance placements to educate students from this programme but there is confidence that this can be done. As such the visitors are unclear as to how the education provider will ensure that practice placement educators in non-ambulance placement settings will have the knowledge, skills and experience to educate students from this programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the education provider will ensure that where students are being supervised or educated in a non-ambulance setting this will be done by a practice placement educator who has all of the skills and experience required to provide students from this programme with the placement experience they require.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- the learning outcomes to be achieved;
- the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;
- expectations of professional conduct;
- the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and
- communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence about how students and practice placement educators in non-ambulance settings are fully prepared for placement and understand who is responsible for which aspects of the placement experience.

Reason: From the evidence provided prior to the visit the visitors were aware that students will be expected to undertake placements in both ambulance trust settings and in non-ambulance trust settings. The visitors were made aware at the visit that the placement provision in ambulance trust settings is centrally co-ordinated between the education provider's faculty placement office and the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS). They were also informed that there is a process and policy in place whereby paramedics employed by SCAS are put forward to be trained by the education provider and become practice placement educators for students on this programme. These practice placement educators are then held on a list by SCAS who inform the education provider as and when students have been allocated placements where they will be supervised by these trained members of staff. Employment practices and roles and responsibilities for practice placement educators at SCAS and the education provider are also included in students' practice placement handbooks. However, in discussion with the practice placement educators the visitors were made aware that the arrangements in non-ambulance settings were not the same and could vary from one setting to another. They also heard in further discussions that students felt less sure how to raise concerns about non-ambulance placements and less sure about who was responsible for which aspects of placement as the faculty placement office sites students for non-ambulance placements but the student and the placement provider agree on the experience that they will have. As such the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators are fully prepared for placement in non-ambulance settings. In particular they were unsure about the lines of responsibility for the different aspects of non-ambulance placements and how any issues would be dealt with if they arose. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the education provider will prepare everyone involved in non-ambulance practice placements and how everyone will be made aware of who is responsible for which aspects of the placement.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how best to ensure that the programme team continues to have sufficient time to pursue any personal or professional development activities as required.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors noted that there is a personal development policy for all members of staff at the education provider and that the programme team have been provided the opportunity to pursue further study in addition to their roles in delivering this programme. The visitors were therefore content that this standard is met by the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team and the senior team it was highlighted that there would be an additional workload associated with the delivery of this programme and in particular when there will be an increased workload during the cross-over between the existing provision and this new programme. The visitors therefore recommend that the education provider continues to monitor the workload of the current programme team to ensure that there is sufficient time for them to pursue personal development goals and further academic study should they require it. In this way the education provider may better ensure that the programme team can develop in line with the increased burden that will be placed on them through the delivery of this new programme.

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Recommendation: The programme team should consider how they will develop the use of service users and carers in the programme and how they can be best used to aid the delivery of the programme in the future.

Reason: From the evidence provided at the visit, the visitors noted that there is a dedicated, active group of service users and carers who are involved in the delivery of the programme. Therefore the visitors are satisfied that the programme has met this standard. However, the visitors noted that the service users and carers are all from the same charitable group and their participation is dependent on their availability and not necessarily the requirements of the programme team. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team continues to develop the inclusion of service users and carers in the programme and look, where possible, to involve service users and carers from a greater variety of backgrounds and walks of life. In this way the programme team may better be able to increase pool of service users and carers who will be able to contribute to the programme. By increasing the available pool of service users and carers the programme team could also be better placed to consider how service users and carers may be included in other aspects of the programme to enhance students' learning.

5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider how best to continue monitoring the number, and availability, of practice placement educators.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were made aware that SCAS and the education provider work in partnership to ensure that sufficient numbers of practice placement educators are available to supervise students at the ambulance placements. Therefore the visitors were content that the programme meets this standard. However, in discussion with the senior team and the practice placement providers the visitors were made aware that there is a high turnover of practice placement educators currently with a number leaving the employment of the SCAS trust, in common with all other areas of the UK. The visitors were also made aware that the list of available practice placement educators is provided to the education provider on an annual basis as part of the ongoing approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors therefore recommend that the education provider considers how best to work with SCAS to monitor the availability of practice placement educators and considers how best mitigate the situation should a number of them leave the trust's employment at any one time. In this way the education provider, and ambulance trust, may be better placed to deal with this should a situation such as this arise and plans can be put in place to avoid any potential disruption to the programme and students' placement experiences.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider awarding credit to those practice placement educators who successfully complete the relevant practice placement educator training.

Reason:

As part of the required training that a practice placement educator undertakes prior to supervising any student in practice potential educators must complete the education providers' supporting lecturers in practice (SLP) training. This is backed up with annual refresher training modules that practice placement educators complete via distance learning. As such the visitors were satisfied that the programme has met this standard. However, in discussion with the practice placement providers and programme team the visitors were made aware that anyone successfully completing the SLP training is not awarded with any academic credit for having done so. The visitors therefore recommend that the education provider considers awarding academic credit to anyone who successfully completes this training. In this way the education provider may be better placed to attract greater numbers of professionals to undertake the role of practice placement educator for this programme.

Susanne Roff
Mark Nevins
Bob Fellows