Health Professions Council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Ulster
Name and titles of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science with DPP (Pathology)
Mode of delivery (FT/PT)	Full time
Date of visit	21st and 22nd November 2007
Proposed date of approval to commence	September 2008
Name of HPC visitors attending (including member type and professional area)	Phillip Warren (Biomedical Scientist) Mary Popeck (Biomedical Scientist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Tracey Samuel-Smith
Joint panel members in attendance (name and delegation):	Professor Bernie Hannigan (Chair) Brian McArthur (Secretary) Dr Stanley Black (Internal) Barry Burgess (Internal) Dr Len Seal (Internal) Alan Wainwright (Institute of Biomedical Science, IBMS) Sarah May (IBMS) Christine Murphy (IBMS) Dr David Hawcroft (Academy of Medical Laboratory Science, AMLS) Dr John Williams (AMLS) Kevin O'Connell (AMLS)

Scope of visit *(please tick)*

New programme	☒
Major change to existing programme	☐
Visit initiated through Annual Monitoring	☐
New Profession	☐

Confirmation of meetings held

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior personnel of provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators	☒	☐	☐
Students (current or past as appropriate)	☒	☐	☐

Confirmation of facilities inspected

	Yes	No	N/A
Library learning centre	☒	☐	☐
IT facilities	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation	☒	☐	☐

Confirmation that particular requirements/specific instructions (if any) of the Education and Training Committee that have been explored e.g. specific aspects arising from annual monitoring reports.

Requirement (please insert detail)	Yes	No	N/A
1	☐	☐	☒
2	☐	☐	☒
3	☐	☐	☒

Proposed student cohort intake number please state	**25**

ALL CONDITIONS MET

The following summarises the key outcomes of the approval event and provides reasons for the decision.

CONDITIONS

SET 2 *Programme admissions*

The admissions procedures must:
2.1 give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make, or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the admission documentation to remove references to state registration and to clarify the relationship between holding the qualification and entry to the HPC Register.

Reason: Currently the admission documentation includes references to terminology no longer in use and states that students are eligible to register with the HPC upon graduation. To provide full and up-to-date information about the programme, the Visitors felt the admission documentation must be amended to state that upon graduation, students are eligible to apply for registration with the HPC.

The admission procedures must:
2.1 give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make, or take up the offer of a place on a programme
2.2.2 apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks;
2.2.3 apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements;

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the admission documentation to provide prospective applicants with information about criminal conviction checks, any health requirements and non standard entry procedures.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team it was apparent that students are informed about criminal conviction checks, any health requirements and non standard entry procedures at open days and upon registration. However, to provide full and clear information about the programme prior to registration, the Visitors felt the admission documentation must be amended to provide this information.

SET 3. *Programme management and resource standards*

3.7 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to accurately reflect the role of HPC.

Reason: To provide students and placement educators with clear and up-to-date information, the Visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to:
- remove references to state registration, a HPC minimum timeframe for laboratory training and HPC approval of laboratories;
- update material which refers to the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine; and
- clarify that HPC determines the regulations for registration on the HPC Register.

3.7 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to remove clause 11.5 from the Course Regulations.

Reason: Clause 11.5 states 'For the award of the BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science with Diploma in Professional Practice (Pathology) students must have completed the IBMS/HPC Registration process'. This clause is incorrect as without the award of an approved programme, students are unable to apply to the HPC Register and as such, the documentation must be updated.

3.7 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the student handbook to include further information about entrepreneurship and the selection criteria and process for the allocation of funded places.

Reason: The Visitors felt the inclusion of entrepreneurship in the programme is unusual but not detrimental to the programme. However, they believe that information explaining what entrepreneurship is and its relevance to the programme must be included in the student handbook. The Visitors also thought that information about the selection criteria and process for allocating the limited funded places must be included to help dispel confusion among students.

3.9 Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must submit documentation showing where students participate as patients or clients and the protocols used to gain student consent.

Reason: During the tour of the facilities the Visitors were shown a practical examination of a patient's heartbeat which they were told would be undertaken during the Human Physiology and Anatomy module. While the examination during the tour was of a lecturer, it was confirmed that students would volunteer to act as the patient and as such, appropriate protocols must be in place.

SET 4. *Curriculum Standards*

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to identify that upon completion of the programme, students will be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System, with no element below 6.5.

Reason: Currently the programme documentation is unclear at what level the students will exit the programme and to comply with standard of proficiency 1b.3, the Visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

SET 5. *Practice placements standards*

5.6 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Condition: The programme team must submit the policies and processes for initial approval and the systems for ongoing monitoring and assessment of placements, which includes the responsibilities of the different parties involved.

Reason: The Visitors are satisfied these policies, processes and systems are in place, as they were discussed with the programme team. However, full documentary evidence was not received and to reinforce discussions, the Visitors would like to review written evidence.

Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:
5.7.1 the learning outcomes to be achieved;
5.7.4 the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the module descriptor for Biomedical Professional Practice to include reference to the Registration Training Portfolio.

Reason: The Visitors are satisfied that students are informed about the Registration Training Portfolio and the associated learning outcomes and assessment methods during the Biomedical Professional Practice module. However, there is no reference in the module descriptor to the portfolio and the Visitors felt reference must be made to provide students with full information.

Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators:
5.8.3 undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must submit the training plans and guidance provided to placement educators surrounding the assessment of the Health and Safety assignment.

Reason: From discussions with the placement educators it was apparent they receive training prior to acting as a mentor however, they confirmed they used professional judgement in marking the Health and Safety assignment. The Health and Safety assignment is the only assignment which placement educators mark but as it counts towards the students final grade, the Visitors felt the placement educators must be provided with guidance to ensure parity across placements.

SET 6. *Assessment standards*

6.1 The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practise.

Condition: The programme team must redraft and resubmit the course handbook to provide clarification of the modules available for and the amount of condonement allowed within the programme.

Reason: Currently the course handbook does not clearly state which modules can be condoned or the extent of condonement allowed. From discussions with the programme team, the Visitors were satisfied the level of condonement allows students to demonstrate fitness to practice, but to provide full information to students the course handbook must be updated.

Deadline for conditions to be met: 21 February 2008
Expected date visitors' report submitted to Panel for approval: 26 March 2008
Expected date programme submitted to Panel for approval: 26 March 2008

COMMENDATIONS

- **The Visitors would like to commend the programme team on the number of opportunities for students to use the excellent research facilities and engage with projects based on patient samples being delivered into the facility.**

The nature and quality of instruction and facilities meets the standards of education and training.

We recommend to the Education and Training Committee of the HPC that they approve this programme, subject to any conditions being met.

Visitors' signatures:

   Mary Popeck

   Phil Warren

Date: 6 December 2007