

Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Open University
<b>Programme name</b>	Foundation Degree in Health Sciences
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Part time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Operating Department Practice
<b>Date of visit</b>	18 and 19 March 2008

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Operating Department Practitioner' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health 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. The education provider has until Monday 19 May 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 29 May 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Tuesday 27 May 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 3 July 2008.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

### Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mrs Tracy Huggins (Operating Department Practitioner) Mrs Penny Joyce (Operating Department Practitioner)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Ms Charlotte Urwin
Proposed student numbers	10 in first cohort
Proposed start date of programme approval	29 September 2008
Chair	Professor Trevor Herbert (Open University)
Secretary	Ms Caroline Neeson (Open University)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC 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 for S110 course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbooks for individual courses	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative agreement for S110 course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HPC 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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the pilot programme of the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences. The students were all registered Paramedics undertaking the programme as a trial before it is rolled out nationwide.

The HPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the education provider offers programmes by supported open learning. The specialist teaching accommodation is therefore provided by the student's employer (Sponsor).

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured 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 their 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 20 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 43 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

## Conditions

### **SET 2 Programme admissions**

2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 education provider must redraft and resubmit the advertising materials for the programme to provide full and clear information to applicants about their opportunities upon completion of the programme.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear the advertising material contained references to Assistant Practitioner. The visitors felt that this was misleading as, if the programme gained approval, graduates would be eligible to apply to the HPC Register and if successfully registered, use the protected title of Operating Department Practitioner.

2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure applicants meet the English language requirements of the programme at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement, between the education provider and the Sponsor, requires the Sponsor to ensure that applicants 'meet minimum English language requirements'. The agreement provides the Sponsor with guidance on the level the education provider expects students to have attained. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure applicants had a good command of written and spoken English. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors felt the education provider could not ensure that criminal conviction

checks were undertaken. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.3 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate health checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'all appropriate health status checks required for the Student's role are met'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the appropriate health requirements were met. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### ***SET 3 Programme management and resource standards***

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that practice based courses are appropriately quality assured.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was apparent the Collaborative Agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Sponsor and the education provider. However, the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement and the visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management. The visitors felt that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the Collaborative Agreement for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) course.

**Reason:** In the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team and senior team it was clear that the Collaborative Agreement for the second practice based module (S210) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme, the Collaborative Agreement for the S210 course must be submitted.

- 3.4 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit a strategy for appointing an adequate number of appropriately qualified Associate Lecturers for the practice based courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences award.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team and students it was clear the Associate Lecturer plays an important role in supporting the student. One Associate Lecturer has been appointed for the first practice based course (S110 – Health sciences in practice) of the pilot Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. The visitors recognise that prior to the programme being rolled-out nationwide it is difficult to predict student numbers and therefore the number of and location where Associate Lecturers will be needed. However, the visitors felt that until they received further information, in the form of a recruitment strategy, they were unable to fully assess this standard of education and training.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that resources are available and used effectively during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources were provided or used effectively. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 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 education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure student consent is obtained during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'obtain Student consent for participation as patient or client in any practical or clinical teaching activity' and that further guidance is provided in the Information for Mentors publication. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that student consent was being obtained. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that



mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the practice placement attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the programme team it was clear that students are required to undertake all of the placements recommended by the College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP). This was not clearly articulated in the submitted documentation for courses S110 and S210 and as such, the visitors were unclear of the attendance policy surrounding these placements and the monitoring mechanisms which are in place to assess whether students gain this mandatory experience.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the resources adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources provided adequately supported the programme's learning and teaching activities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

**Condition:** The education provider must update and submit evidence that the online library includes Operating Department Practice electronic periodicals and books.

**Reason:** From searches of the online library and the discussions with the library staff and programme team, it was clear there were no Operating Department Practice electronic periodicals and books available for students to view. The visitors recognise that much of the information students require is provided to them in the form of textbooks. However as there was no Operating Department Practice specific information in the library at the time of the visit, the visitors felt that to provide students with full support throughout the duration of the

programme, the online library must be updated to include Operating Department Practice specific material.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate IT facilities are provided during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'the Student with access to computing facilities' which meet the education provider standard specification. The visitors were satisfied the education provider standard specification is appropriate, however, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that students had access to appropriate IT facilities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

#### **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 education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessments, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether graduates would meet the standards of proficiency for Operating Department Practice and as such, the course guides must be submitted.

4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the requirement to undertake the CODP recommended placements.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the education provider requires students to complete the CODP recommended placements. However, the practice placement documentation does not reflect these discussions and to allow the visitors to fully assess this standard, the practice placement documentation must be updated.

- 4.6 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate learning and teaching approaches are used during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide suitable Practice Placements that enable the Student to complete Continuous Assessment and the End of Course Assessment'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate to the subject. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### ***SET 5 Practice placement standards***

- 5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the student during Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe environment during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided a safe environment. The

visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure safe and effective practice during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement' and 'carry out regular audits'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided safe and effective practice. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the number, duration and range of placements is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was unclear what placements the students were expected to undertake. However, from discussions with the programme team and placement providers it became clear that students are expected to undertake the CODP recommended placements. HPC does not set the number, length or range of placements which a student must undertake and it does not stipulate that students studying to become Operating Department Practitioners must undertake the CODP recommended placements. However, as the programme team confirmed that students would be expected to undertake the CODP recommended placements, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to clearly articulate how the CODP recommended placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a thorough and effective system of monitoring is undertaken for the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'carry out regular audits of Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the

visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that regular audits were carried out or that they were part of a thorough or effective system. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with each practice placement.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that these competency lists were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient detail about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

The visitors felt that in order for students and placement providers to be fully prepared for placement, the programme documentation must be updated to provide further information about the specific learning outcomes required during the practice based courses.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the timings and duration of the placements and any associated records to be maintained.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team and the placement providers it was clear that students are required to undertake the CODP recommended placements. However it is not clear in the programme documentation when these placements should occur; how long they should be; or what records must be kept. In order to provide students and placement providers with clear information, the visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated.

5.7.3 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the expectations of professional conduct.

**Reason:** From the documentation the visitors felt that more information must be included regarding expectations of professional conduct. In particular, the visitors felt the S110 course guide must be updated to reflect that students would be expected to meet HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Information must also be provided to students and placement providers on what will happen in the event of students behaving in an unprofessional manner.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that information was included in the practice placement documentation regarding assessment procedures. However, the visitors felt that more information must be provided regarding the options available for a failing student.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate to students and placement providers the lines of communication and responsibility.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that all parties were confident of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitors recognised that all three groups, to varying degrees, had been involved in the development of the programme. The visitors were unclear how any new students or placement providers would be informed about lines of communication and responsibility and as such, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately qualified and experienced.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide

students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria provided by the education provider. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the Workplace Mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.2 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately registered.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria as provided by the education provider; and advise the education provider of the 'name and professional registration number of the Workplace Mentor'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors were appropriately registered. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure Workplace Mentors receive appropriate educator training.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the Student'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors received appropriate educator training. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the placement providers.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that the processes to provide information to the placement providers work well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors were concerned that this could be due to the close relationship between the education provider and the Trust who had helped to develop the programme. The visitors would therefore like to see further information about the mechanisms which are in place to provide all placement providers with necessary information.

5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate when the placement providers must pass information to the education provider and students.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the placement providers were confident of the information to be passed to the education provider and to the student. The placement providers recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new placement providers may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new placement providers would be informed about the information they needed to pass to the education provider and to the student.

5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the learning and teaching methods used during the practice based courses respect the rights and needs of patients, clients and colleagues.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to schedule 7 of the Collaborative Agreement. Schedule 7 does not demonstrate how the learning and teaching methods of the practice placements respect the needs of patients, clients or colleagues. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to provide evidence of this.

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored during the practice based courses.



**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to have in place non-discriminatory policies, though there is no requirement for the Sponsor to monitor their policies. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the anti-discriminatory policies were implemented and monitored accordingly. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### **SET 6 Assessment standards**

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

**Condition:** The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them to fully determine whether the assessment design and procedures allowed students to demonstrate fitness to practise.

6.2 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the assessment methods measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten lists of competencies were too wide reaching and did not allow students to be assessed against the specific learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to ensure the assessment methods adequately assess the learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice.

6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

**Condition:** The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether all the assessment methods were thorough and effective.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the External Assessors interim reports for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that modules are subject to two forms of external scrutiny; external assessment during the development of the course and external examiner scrutiny during course presentation. The visitors noted that the External Assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented and to determine whether there are effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment, the visitors would like to review the External Assessors interim reports.

6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how professional aspects of practice will be integral to assessment procedures.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten competencies were too wide reaching and did not provide the detail necessary to assess a student's familiarity with the idea of their professional responsibility for their own actions, values and ethics, or their understanding of the nature of professional regulation, and the responsibilities this involves.

6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate student progression and achievement for Operating Department Practice within the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences was an existing programme to which an Operating Department Practice route had been added. The programme team confirmed that all students graduating from the programme would be awarded the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences. The visitors were concerned that as student progression and achievement for the Operating Department Practice route was not specifically articulated in the programme documentation or award, there was no way of determining whether a graduate had undertaken the Operating Department Practice route or another health care science route.

6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specific assessment regulations to clearly state that an aegrotat award does not provide eligibility to apply for admission to the HPC Register.

**Reason:** From the documentation it was clear the rules surrounding aegrotat awards are available to students on the website. However, the visitors felt that programme specific information must be made available to students.

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the assessment regulations which clearly specify the education provider's External Examiner arrangements.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that there are External Examiners for all courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. However, the visitors were unable to view the assessment regulations stating the education providers External Examiner policy and would like the opportunity to review them to finalise their assessment of this standard.

Tracy Huggins  
Penny Joyce

Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Open University
<b>Programme name</b>	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Part time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Paramedic Science
<b>Date of visit</b>	18 and 19 March 2008

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 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 HPC keep a register of health 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. The education provider has until Monday 19 May 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 29 May 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Tuesday 27 May 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 3 July 2008.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

### Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Mr Andrew Newton (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Ms Charlotte Urwin
Proposed student numbers	100
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 October 2008
Chair	Professor Trevor Herbert (Open University)
Secretary	Ms Caroline Neeson (Open University)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC 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 for S110 course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbooks for individual courses	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaborative agreement for S110 course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

During the visit the HPC 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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the pilot programme of the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences. The students were all registered Paramedics undertaking the programme as a trial before it is rolled out nationwide.

The HPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the education provider offers programmes by supported open learning. The specialist teaching accommodation is therefore provided by the student's employer (Sponsor).

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be assured 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 their 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 21 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 42 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for approval. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.



## Conditions

### **SET 2 Programme admissions**

- 2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 education provider must submit draft advertising material for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences.

**Reason:** During discussions with the programme team it became apparent there was confusion about whether advertising material could be produced for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme prior to it gaining approval. As such the education provider took the decision not to produce any material until the programme had gained approval. The visitors felt that in order to fully assess whether the programme meets this standard, draft advertising material must be submitted.

- 2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure applicants meet the English language requirements of the programme at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement, between the education provider and the Sponsor, requires the Sponsor to ensure that applicants 'meet minimum English language requirements'. The agreement provides the Sponsor with guidance on the level the education provider expects students to have attained. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure applicants had a good command of written and spoken English. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the

visitors felt the education provider could not ensure that criminal conviction checks were undertaken. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.3 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate health checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'all appropriate health status checks required for the Student's role are met'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the appropriate health requirements were met. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### **SET 3 Programme management and resource standards**

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that the practice based courses are appropriately quality assured.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was apparent the Collaborative Agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Sponsor and the education provider. However, the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement and the visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management. The visitors felt that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) course.

**Reason:** In the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team and senior team it was clear that the Collaborative Agreement for the second practice based module (S211) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme, the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 course must be submitted.

- 3.4 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit a strategy for appointing an adequate number of appropriately qualified Associate Lecturers for the practice based courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences award.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team and students it was clear the Associate Lecturer plays an important role in supporting the student. One Associate Lecturer has been appointed for the first practice based course (S110 – Health sciences in practice) of the pilot Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. The visitors recognise that prior to the programme being rolled-out nationwide it is difficult to predict student numbers and therefore the number of and location where Associate Lecturers will be needed. However, the visitors felt that until they received further information, in the form of a recruitment strategy, they were unable to fully assess this standard of education and training.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that resources are available and used effectively during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources were provided or used effectively. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 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 education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure student consent is obtained during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'obtain Student consent for participation as patient or client in any practical or clinical teaching activity' and that further guidance is provided in the Information for Mentors publication. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that student consent was being obtained. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that

mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the practice placement attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the programme team it was clear that students are required to undertake all of the placements recommended by the British Paramedic Association (BPA). This was not clearly articulated in the submitted documentation for courses S110 and S211 and as such, the visitors were unclear of the attendance policy surrounding these placements and the monitoring mechanisms which are in place to assess whether students gain this mandatory experience.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the resources adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources provided adequately supported the programme's learning and teaching activities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

**Condition:** The education provider must update and submit evidence that the online library includes Paramedic specific texts and journals.

**Reason:** From searches of the online library and the discussions with the library staff and programme team, it was clear there were no Paramedic specific texts or journals available for students to view. The visitors recognise that much of the information students require is provided to them in the form of textbooks and that there are plans to introduce Paramedic specific material once the pilot programme enters the second year. However as there was no Paramedic specific information in the library at the time of the visit, the visitors felt that to

provide students with full support throughout the duration of the programme, the online library must be updated to include Paramedic specific material.

- 3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate IT facilities are provided during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'the Student with access to computing facilities' which meet the education provider standard specification. The visitors were satisfied the education provider standard specification is appropriate, however, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that students had access to appropriate IT facilities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

#### **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 education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessments, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether graduates would meet the standards of proficiency for Paramedics and as such, the course guides must be submitted.

- 4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the requirement to undertake the BPA recommended placements.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the education provider requires students to complete the BPA recommended placements. However, the practice placement documentation does not reflect these discussions and to allow the visitors to fully assess this standard, the practice placement documentation must be updated.

- 4.6 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate learning and teaching approaches are used during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide suitable Practice Placements that enable the Student to complete Continuous Assessment and the End of Course Assessment'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate to the subject. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### ***SET 5 Practice placement standards***

- 5.2 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the student during Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

- 5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe environment during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided a safe environment. The

visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure safe and effective practice during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement' and 'carry out regular audits'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided safe and effective practice. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the number, duration and range of placements is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was unclear what placements the students were expected to undertake. However, from discussions with the programme team and placement providers it became clear that students are expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements. HPC does not set the number, length or range of placements which a student must undertake and it does not stipulate that students studying to become Paramedics must undertake the BPA recommended placements. However, as the programme team confirmed that students would be expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to clearly articulate how the BPA recommended placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a thorough and effective system of monitoring is undertaken for the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'carry out regular audits of Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that regular

audits were carried out or that they were part of a thorough or effective system. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with each practice placement.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that these competency lists were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient detail about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

The visitors felt that in order for students and placement providers to be fully prepared for placement, the programme documentation must be updated to provide further information about the specific learning outcomes required during the practice based courses.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the timings and duration of the placements and any associated records to be maintained.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team and the placement providers it was clear that students are required to undertake the BPA recommended placements. However it is not clear in the programme documentation when these placements should occur; how long they should be; or what records must be kept. In order to provide students and placement providers with clear information, the visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated.



5.7.3 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the expectations of professional conduct.

**Reason:** From the documentation the visitors felt that more information must be included regarding expectations of professional conduct. In particular, the visitors felt the S110 course guide must be updated to reflect that students would be expected to meet HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Information must also be provided to students and placement providers on what will happen in the event of students behaving in an unprofessional manner.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that information was included in the practice placement documentation regarding assessment procedures. However, the visitors felt that more information must be provided regarding the options available for a failing student.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate to students and placement providers the lines of communication and responsibility.

**Reason:** From discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that all parties were confident of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitors recognised that all three groups, to varying degrees, had been involved in the development of the programme. The visitors were unclear how any new students or placement providers would be informed about lines of communication and responsibility and as such, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately qualified and experienced.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide

students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria provided by the education provider. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the Workplace Mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.2 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately registered.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria as provided by the education provider; and advise the education provider of the 'name and professional registration number of the Workplace Mentor'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors were appropriately registered. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure Workplace Mentors receive appropriate educator training.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the Student'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors received appropriate educator training. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the placement providers.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that the processes to provide information to the placement providers were working well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors were concerned that this could be due to the close relationship between the education provider and the Trust who had helped to develop the programme. The visitors would therefore like to see further information about the mechanisms which are in place to provide all placement providers with necessary information.

5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate when the placement providers must pass information to the education provider and students.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the placement providers were confident of the information to be passed to the education provider and to the student. The placement providers recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new placement providers may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new placement providers would be informed about the information they needed to pass to the education provider and to the student.

5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the learning and teaching methods used during the practice based courses respect the rights and needs of patients, clients and colleagues.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to schedule 7 of the Collaborative Agreement. Schedule 7 does not demonstrate how the learning and teaching methods of the practice placements respect the needs of patients, clients or colleagues. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to provide evidence of this.

5.13 The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored during the practice based courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to have in place

non-discriminatory policies, though there is no requirement for the Sponsor to monitor their policies. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the anti-discriminatory policies were implemented and monitored accordingly. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

### **SET 6 Assessment standards**

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

**Condition:** The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them to fully determine whether the assessment design and procedures allowed students to demonstrate fitness to practise.

6.2 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the assessment methods measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten lists of competencies were too wide reaching and did not allow students to be assessed against the specific learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to ensure the assessment methods adequately assess the learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice.

6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

**Condition:** The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211

(Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether all the assessment methods were thorough and effective.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the External Assessors interim reports for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that modules are subject to two forms of external scrutiny; external assessment during the development of the course and external examiner scrutiny during course presentation. The visitors noted that the External Assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented and to determine whether there are effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment, the visitors would like to review the External Assessors interim reports.

6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how professional aspects of practice will be integral to assessment procedures.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publications states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten competencies were too wide reaching and did not provide the detail necessary to assess a student's familiarity with the idea of their professional responsibility for their own actions, values and ethics, or their understanding of the nature of professional regulation, and the responsibilities this involves.

6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

**Condition:** The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specific assessment regulations to clearly state that an aegrotat award does not provide eligibility to apply for admission to the HPC Register.

**Reason:** From the documentation it was clear the rules surrounding aegrotat awards are available to students on the website. However, the visitors felt that programme specific information must be made available to students.

6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the assessment regulations which clearly specify the education provider's External Examiner arrangements.

**Reason:** From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that there are External Examiners for all courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. However, the visitors were unable to view the assessment regulations stating the education providers External Examiner policy and would like the opportunity to review them to finalise their assessment of this standard.

Vince Clarke  
Andrew Newton



RECEIVED 19 MAY 2008

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Abigail Creighton  
Health Professions Council  
184 Kennington Road  
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14 May 2008

Dear Abigail

### Comments on HPC Visitors Reports

I am writing to you in Tracey Samuel-Smith's absence on leave with two comments on the factual accuracy of the HPC Visitors Reports for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences and the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice. I understand that you require these comments by 19 May.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 3.2 which states *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S211*. A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 3.2 which reads *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S210*. We would like to reiterate the point made at the visit that the collaborative agreement covers the whole programme and is not module based (or in OU parlance, course based). Therefore, we would be grateful if this condition could be taken out of both reports.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S211 and S2xx*. A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S210 and S2xx*.

External Assessor interim reports are a full and detailed formal report, covering all aspects of the course (or module) and commenting on all the course material available. S211, S210 and S2xx are courses which are currently being written. S211 and S210 are not due for first presentation for another year and a half and S2xx for another two and a half years. Formally, External Assessor interim reports are required for submission to the University six to nine months before the expected first presentation of the course. It is therefore not possible at this stage for the External Assessors to prepare their interim report. Whilst we cannot provide the External Assessor interim reports for these courses at this time we will be happy to provide



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copies of the interim reports when they are provided to us which we anticipate will be in another 1-2 years.

We would be grateful if these conditions could either be removed or changed to reflect this situation and applied retrospectively.

I hope these points clarify the situation on two sets of conditions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'pp J.R.' followed by a flourish.

Caroline Neeson



## Extract from May 2008 Education and Training Panel minutes

### Item 5.08/28 Visitors' reports with representations

- 5.1 The Panel received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 5.2 The Panel noted that the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences programme at the Open University had been the subject of an approvals visit on 18-19 March 2008. The visitors' report had included a condition against SET 3.2, requiring the education provider to submit the collaborative agreement for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) course. The report had stated that, from the documentation and discussions with the programme team and senior team, it was clear that the collaborative agreement for the second practice based module (S210) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme the collaborative agreement must be submitted.
- 5.3 The Panel noted that the visitors' report had also included a condition against SET 6.5, requiring the education provider to submit the external assessors' interim reports for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (the psychology of health and ill health) courses. The visitors had noted that the external assessor provided an interim report six to nine months before the course was presented and the visitors wished to determine whether there were effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.
- 5.4 The Panel noted that education provider had made representations concerning the condition against SET 3.2. The education provider had explained that the collaborative agreement covered the whole programme and was not module-based. The education provider had also made representations concerning the condition against SET 6.5. The education provider stated that it was not possible at this time for the external assessor to prepare the interim report, due to the timescale indicated in paragraph 5.3, although the education provider offered to provide the report once it was available.
- 5.5 The Panel noted that the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme at the Open University had been the subject of an approvals visit on 18-19 March 2008. The visitors' report had included similar conditions against SET 3.2 and 6.5 and the education provider had made representations on the same grounds as indicated above.

- 5.6 In respect of the representation concerning the condition for SET 3.2 in both of the above programmes, the Panel felt that as the collaborative agreement received prior to the visit stated it was for a module, the condition would be satisfied if the collaborative agreement was amended to state that it applied to the whole programme. The Panel agreed that the conditions should remain in the visitors' reports.
- 5.7 In respect of the representation concerning the condition against SET 6.5, the Panel noted that the visitors' report stated it had been clear, from documentation and discussion with the programme team, that modules were subject to two forms of external scrutiny (external assessment during the development of the course and external examiner scrutiny during course presentation). The visitors had requested copies of the external assessor interim reports. The Panel agreed that there was an apparent contradiction between the clarity over external scrutiny and the need for the visitors to see the interim reports. The Panel agreed that the visitors should be asked to provide clarification on the reasons for the condition to a future Panel meeting, which would decide on whether the condition should remain.

The full minutes from this Panel can be found at:

[www.hpc-](http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/committees/educationandtraining_archive/index.asp?id=316)

[uk.org/aboutus/committees/educationandtraining\\_archive/index.asp?id=316](http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/committees/educationandtraining_archive/index.asp?id=316)

## Visitor responses to request from May 2008 ETP for further information

In response to the email below, agreement was received by email from the Visitors as follows:

5 August 2008 – agreement by Penny Joyce  
5 August 2008 – agreement by Vince Clarke  
5 August 2008 – agreement by Andrew Newton  
6 August 2008 – agreement by Tracey Huggins

Copies of the emails will be available for the Panel members if they wish to review them at the Panel meeting.

---

Mandy Hargood  
05/08/2008 08:56

Dear Penny, Tracey, Vince and Andy

From some words that Penny sent me (thank you!) I have put together the recommendation below to go to committee. I should be grateful if you could all approve it by Wednesday 6 August 2008 as the paper needs to go to committee then.

Recommendation The education provider should submit as part of annual monitoring the interim reports for S210 and S2XX

Reason: The visitors noted that the external assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented to ensure effective mechanisms are in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment of student. The visitors felt that these mechanisms were sufficient to meet SET 6.5 to assure appropriate standards in the assessment. As these reports will not be available until 2009/10 it is recommended that this is seen as part of the annual monitoring process.

Many thanks for your time once again on this.

Kind regards

Mandy Hargood  
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## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Strathclyde
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 and 14 May 2008

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Prosthetist' or 'Orthotist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health 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 ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until Thursday 24 July 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Monday 18 August 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by <deadline for conditions tbc>. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on <panel date tbc>.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - programme admissions standards, programme management and resources standards, curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HPC only visit. The education provider did not review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. The visit also considered a different programme – MSci Prosthetics and Orthotics. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

### Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr Martin Matthews (Orthotist) Professor Jackie Campbell (Lay)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Abigail Creighton
Proposed student numbers	30
Initial approval	1986
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Mr Robbie Rooney (Scottish Government Health and Wellbeing Directorate)
Secretary	Gabrielle Weir (University of Strathclyde)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internal annual monitoring reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners reports from the last two years (2005-06 & 2006-07) as they do not exist. However, the HPC did review external examiners reports from the 2003-04 & 2004-05years.

The HPC did not request the mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs, as the visitors had received sufficient documentation as part of the earlier minor/major change process.

During the visit the HPC 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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured 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 their 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 40 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 23 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. 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 recommendation for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.



## Conditions

### **3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the role of external examiners and the process for their appointment and subsequent reporting

**Reason:** Prior to the visit, the visitors received external examiner reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 academic years, but not from the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years. The programme team explained that the external examiner had been on sick leave in 2005-06 and that the outgoing external examiner never submitted a report for 2006-07. The absence of external examiners reports for two years had not been flagged up as a concern to the programme team.

The programme team explained that two new external examiners had been recruited for the current academic year (2007-08) and that they had already been sent examination papers. However, it was initially unclear whether they had completed the selection process and been formally appointed.

The visitors followed up comments in the reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 years about external examiners not being fully utilised. It was explained that they only routinely send exam papers (not coursework) and that they were not asked for feedback on the major changes to the programme. External examiners could ask to see coursework and students when they attended exam boards each year.

There appeared to be a lack of ownership over external examiners and they were not being appointed and used in line with the education provider's regulations. Their limited involvement called into question the effectiveness of the education providers' peer review system as a tool to successfully manage the programme.

### **3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the systems used to ensure that placement components of the programme are managed effectively.

**Reason:** Following discussion with the programme team and placement educators, it was apparent to the visitors that the education provider was not taking ultimate responsibility for placements. The lack of formal auditing and monitoring (reflected in the conditions later in the report) meant that the visitors were not assured that placements were managed effectively. Systems, such as placement evaluations, audits, and partnership meetings, were not in place to monitor and enhance placement learning.

### **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 education provider must develop an appropriate protocol for obtaining students' consent.

**Reason:** The documentation submitted prior to the visit did not detail any protocol for obtaining students' consent. The students explained to the visitors that although there were no written consent forms, it was acceptable to opt out or modify teaching activities for health or cultural reasons, as long as it was discussed with a member of the programme team. The programme team explained that consent was currently obtained on a module specific basis and that forms were signed in some incidences (e.g. wearing orthoses) but not in others (e.g. role plays). The visitors felt that the approach to obtaining consent needed to be revised to acknowledge the wide range of risk factors and provide consistent guidance.

### **3.10 A system of academic and pastoral student support must be in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the academic and pastoral support systems available to students whilst on placements.

**Reason:** In the meeting with students, the students explained that there were effective support mechanisms in place during the taught part of the programme; however there was a contrast when they were on placement. The students could not recall any placement visits from members of the programme team and although placement educators supported students' clinical learning, they did not offer any pastoral or wider academic support. The placement educators told the visitors that they normally experienced one visit per placement from a member of the programme team. The programme team acknowledged that placements visits were not consistently happening outside of the local region and that a system of reactive, rather than proactive support by email and telephone was in place. The visitors felt that students needed to know how they were supported during their placements.

### **3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the reading lists for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' and confirm the availability of their contents.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' did not include any recommended reading. In the meeting with the programme team, it was explained that the documents were still work in progress, but that as they were based on content delivered in the previous version of the programme, the learning resources to support them were available. As the tour of facilities coincided with the exam period, the full stock of periodicals and books was not available for the visitors to see. The visitors felt that the reading lists should be finalised so they could be assured that the resources were appropriate to the subject. They also wished for confirmation that the texts were available, through either library or IT facilities.

### **5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide a safe environment, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident that a safe environment was assured when the placement was initially approved. Following on from this, they had no assurance that the risks and safety issues in placements were assessed, reduced and communicated to students on an ongoing, routine basis.

### **5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide for safe and effective practice, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident each placement provided for safe and effective practice on initial approval. Following on from this, there was no assurance that resources and placement educators encouraged safe and effective practice on an ongoing, routine basis.

### **5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of initial and ongoing training and/or development of placement educators in the process of supervision.

**Reason:** During the meeting with placement educators, it became apparent that the education provider provided limited training and relied on placement providers and the prior qualifications and experience of individuals to ensure that placement educators were prepared to teach and supervise students. Placement educators acknowledged that they built professional day-to-day working relationships with students and consequently found it difficult to fail them because of this. They could not envisage supervising a failed student who had to re-sit a placement. The students had varied experiences in their placements, with

placement educators often unaware of their level and having expectations which were either too high or too low. When this occurred, students felt that placement educators struggled to teach or supervise them. The visitors felt that the education provider needed to ensure that placement educators were prepared in supervisory practice, so that students' clinical and professional skills were fostered and developed appropriately.

#### **5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that placement educators can ensure that students can meet the learning outcomes of the placements within the four month period.

**Reason:** The revised programme has reduced the duration of placements. There are now two four month placements, instead of two six month placements. They still follow the same pattern – one in year three and one in year four; one covering prosthetics and one covering orthotics.

The senior team explained that the changes had arisen out of a major review and that key stakeholders (including students and placement providers/educators) had been involved. In the meeting with placement educators, they explained that they had completed a questionnaire about the proposed changes and then later learnt of the changes via professional journals and conferences. They were not aware that any changes had been made to the learning outcomes of the placements, nor were they entirely clear of how the taught part of the programme was now structured. There was great concern that the reduced length in placements would not allow students to see a sufficient range of patient/client groups and interventions/devices. The placement educators could not grasp how the education provider expected students to progress in terms of clinical skills over a shorter period of time. Whilst there is much overlap between prosthetics and orthotics, the placement educators felt that modern practice and placement settings were markedly different in the two areas and warranted differing learning outcomes. They doubted whether there was sufficient time to achieve the learning outcomes, particularly in the orthotics placement. Final year students also questioned whether the learning outcomes for the orthotics placement could be achieved within four months.

The programme team identified with the placement educators and students concerns and said that they hoped that all the placement learning outcomes could be achieved within four months. However, they explained that if it became impossible for students to achieve their learning outcomes within this shortened period, then the five week holiday block at the end of the year would be utilised. The programme team were hopeful that the clearer integration of theory and practice in years one and two will prepare students for their placements in years three and four, and thus allow them to consolidate their clinical learning more efficiently. The visitors explained that the HPC does not have any specific requirements on the length of placements and the dilemma they face is not over the length of the placements per se, but over the education provider's confidence that the new length is appropriate to meet the learning outcomes. The visitor need to be assured that placement educators in particular are prepared and able

to give students the placement opportunity they require to meet the learning outcomes set by the education provider; which in turn assure that the standards of proficiency are met upon completion.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements and criteria used when approving and monitoring placements.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident. From discussions with the programme team and placement educators, it was unclear how placements were monitored subsequently. The system appeared to rely on informal communication channels and ad-hoc feedback and be to some extent reactive.

**5.7 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**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the learning outcomes for the two placements modules.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed learning outcomes. The programme team explained that they remained unchanged from the previous version of the programme. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes needed to be included in the documentation available to placement educators and students, so they were clear of what the achievements were.

**5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

**5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm that the learning outcomes for the two placements modules include expectations of professional conduct.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed learning outcomes, so the visitors could not be assured that expectations of professional conduct were covered. The programme team explained that they remained unchanged from the previous version of the programme. The placement educators said that the clinical assessment did not focus on interpersonal skills.

The visitors felt that the learning outcomes needed to be provided, so they could make sure that the expectations of professional conduct were clear.

**5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

**5.7.4 the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure; and**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the assessment procedures used by placement educators in the two placements modules.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed assessment methods. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. The placement educators explained that they currently find it difficult to fail students on the assessment and tend to use the clinical examination to fail poor students instead.

**5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualification and experience.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the qualification and experience required for placement educators.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. These approval mechanisms included a check on the qualifications and prior experience of placement educators. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge how the requirements of placement educators' knowledge, understanding and skills were checked. Equally, it was not clear how changes to placement educators were proposed and agreed, following initial approval. The programme team and placement educators gave contrasting accounts to the visitors. The visitors felt that the education provider must clarify their arrangements for setting and monitoring the qualifications and prior experience of placement educators.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the process for training placement educators. This should include initial training, refresher training as well as specific training to inform current placement educators of the major changes to the programme.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that they did not provide formal training for placement educators. They said that their initial approval mechanism acted as a safeguard for placement educators' knowledge and skills and that ad-hoc

informal support was available from the placement co-ordinator role. The placement educators confirmed that they had not received initial or refresher training and said it would be useful, especially in the areas of assessment, mentoring and reflective learning. As the students had commented about how placement educators misjudged the level of their theoretical knowledge and clinical skills at the beginning of placements, and the placement educators had said they were unaware of the detail of the new programme, the visitors were keen for the education provider to develop and plan arrangements for placement educators training.

#### **5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must review current arrangements for consultation and collaboration between the education provider and placement educators.

**Reason:** The placement educators commended the day-to-day communication channels with the education provider and the visitors were confident in these signs of collaborative working. However, the expectations on the placement co-ordinator role seemed unrealistic and as a result, collaboration was limited. There was no opportunity for placement educators to feed back on general, broad areas, either collectively or individually. The placement educators appeared to have a disjointed and somewhat distant involvement in the review and major changes to the programmes, which questions the effectiveness of the collaboration with these key stakeholders.

#### **5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information is available to placement educators, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** Placement educators had not received information about the new programme or placement structure and assumed that this was because the new placements were not until the 2009-10 academic year. In general, the placement educators were confident they received the information that they needed to supervise students, however the visitors felt that the education provider should confirm what information they will give placement providers initially and what updates they can expect to receive, with an intention of timescales.

#### **5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information placement educators are expected to make available to the education provider.

**Reason:** Placement educators were unclear what information they were expected to give to the education provider and any timescales. The visitors would

have expected a flow of information around areas such as assessment, attendance monitoring, auditing/monitoring procedures.

**5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that their placement educators' training includes teaching and learning methods.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that they did not provide formal training for placement educators on teaching. They said that their initial approval mechanism checked the placement educators' previous knowledge and skills in this area. The students raised concerns that some placement educators struggled to mentor students appropriately. In general placement educators were confident in their abilities, but recognised the diversity in training and background of placement educators. As the visitors had no evidence that placement educators were expected to have a qualification in mentoring/teaching or equivalent experience, they felt that the range and use of appropriate learning and teaching methods should be covered in placement educators' training to ensure that the rights of patients or clients and colleagues were respected.

**5.13 The placement provider must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify that placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies are verified.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the how placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies were checked initially. It was also unclear how they were monitored on an ongoing basis and communicated to students.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the finalised placement assessment methods, criteria and associated regulations. These must demonstrate clear links to the standards of proficiency and fitness to practice.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' detailed the assessment strategy for placements. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. This will address the placement educators' comments that the current clinical assessment does not measure students interpersonal skills (so



potentially standards of proficiency 1b). Currently it is not clear from the documentation how students progress through and complete each placement module, what the implications are for failing a placement module, what the resit and retake arrangements are and whether elements of practice are eligible for compensation or condonement. Therefore, it is difficult for the visitors to be sure that students are fit to practice upon completion.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the specific requirements to pass each module.

**Reason:** The requirements to pass each module were listed in the documentation and discussed with the programme team. It was explained that each module had different requirements and that references in the documentation to common regulations were inaccurate and misleading. Clarification is needed as to what constitutes a pass in each module to make sure that students who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency. It is also important that students receive accurate and easy to understand information.

#### **6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the role and responsibility of external examiners and provide evidence of the guidance given to them.

**Reason:** The visitors reviewed external examiner reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 academic years and followed up comments about external examiners not being fully utilised. The programme team explained that they only routinely send draft exam papers to external examiners and not completed student work (exam or coursework). External examiners could ask to see coursework and students when they attended exam boards each year. They also said that they were not asked for feedback on the major changes to the programme. The visitors were concerned that there appeared to be a lack of ownership over external examiners and that they were possibly not being used in line with the education provider's regulations. Due to the limited external moderation mechanisms the visitors were unsure how they could effectively assure that appropriate standards were being used in the assessment procedures. In addition, as the revised programme included a shift from exam to coursework, the visitors were also concerned that future external moderation would be reduced even further.

#### **6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the placement assessment procedures and update their information about sources of guidance available to students on values and ethics.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' detailed the assessment strategy for placements. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. This will address the placement educators' comments that the current clinical assessment does not measure students interpersonal skills (so potentially standards of proficiency 1b). Currently it is not clear how aspects such as misconduct, confidentiality and professionalism will be assessed whilst on placement. The current placement handbook referred to an outdated code of practice and the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not mentioned. Without the finalised placement assessment and updated information, the visitors cannot be assured that professional aspects are an integral part of students' assessment.

**6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the regulations on progression.

**Reason:** The programme team clarified that the documentation contained arithmetic errors and inconsistencies in terms of credit value needed for progression. The visitors were happy with the regulations verbally confirmed to them, but felt that they needed to be clearly specified in the documentation.

**6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the regulations about their aegrotat award.

**Reason:** The documentation did not contain any references to an aegrotat award. The programme team explained that the standard regulations did allow for an aegrotat award and that there was currently no caveat to clarify the relationship between this award and HPC registration. The visitors felt that this needed to be clearly specified in the documentation.

## Recommendations

### **3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider developing a formal policy on student attendance.

**Reason:** The programme team currently monitor attendance through registers and attendance sheets and address non attendance through academic tutoring. Continual assessment requirements help ensure that students' attend regular, key components. Both students and the programme team explained that there were pockets of poor attendance and there were desires for a more formal system with mandatory attendance defined in numerical or another quantifiable term. The visitors wished to encourage this system as a model of best practice.

Mr Martin Matthews  
Professor Jackie Campbell

Our Ref: EF/LG

1 August 2008

HPC Education and Training Committee  
Health Professions Council  
Park House  
184 Kenington Road  
LONDON SE11 4BU

Dear members of the HPC Education and Training Committee

The National Centre for Prosthetics and Orthotics wishes to thank the HPC for their recent visit in the validation process for its courses. We recognise the importance of the process and the benefits this gives. We aim to consistently improve the teaching and learning experience for the student and this is evident in the major change we have voluntarily undertaken to the BSc Honours programme adding on the MSci, to provide world class education.

The National Centre would like the enclosed observations and reasoned consideration to be noted on the two reports following the visit on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008 to the department in line with major change to the programme.

The National Centre would also like to draw to the attention of the Education Committee the matter of the timescales imposed on the National Centre to respond to this recent report and the timing of this over the summer holiday period. The National Centre has been proactive throughout this process to inform the HPC at a very early stage in our own change process as required and documented by HPC. It is the National Centre's opinion that there was a serious delay in the programme being reviewed in the first instance. We consider the timescales within the report to be unreasonable and some deadlines unachievable if we are to meet our standards of quality.

- The department approached HPC in November 2006 and submitted paperwork for the major/minor change process and documentation of the changes to the programme.
- Visit requested by the National Centre in May/June 2007 in line with the dates suggested in the HPC documentation.
- HPC Education Department responds in June 2007 citing ongoing approval. HPC contacts National Centre in July/August 2007 stating the programme had undergone a major change and visitors would be appointed.
- August 2007 HPC notifies us that no visitors are currently trained whom did not have a vested interest in the programme and as such a new visitor would need to be found and trained.
- December 2007 dates requested by HPC for visit. March/April 2008 suggested by department.
- HPC unable to make dates and June 2008 suggested by HPC.

2/.....

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- The department suggests May 2008 to ensure student's available.
- HPC visit takes place on 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
- HPC reports were received by the programme leader on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and the following dates were suggested for responses:
- 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008 (for the HPC Education & Training Committee meeting 18<sup>th</sup> August)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008 (for the HPC Education & Training Committee meeting 25<sup>th</sup> September)
- Observations to be made by 24<sup>th</sup> July although following a telephone call this was agreed to be delayed by one week until Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008.

It is planned that, by 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008, the majority of the considerations will be acted upon fully. There are some conditions pertaining to core competencies and assessment of the Clinical Placement Programme, as are highlighted, that require further time to allow consultation and collaboration with our clinical placement supervisors to allow submission in a full and complete manner.

We look forward to the response of the Education and Training Committee.

Yours sincerely



**Elaine Figgins**  
Undergraduate Course Director

c.c. Abigail Crichton Education Manager, HPC Visitors

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OBSERVATIONS  
1 August 2008



OBSERVATIONS regarding the HPC visit report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Strathclyde
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 and 14 May 2008

Conditions

**3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the role of external examiners and the process for their appointment and subsequent reporting

**OBSERVATION**

*External examiners are appointed using the University of Strathclyde processes and procedures for appointment of external examiners. This includes submission and scrutiny of a Curriculum Vitae at appropriate University Committee.*

*Documentation was available during the second day to show the full approval process of both of the current external examiners but the department was told the team did not wish to see this.*

*We agree that the departmental processes for External Examiners need to be strengthened so that stronger peer review is implemented.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the systems used to ensure that placement components of the programme are managed effectively.

**OBSERVATION**

*Whilst we recognise the importance of formalising the auditing and monitoring of clinical placements we wish to point out that the cohort of prosthetist/orthotist students being placed is relatively small, with 20 students commonly being in a clinical placement cohort by Year 4. Being a small course within one of the smallest Allied Health Professions, the students and faculty team form a close knit community in the prosthetic/orthotic community and students are well known individually to the course team. Supervisors can readily access the team to flag a potential problem and also students continue in the 4<sup>th</sup> year to be allocated an academic counsellor and can make use of this link. Further to this the clinical placement co-ordinator is in regular informal communication with the 20 students and the clinical supervisors. One formal visit is normally conducted within the first half of the placement.*

*Members of staff from the department regularly liaise with the clinical placement supervisors in a number of forum such as the Practice Development network, the SCOTRET prosthetic, orthotic and coordinating groups which are for the NHS service providers and at which there is now PO company representation.*

*Additionally within this smaller profession a number of the placement supervisors also visit the department to lecture or to attend other professional meetings. We believe that to date there has been ample opportunity for discussion about clinical placements but recognise the need to improve our processes and agree that we should put in place further administration around quality audit and monitoring processes.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**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 education provider must develop an appropriate protocol for obtaining students' consent.

**OBSERVATION:**

*The department had previously been granted ethical approval for all student teaching and learning activities by the University Ethics Committee. This documentation was offered to the visitors. It is normal teaching practice across the University to adopt modern teaching and learning techniques, and role play is recognised as one such technique. With small classes that are commonly split into small groups it is possible to readily obtain verbal consent from students undertaking activities like role play and to ensure that students are comfortable with and consent to involvement and always have the option to opt out. The Programme team are prepared to revise the approach to obtaining consent, but are keen to stress that this is already carefully conducted. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.10 A system of academic and pastoral student support must be in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the academic and pastoral support systems available to students whilst on placements.

***OBSERVATION:** The current clinical placement visits of students and supervisors are normally one per clinical placement duration, the department has agreed to revise this in line with the condition above, but appreciates that due to the demographic spread of placements and the profession size that online support and other appropriate means of contact will also be increased to reinforce this area.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the reading lists for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' and confirm the availability of their contents.

**OBSERVATION:**

*The department has a world renowned book and periodical collection that is now housed in the main University Andersonian Library in the same building as the department. A full library catalogue is available both online and a hard copy will be produced for the visitors. The module descriptors do have a recommended reading list but many staff prefer to update these lists and produce class handouts with up to date reading lists. The department will ensure that the module descriptors have a reading list within all appropriate module descriptors but are cautious that students do not purchase books too early at unnecessary expense when they are readily available in the library.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide a safe environment, both initially and on an ongoing basis.



**OBSERVATION**

*The full documentation of the clinical placement approvals process was not seen by the visitors and will be submitted to them for their approval. It has been agreed by the department to enhance this procedure through improved quality management protocols and this will be documented.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide for safe and effective practice, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**OBSERVATION:**

**The full documentation of the clinical placement approvals process was not seen by the visitors and will be submitted to them for their approval. All Health and Safety documentation for all centres being used each year are requested and held centrally by the department's Health and Safety Committee. Quality management protocols will be produced for this mechanism.**

**Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.**

**5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of initial and ongoing training and/or development of placement educators in the process of supervision.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates that fuller documentation of students' experiences and clinical competencies already achieved prior to placements needs to be available to clinical placement supervisors. Also we do appreciate the need for further training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. We are planning this to be more proactive. To allow for the spread of clinical placement locations both in the short and the long term this will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\**

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

**5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that placement educators can ensure that students can meet the learning outcomes of the placements within the four month period.

**OBSERVATION**

*We wish to stress that the programme has changed in years 1, 2 and 3 with the aim of better preparing the students for their clinical placements. Essentially students on the revised course will have between 4 and 8 months placement in 2009/2010 for each discipline rather than 6 months to achieve competencies. The approach is flexible and so takes into account the concerns of clinical placement supervisors about the length of clinical placement and this will be closely monitored. Two 4 months placements of 16 weeks duration allow for a minimum*

*clinical experience of 1,280 hours and the clinical experience in the first three years is a total of 1,736 hours. This gives a total minimum experience of 3,000 hours. The department appreciates that the placement length must allow the student to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.\*\*.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements and criteria used when approving and monitoring placements.

**OBSERVATION**

*Documentation will be submitted by the department to show the procedures for monitoring these arrangements and criteria.*

- 5.7 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

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the learning outcomes for the two placements modules.

**OBSERVATION**

*As discussed with the visitors these core competencies are being written in liaison with the clinical placement providers and as such more time is sought to allow for this consultation to be an appropriate dialogue before submission of the detailed documentation. A meeting had already been held with the clinical placement providers prior to the HPC visit. The department would request till December 2008 for this submission to allow further consultation with our placement providers.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:

- 5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm that the learning outcomes for the two placements modules include expectations of professional conduct.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. This point was not raised as a question to the department teaching team by the visitors. However the specific learning outcomes are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the assessment procedures used by placement educators in the two placements modules.

**OBSERVATION**

*Due the comments we had received from clinical placement supervisors that grading students had difficulties, it had been agreed that the new assessment strategy would be pass/fail with written criteria. However the specific assessment criteria are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualification and experience.

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the qualification and experience required for placement educators.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department plans to act on this and clarify these arrangements. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the process for training placement educators. This should include initial training, refresher training as well as specific training to inform current placement educators of the major changes to the programme.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates the need for training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. We are planning this to be more proactive. However due to the demographic spread of clinical placement locations this is being planned for both in the short and the long term. This will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\**

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.

**Condition:** The education provider must review current arrangements for consultation and collaboration between the education provider and placement educators.

**OBSERVATION**

*It must be recognised that in moulding the model for the revised programme that other driving forces helped form the revised model. The Strategic Management Board of the department includes representatives from the professional body who manage clinical placement centres (one in orthotics and one in prosthetics).*

*Additionally there is an employer representative, a user and an NHS representative who chairs the Board. Also, the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for Scotland is on the board as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Health and Social Care of a neighbouring University. The Board were presented with various options for a revised course over several months that included longer clinical placements but unanimously agreed that option 7 (the revised course programme) was the best option. Two placement educators were therefore closely involved in agreeing the curriculum design. Documentation is currently being drafted to map the short and long term collaboration arrangement of the department with clinical supervisors. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information is available to placement educators, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**OBSERVATION**

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information placement educators are expected to make available to the education provider.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

**5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that their placement educators' training includes teaching and learning methods.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates the need for training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. However due to the demographic spread of clinical placement locations this is being planned for both in the short and the long term. This will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\* Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

**5.13 The placement provider must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify that placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies are verified.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the finalised placement assessment methods, criteria and associated regulations. These must demonstrate clear links to the standards of proficiency and fitness to practice.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. However the specific assessment criteria are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors. Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the specific requirements to pass each module.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

- 6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the role and responsibility of external examiners and provide evidence of the guidance given to them.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

- 6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the placement assessment procedures and update their information about sources of guidance available to students on values and ethics.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed*

*with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. The errors in the student handbook have been rectified.*

*However the specific finalised placement assessment is currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors and more time is requested as in the previous point.*

**6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the regulations on progression.

***OBSERVATION***

***The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.***

**6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the regulations about their aegrotat award.

***OBSERVATION***

***The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.***

Recommendations

**3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider developing a formal policy on student attendance.

***OBSERVATION***

***The department had planned to document these more formal systems and is happy to implement this recommendation.***

***Documentation will be submitted to support this condition***

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Strathclyde
<b>Programme name</b>	MSci Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 and 14 May 2008

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Prosthetist' or 'Orthotist' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health 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. The education provider has until Thursday 24 July to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Monday 18 August 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by <deadline for conditions tbc>. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on <panel date tbc>.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. The visit also considered a different programme – BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

### Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr Martin Matthews (Orthotist) Professor Jackie Campbell (Lay)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Abigail Creighton
Proposed student numbers	30
Initial approval	1986
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2008
Chair	Mr Robbie Rooney (Scottish Government Health and Wellbeing Directorate)
Secretary	Gabrielle Weir (University of Strathclyde)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 HPC did not review a programme specification prior to the visit as one has not been created.

The HPC did not review the standards of education and training mapping document prior to the visit as it was not required by the visitors. The visitors had received sufficient documentation as part of an earlier submission minor/major change submission to the BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. The two programmes share an identical four years. It is only the fifth year of this programme which differs.

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports prior to the visit, as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

During the visit the HPC 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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme, 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 assured 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 their 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 40 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 23 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. 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 recommendation for the programme.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors did not make any commendations on the programme. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

## Conditions

### 3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the role of external examiners and the process for their appointment and subsequent reporting

**Reason:** The first four years of this programme are identical to the existing BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. It is only the fifth year of this programme which differs. The programme team confirmed that the existing external examiners arrangements for the BSc (Hons) programme would be adopted for this programme. This raised concerns for the visitors as the visitors had only received external examiner reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 academic years and not from the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years. The programme team explained that the external examiner had been on sick leave in 2005-06 and that the outgoing external examiner never submitted a report for 2006-07. The absence of external examiners reports for two years had not been flagged up as a concern to the programme team.

The programme team explained that two new external examiners had been recruited for the current academic year (2007-08) and that they would cover this programme as well in the future. However, it was initially unclear whether they had completed the selection process and been formally appointed.

The visitors followed up comments in the reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 years about external examiners not being fully utilised. It was explained that external examiners were only routinely send exam papers (not coursework) but that they could ask to see coursework and students when they attended exam boards each year. They were not asked for feedback on this new programme.

There appeared to be a lack of ownership over external examiners and they were not being appointed and used in line with the education provider's regulations. Their current limited involvement questioned the effectiveness of the education providers' peer review system to successfully manage this new programme.

### 3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the systems used to ensure that placement components of the programme are managed effectively.

**Reason:** Following discussion with the programme team and placement educators, it was apparent to the visitors that the education provider was not taking ultimate responsibility for placements. The lack of formal auditing and monitoring (reflected in the conditions later in the report) meant that the visitors were not assured that placements were managed effectively. Systems, such as placement evaluations, audits, and partnership meetings, were not in place to monitor and enhance placement learning.

### **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 education provider must develop an appropriate protocol for obtaining students' consent.

**Reason:** The documentation submitted prior to the visit did not detail any protocol for obtaining students' consent. The students explained to the visitors that although there were no written consent forms, it was acceptable to opt out or modify teaching activities for health or cultural reasons, as long as it was discussed with a member of the programme team. The programme team explained that consent was currently obtained on a module specific basis on the BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme and that forms were signed in some incidences (e.g. wearing orthoses) but not in others (e.g. role plays). The visitors felt that the approach to obtaining consent needed to be revised to acknowledge the wide range of risk factors and provide consistent guidance.

### **3.10 A system of academic and pastoral student support must be in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the academic and pastoral support systems available to students whilst on placements.

**Reason:** In the meeting with students, the students explained that there were effective support mechanisms in place during the taught part of the programme; however there was a contrast when they were on placement. The students could not recall any placement visits from members of the programme team and although placement educators supported students' clinical learning, they did not offer any pastoral or wider academic support. The placement educators told the visitors that they normally experienced one visit per placement from a member of the programme team. The programme team acknowledged that placements visits were not consistently happening outside of the local region and that a system of reactive, rather than proactive support by email and telephone was in place. The visitors felt that students needed to know how they were supported during their placements.

### **3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the reading lists for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' and confirm the availability of their contents.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' did not include any recommended reading. In the meeting with the programme team, it was explained that the documents were still work in

progress, but that as they were based on content delivered in the previous version of the programme, the learning resources to support them were available. As the tour of facilities coincided with the exam period, the full stock of periodicals and books was not available for the visitors to see. The visitors felt that the reading lists should be finalised so they could be assured that the resources were appropriate to the subject. They also wished for confirmation that the texts were available, through either library or IT facilities.

### **5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide a safe environment, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident that a safe environment was assured when the placement was initially approved. Following on from this, they had no assurance that the risks and safety issues in placements were assessed, reduced and communicated to students on an ongoing, routine basis.

### **5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide for safe and effective practice, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident each placement provided for safe and effective practice on initial approval. Following on from this, there was no assurance that resources and placement educators encouraged safe and effective practice on an ongoing, routine basis.

## **5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of initial and ongoing training and/or development of placement educators in the process of supervision.

**Reason:** During the meeting with placement educators, it became apparent that the education provider provided limited training and relied on placement providers and the prior qualifications and experience of individuals to ensure that placement educators were prepared to teach and supervise students. Placement educators acknowledged that they built professional day-to-day working relationships with students and consequently found it difficult to fail them because of this. They could not envisage supervising a failed student who had to re-sit a placement. The students had varied experiences in their placements, with placement educators often unaware of their level and having expectations which were either too high or too low. When this occurred, students felt that placement educators struggled to teach or supervise them. The visitors felt that the education provider needed to ensure that placement educators were prepared in supervisory practice, so that students' clinical and professional skills were fostered and developed appropriately.

### **5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that placement educators can ensure that students can meet the learning outcomes of the placements within the four month period.

**Reason:** This placement structure is identical to that in the BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. However, this common structure differs from that followed by current students. There are now two four month placements, instead of two six month placements. They still follow the same pattern – one in year three and one in year four; one covering prosthetics and one covering orthotics.

The senior team explained that the changes had arisen out of a major review and that key stakeholders (including students and placement providers/educators) had been involved. In the meeting with placement educators, they explained that they had completed a questionnaire about the proposed changes and then later learnt of the changes via professional journals and conferences. They were not aware that any changes had been made to the learning outcomes of the placements, nor were they entirely clear of how the taught part of the programme was now structured. There was great concern that the reduced length in placements would not allow students to see a sufficient range of patient/client groups and interventions/devices. The placement educators could not grasp how the education provider expected students to progress in terms of clinical skills over a shorter period of time. Whilst there is much overlap between prosthetics and orthotics, the placement educators felt that modern practice and placement settings were markedly different in the two areas and warranted differing learning outcomes. They doubted whether there was sufficient time to achieve the learning outcomes, particularly in the orthotics placement. Students also questioned whether the learning outcomes for the orthotics placement could be achieved within four months.

The programme team identified with the placement educators and students concerns and said that they hoped that all the placement learning outcomes could be achieved within four months. However, they explained that if it became



impossible for students to achieve their learning outcomes within this shortened period, then the five week holiday block at the end of the year would be utilised. The programme team were hopeful that the clearer integration of theory and practice in years one and two would prepare students for their placements in years three and four, and thus allow them to consolidate their clinical learning more efficiently. The visitors explained that the HPC does not have any specific requirements on the length of placements and the dilemma they face is not over the length of the placements per se, but over the education provider's confidence that the new length is appropriate to meet the learning outcomes. The visitor need to be assured that placement educators in particular are prepared and able to give students the placement opportunity they require to meet the learning outcomes set by the education provider; which in turn assure that the standards of proficiency are met upon completion.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements and criteria used when approving and monitoring placements.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the requirements for approval from the descriptive account. Without seeing the detailed requirements used in either process, the visitors were not confident. From discussions with the programme team and placement educators, it was unclear how placements were monitored subsequently. The system appeared to rely on informal communication channels and ad-hoc feedback and be to some extent reactive.

### **5.7 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**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the learning outcomes for the two placements modules.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed learning outcomes. The programme team explained that they remained unchanged from the existing BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes needed to be included in the documentation available to placement educators and students, so they were clear of what the achievements were.

### **5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

### 5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm that the learning outcomes for the two placements modules include expectations of professional conduct.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed learning outcomes, so the visitors could not be assured that expectations of professional conduct were covered. The programme team explained that they remained unchanged from the existing BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. The placement educators said that the clinical assessment did not focus on interpersonal skills. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes needed to be provided, so they could make sure that the expectations of professional conduct were clear.

### 5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:

#### 5.7.4 the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure; and

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the assessment procedures used by placement educators in the two placements modules.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' did not contain detailed assessment methods. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. The placement educators explained that they currently find it difficult to fail students on the assessment and tend to use the clinical examination to fail poor students instead.

### 5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualification and experience.

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the qualification and experience required for placement educators.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. These approval mechanisms included a check on the qualifications and prior experience of placement educators. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge how the requirements of placement educators' knowledge, understanding and skills were checked. Equally, it was not clear how changes to placement educators were proposed and agreed, following initial approval. The programme team and placement educators gave contrasting accounts to the visitors. The visitors felt that the education provider must clarify their arrangements for setting and monitoring the qualifications and prior experience of placement educators.

### **5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the process for training placement educators. This should include initial training, refresher training as well as specific training to inform current placement educators of the major changes to the programme.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that they did not provide formal training for placement educators. They said that their initial approval mechanism acted as a safeguard for placement educators' knowledge and skills and that ad-hoc informal support was available from the placement co-ordinator role. The placement educators confirmed that they had not received initial or refresher training and said it would be useful, especially in the areas of assessment, mentoring and reflective learning. As the students had commented about how placement educators misjudged the level of their theoretical knowledge and clinical skills at the beginning of placements, and the placement educators had said they were unaware of the detail of the new programme, the visitors were keen for the education provider to develop and plan arrangements for placement educators training.

### **5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must review current arrangements for consultation and collaboration between the education provider and placement educators.

**Reason:** The placement educators commended the day-to-day communication channels with the education provider and the visitors were confident in these signs of collaborative working. However, the expectations on the placement co-ordinator role seemed unrealistic and as a result, collaboration was limited. There was no opportunity for placement educators to feed back on general, broad areas, either collectively or individually. The placement educators appeared to have a disjointed and somewhat distant involvement in the development of this programme, which questions the effectiveness of the collaboration with these key stakeholders.

### **5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information is available to placement educators, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**Reason:** Placement educators had not received information about the new programme or placement structure and assumed that this was because the new placements were not until the 2009-10 academic year. In general, the placement educators were confident they received the information that they needed to supervise students, however the visitors felt that the education provider should

confirm what information they will give placement providers initially and what updates they can expect to receive, with an intention of timescales.

**5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information placement educators are expected to make available to the education provider.

**Reason:** Placement educators were unclear what information they were expected to give to the education provider and any timescales. The visitors would have expected a flow of information around areas such as assessment, attendance monitoring, auditing/monitoring procedures.

**5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that their placement educators' training includes teaching and learning methods.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that they did not provide formal training for placement educators on teaching. They said that their initial approval mechanism checked the placement educators' previous knowledge and skills in this area. The students raised concerns that some placement educators struggled to mentor students appropriately. In general placement educators were confident in their abilities, but recognised the diversity in training and background of placement educators. As the visitors had no evidence that placement educators were expected to have a qualification in mentoring/teaching or equivalent experience, they felt that the range and use of appropriate learning and teaching methods should be covered in placement educators' training to ensure that the rights of patients or clients and colleagues were respected.

**5.13 The placement provider must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify that placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies are verified.

**Reason:** The programme team explained that new placements were approved either by a visit or through a reciprocal agreement with the other education provider delivering pre-registration training in the UK. The visitors saw an example visit report but could not gauge the how placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies were checked initially. It was also unclear how they were monitored on an ongoing basis and communicated to students.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the finalised placement assessment methods, criteria and associated regulations. These must demonstrate clear links to the standards of proficiency and fitness to practice.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' detailed the assessment strategy for placements. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. This will address the placement educators' comments that the current clinical assessment does not measure students interpersonal skills (so potentially standards of proficiency 1b). Currently it is not clear from the documentation how students progress through and complete each placement module, what the implications are for failing a placement module, what the resit and retake arrangements are and whether elements of practice are eligible for compensation or condonement. Therefore, it is difficult for the visitors to be sure that students are fit to practice upon completion.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the specific requirements to pass each module.

**Reason:** The requirements to pass each module were listed in the documentation and discussed with the programme team. It was explained that each module had different requirements and that references in the documentation to common regulations were inaccurate and misleading. Clarification is needed as to what constitutes a pass in each module to make sure that students who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency. It is also important that students receive accurate and easy to understand information.

## **6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the role and responsibility of external examiners and provide evidence of the guidance given to them.

**Reason:** The programme team confirmed that the existing external examiners arrangements for the BSc (Hons) programme would be adopted for this programme. This raised concerns for the visitors as the visitors reviewed external examiner reports from the 2003-04 and 2004-05 academic years and followed up comments about external examiners not being fully utilised. The programme team explained that they only routinely send draft exam papers to external examiners and not completed student work (exam or coursework). External examiners could ask to see coursework and students when they attended exam boards each year. They also said that they were not asked for feedback on the

major changes to the programme. The visitors were concerned that there appeared to be a lack of ownership over external examiners and that they were possibly not being used in line with the education provider's regulations. Due to the limited external moderation mechanisms the visitors were unsure how they could effectively assure that appropriate standards were being used in the assessment procedures. In addition, as this new programme included a shift from exam to coursework, the visitors were also concerned that future external moderation would be reduced even further.

## **6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the placement assessment procedures and update their information about sources of guidance available to students on values and ethics.

**Reason:** The module descriptors for 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 1' and 'Prosthetics/Orthotics Clinical Placement 2' detailed the assessment strategy for placements. The programme team explained that this vital piece of assessment was being revised with the intention of developing assessment criteria which can be used consistently and be explicitly linked to the standards of proficiency. This will address the placement educators' comments that the current clinical assessment does not measure students interpersonal skills (so potentially standards of proficiency 1b). Currently it is not clear how aspects such as misconduct, confidentiality and professionalism will be assessed whilst on placement. The current placement handbook referred to an outdated code of practice and the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics were not mentioned. Without the finalised placement assessment and updated information, the visitors cannot be assured that professional aspects are an integral part of students' assessment.

### **6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the regulations on progression.

**Reason:** The programme team clarified that the documentation contained arithmetic errors and inconsistencies in terms of credit value needed for progression. The visitors were happy with the regulations verbally confirmed to them, but felt that they needed to be clearly specified in the documentation.

### **6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the regulations about their aegrotat award.

**Reason:** The documentation did not contain any references to an aegrotat award. The programme team explained that the standard regulations did allow for an

aegotat award and that there was currently no caveat to clarify the relationship between this award and HPC registration. The visitors felt that this needed to be clearly specified in the documentation.

## Recommendations

### **3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider developing a formal policy on student attendance.

**Reason:** The programme team currently monitor attendance through registers and attendance sheets and address non attendance through academic tutoring. Continual assessment requirements help ensure that students' attend regular, key components. Both students and the programme team explained that there were pockets of poor attendance and there were desires for a more formal system with mandatory attendance defined in numerical or another quantifiable term. The visitors wished to encourage this system as a model of best practice.

Mr Martin Matthews  
Professor Jackie Campbell



OBSERVATIONS  
1 August 2008



OBSERVATIONS regarding the HPC visit report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Strathclyde
<b>Programme name</b>	MSci Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 and 14 May 2008

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 HPC did not review a programme specification prior to the visit as one has not been created.

The HPC did not review the standards of education and training mapping document prior to the visit as it was not required by the visitors. The visitors had received sufficient documentation as part of an earlier submission minor/major change submission to the BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics programme. The two programmes share an identical four years. It is only the fifth year of this programme which differs.

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports prior to the visit, as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

## OBSERVATIONS

***The MSci report states that no programme specification was received. This is an error as the programme specification provided was for the five years of educational pathway leading to either BSc (Honours) and MSci.***

***Two reports were received as the major change will include the addition of the award of MSci (Prosthetics and Orthotics) as well as the continued BSc Honours (Prosthetics and Orthotics). The first four years are identical and the option to remain on for the award of MSci will be following the student meeting set criteria of an average grade of 70% across all subject areas in the second and third year summary marks. These students will be given the option of switching to the MSci and completing five years and being solely awarded the MSci award. (This is in line with regulations with other degrees within the University of Strathclyde where five year Masters Degrees are the only exit route. This also aligns with the European Bologna agreement). Students who do not achieve Masters level work in year 5 will be awarded a BSc Honours degree. The two reports are therefore identical in all their conditions and recommendations.***

***The department therefore would suggest that two reports over one cohort of 30 students for a four year period are very confusing and overcomplicated. It would suggest that the paperwork is amended to show one report with two exit routes: One at year four and one at year five.***

OBSERVATIONS  
1 August 2008



OBSERVATIONS regarding the HPC visit report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Strathclyde
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Prosthetics and Orthotics
<b>Date of visit</b>	13 and 14 May 2008

Conditions

**3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the role of external examiners and the process for their appointment and subsequent reporting

**OBSERVATION**

*External examiners are appointed using the University of Strathclyde processes and procedures for appointment of external examiners. This includes submission and scrutiny of a Curriculum Vitae at appropriate University Committee.*

*Documentation was available during the second day to show the full approval process of both of the current external examiners but the department was told the team did not wish to see this.*

*We agree that the departmental processes for External Examiners need to be strengthened so that stronger peer review is implemented.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.2 The programme must be managed effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the systems used to ensure that placement components of the programme are managed effectively.

**OBSERVATION**

*Whilst we recognise the importance of formalising the auditing and monitoring of clinical placements we wish to point out that the cohort of prosthetist/orthotist students being placed is relatively small, with 20 students commonly being in a clinical placement cohort by Year 4. Being a small course within one of the smallest Allied Health Professions, the students and faculty team form a close knit community in the prosthetic/orthotic community and students are well known individually to the course team. Supervisors can readily access the team to flag a potential problem and also students continue in the 4<sup>th</sup> year to be allocated an academic counsellor and can make use of this link. Further to this the clinical placement co-ordinator is in regular informal communication with the 20 students and the clinical supervisors. One formal visit is normally conducted within the first half of the placement.*

*Members of staff from the department regularly liaise with the clinical placement supervisors in a number of forum such as the Practice Development network, the SCOTRET prosthetic, orthotic and coordinating groups which are for the NHS service providers and at which there is now PO company representation.*

*Additionally within this smaller profession a number of the placement supervisors also visit the department to lecture or to attend other professional meetings. We believe that to date there has been ample opportunity for discussion about clinical placements but recognise the need to improve our processes and agree that we should put in place further administration around quality audit and monitoring processes.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**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 education provider must develop an appropriate protocol for obtaining students' consent.

**OBSERVATION:**

*The department had previously been granted ethical approval for all student teaching and learning activities by the University Ethics Committee. This documentation was offered to the visitors. It is normal teaching practice across the University to adopt modern teaching and learning techniques, and role play is recognised as one such technique. With small classes that are commonly split into small groups it is possible to readily obtain verbal consent from students undertaking activities like role play and to ensure that students are comfortable with and consent to involvement and always have the option to opt out. The Programme team are prepared to revise the approach to obtaining consent, but are keen to stress that this is already carefully conducted. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.10 A system of academic and pastoral student support must be in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the academic and pastoral support systems available to students whilst on placements.

***OBSERVATION:** The current clinical placement visits of students and supervisors are normally one per clinical placement duration, the department has agreed to revise this in line with the condition above, but appreciates that due to the demographic spread of placements and the profession size that online support and other appropriate means of contact will also be increased to reinforce this area.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the reading lists for 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 1', 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 2' and 'Principles of Prosthetic and Orthotic Design 3' and confirm the availability of their contents.

**OBSERVATION:**

*The department has a world renowned book and periodical collection that is now housed in the main University Andersonian Library in the same building as the department. A full library catalogue is available both online and a hard copy will be produced for the visitors. The module descriptors do have a recommended reading list but many staff prefer to update these lists and produce class handouts with up to date reading lists. The department will ensure that the module descriptors have a reading list within all appropriate module descriptors but are cautious that students do not purchase books too early at unnecessary expense when they are readily available in the library.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide a safe environment, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**OBSERVATION**

*The full documentation of the clinical placement approvals process was not seen by the visitors and will be submitted to them for their approval. It has been agreed by the department to enhance this procedure through improved quality management protocols and this will be documented.*

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements for ensuring that placement settings provide for safe and effective practice, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**OBSERVATION:**

**The full documentation of the clinical placement approvals process was not seen by the visitors and will be submitted to them for their approval. All Health and Safety documentation for all centres being used each year are requested and held centrally by the department's Health and Safety Committee. Quality management protocols will be produced for this mechanism.**

**Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.**

**5.4 Learning, teaching and supervision must be designed to encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of initial and ongoing training and/or development of placement educators in the process of supervision.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates that fuller documentation of students' experiences and clinical competencies already achieved prior to placements needs to be available to clinical placement supervisors. Also we do appreciate the need for further training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. We are planning this to be more proactive. To allow for the spread of clinical placement locations both in the short and the long term this will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\**

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

**5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that placement educators can ensure that students can meet the learning outcomes of the placements within the four month period.

**OBSERVATION**

*We wish to stress that the programme has changed in years 1, 2 and 3 with the aim of better preparing the students for their clinical placements. Essentially students on the revised course will have between 4 and 8 months placement in 2009/2010 for each discipline rather than 6 months to achieve competencies. The approach is flexible and so takes into account the concerns of clinical placement supervisors about the length of clinical placement and this will be closely monitored. Two 4 months placements of 16 weeks duration allow for a minimum*

*clinical experience of 1,280 hours and the clinical experience in the first three years is a total of 1,736 hours. This gives a total minimum experience of 3,000 hours. The department appreciates that the placement length must allow the student to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.\*\*.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the arrangements and criteria used when approving and monitoring placements.

**OBSERVATION**

*Documentation will be submitted by the department to show the procedures for monitoring these arrangements and criteria.*

- 5.7 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**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the learning outcomes for the two placements modules.

**OBSERVATION**

*As discussed with the visitors these core competencies are being written in liaison with the clinical placement providers and as such more time is sought to allow for this consultation to be an appropriate dialogue before submission of the detailed documentation. A meeting had already been held with the clinical placement providers prior to the HPC visit. The department would request till December 2008 for this submission to allow further consultation with our placement providers.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

- 5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm that the learning outcomes for the two placements modules include expectations of professional conduct.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. This point was not raised as a question to the department teaching team by the visitors. However the specific learning outcomes are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the assessment procedures used by placement educators in the two placements modules.

**OBSERVATION**

*Due the comments we had received from clinical placement supervisors that grading students had difficulties, it had been agreed that the new assessment strategy would be pass/fail with written criteria. However the specific assessment criteria are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors.*

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualification and experience.

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the qualification and experience required for placement educators.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department plans to act on this and clarify these arrangements. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the process for training placement educators. This should include initial training, refresher training as well as specific training to inform current placement educators of the major changes to the programme.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates the need for training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. We are planning this to be more proactive. However due to the demographic spread of clinical placement locations this is being planned for both in the short and the long term. This will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\**

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

- 5.9 There must be collaboration between the education provider and practice placement providers.

**Condition:** The education provider must review current arrangements for consultation and collaboration between the education provider and placement educators.

**OBSERVATION**

*It must be recognised that in moulding the model for the revised programme that other driving forces helped form the revised model. The Strategic Management Board of the department includes representatives from the professional body who manage clinical placement centres (one in orthotics and one in prosthetics).*



*Additionally there is an employer representative, a user and an NHS representative who chairs the Board. Also, the Chief Allied Health Professions Officer for Scotland is on the board as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Health and Social Care of a neighbouring University. The Board were presented with various options for a revised course over several months that included longer clinical placements but unanimously agreed that option 7 (the revised course programme) was the best option. Two placement educators were therefore closely involved in agreeing the curriculum design. Documentation is currently being drafted to map the short and long term collaboration arrangement of the department with clinical supervisors. Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information is available to placement educators, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

**OBSERVATION**

*Documentation will be submitted to support this condition.*

**5.11 Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify what information placement educators are expected to make available to the education provider.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

**5.12 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that their placement educators' training includes teaching and learning methods.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department appreciates the need for training of clinical placement supervisors in a more audited and monitored manner. However due to the demographic spread of clinical placement locations this is being planned for both in the short and the long term. This will be presented in initial documentation that will require further time to allow dialogue with the placement supervisors to allow their input on the best methods to achieve these goals.\*\**

*Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

**5.13 The placement provider must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify that placement providers' equality and anti-discriminatory policies are verified.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the finalised placement assessment methods, criteria and associated regulations. These must demonstrate clear links to the standards of proficiency and fitness to practice.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. However the specific assessment criteria are currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors. Further time is requested until December 2008 to complete this condition.*

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

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the specific requirements to pass each module.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

- 6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the role and responsibility of external examiners and provide evidence of the guidance given to them.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

- 6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

**Condition:** The education provider must provide the placement assessment procedures and update their information about sources of guidance available to students on values and ethics.

**OBSERVATION**

*There is an error/inaccuracy here as the current clinical placement reports have a specific section on interpersonal skills which is formative feedback at midpoint on the placement and summative at the final report. This focus of interpersonal skills will remain in the new learning outcomes and this has been discussed and agreed*

*with clinical placement supervisors on consultation with them. The errors in the student handbook have been rectified.*

*However the specific finalised placement assessment is currently still being revised in consultation with the clinical placement supervisors and more time is requested as in the previous point.*

**6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must confirm the regulations on progression.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

**6.7.3 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the regulations about their aegrotat award.

**OBSERVATION**

*The department will provide documented evidence to show completion of this action.*

Recommendations

**3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider developing a formal policy on student attendance.

***OBSERVATION***

***The department had planned to document these more formal systems and is happy to implement this recommendation.***

***Documentation will be submitted to support this condition***

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
<b>Programme name</b>	IHCD Paramedic award
<b>Validating body/awarding body</b>	IHCD (part of Edexcel)
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of HPC register</b>	Paramedic Science
<b>Date of visit</b>	11 and 12 March 2008

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## Executive summary

The Health Professions Council (HPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. The HPC is a health regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. The HPC currently regulates 13 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 HPC keep a register of health 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 ongoing approval of the programme. The education provider has until Tuesday 15 July 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Wednesday 18 August 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Thursday 31 July 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Wednesday 25 September 2008.

## Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was an approved programme which had not been approved since the publication of the QAA subject benchmark statements. 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider and validating/awarding body did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

**Visit details**

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mrs Jane Topham (Paramedic) Mr Robert Cartwright (Paramedic) Mrs Patricia Fillis (Radiographer)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Miss Elisa Simeoni
Proposed student numbers	50 over the 2008/2009 financial year over two sites - currently 13 at Swansea training centre and 11 at Abergele training centre
Initial approval	September 2000
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	(existing programmes) (delete if appropriate)
Chair	Mrs Diane Mort (Swansea University)
Secretary	Ms Carol Neilson (Welsh Ambulance Service Trust)



## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider.

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
Facilities and resource documentation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External verifier reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review a programme specification or any external examiners' reports prior to the visit as these documents do not exist.

During the visit the HPC 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"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing approval, the visitors must be assured 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 their 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 41 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 22 SETs. Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing approval. 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 agreed that the education provider may wish to discuss some of these conditions with the validating/awarding body before attempting to respond to the conditions. The visitors have identified, within the condition, those which they feel the education provider may wish to discuss with the validating/awarding body.

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 is recommended for ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

The visitors have also made a commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

## Conditions

### **2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 education provider must ensure the advertising materials for the programme follow the guidelines provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

**Reason:** From the documentation submitted it was clear that the advertising materials for the programme did not fully comply with the advertising guidelines issued by HPC. Therefore, to provide applicants with full and clear information in order to make an informed choice about whether to join the programme, the visitors felt that the advertising material must be amended.

### **2.2.5 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including accreditation of prior learning and other inclusion mechanisms.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (ap(e)l) policies are clearly articulated within the admission procedures.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider follows the validating/awarding body ap(e)l policies and has had a number of enquiries from international students, though no one has been through the process. It was apparent from the discussion with the students that they did not know about the ap(e)l policies, this included a nurse who may have been eligible. The visitors therefore felt that the ap(e)l policies must be clearly articulated to all applicants.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence that the staff development policy applies to visiting lecturers and practice placement educators.

**Reason:** From the discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that all tutors must undertake the IHCD Tutor Development award and through their personal development review, appropriate training is made available. The visitors were unsure of the programme for staff development for visiting lecturers and practice placement educators. They felt that further evidence was required to assure them that all staff had the opportunity to develop and maintain their professional skills, to make sure that they continued to deliver the programme effectively.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must submit the training centre policies which cover the availability and use of resources outside of tutor contact hours.

**Reason:** From the tour of the facilities and discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that during the classroom based element of the programme, students are residents at the training centres, from Monday to Friday. A Training Officer is on site until 9.00pm each day to provide support or assistance if needed. Students can access the resources of the training centres once the Training Officer has left for the evening; allowing students to practice at the most convenient time for them. The visitors were concerned that students were able to practice using resources such as the defibrillator, sharps and drugs without supervision. The visitors were told that policies are in place to cover these areas but they were not provided during the visit. The visitors would like to review these policies to ensure that all the resources at the Swansea and Abergele training centres are being used effectively.

### **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 education provider must ensure the protocols used to gain student consent are clearly articulated.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and students it was clear that all students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching. The visitors recognise that as all the students came from an ambulance technician background, they were familiar and comfortable with participating in situations such as these. However, the visitors felt that to help make sure that education and placement providers acknowledge the risk factors associated with the programme and that as students may join the programme through the ap(e)l policies, the protocols to gain student consent must clearly articulate all the situations a student may be asked to participate in and the ability of a student to opt out at a later date.

### **3.11 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the training centre attendance policy is clearly articulated to students.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team it was clear that the placement attendance policy, including any mandatory attendance, was clearly communicated to students and was monitored. While the visitors received confirmation from the documentation and students that a register was taken before each class, the visitors were unsure which stages of the theory element were mandatory and how this was communicated to students.

#### **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 education provider must ensure that students who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency.

**Reason:** The education provider offers both the theory (at the training centres) and practical (in-hospital placements) elements of the IHCD Paramedic award. In addition, the education provider offers placements in paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies. Students are treated as supernumerary during all these placements.

From discussions with the programme team it was clear that students do not undertake an ambulance placement under the supervision of a paramedic. Nor is it guaranteed that while students are working as an ambulance technician and taking the paramedic award (individuals hold dual status as students and employees), they will be 'on shift' with a paramedic. Should students be in a position where they are 'on shift' with a paramedic, they will not be in a supernumerary capacity. The visitors were worried that without guaranteed supervision by a paramedic on an ambulance the knowledge students gained during the theory element of the programme could stay as theory and not be translated into practice. The visitors felt this resulted in an inappropriate period of clinical supervision and as a result, the visitors were doubtful that the programme design enabled a student to meet the standards of proficiency to practise safely and effectively.

The visitors recognise that this situation has developed as there is no requirement by the validating/awarding body for students to gain guaranteed clinical supervision by a paramedic on an ambulance. They felt the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

#### **4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the programme reflects the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

**Reason:** The education provider offers both the theory (at the training centres) and practical (in-hospital placements) elements of the IHCD Paramedic award. In addition, the education provider offers placements in paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies. Students are treated as supernumerary during all these placements.

From discussions with the programme team it was clear that students do not undertake an ambulance placement under the supervision of a paramedic. Nor is it guaranteed that while students are working as an ambulance technician and taking the paramedic award (individuals hold dual status as students and employees), they will be 'on shift' with a paramedic. Should students be in a

position where they are 'on shift' with a paramedic, they will not be in a supernumerary capacity.

One of the placement areas recommended by the British Paramedic Association (BPA) is emergency ambulance which states 'this allows the student to work with Paramedics and Technicians dealing with emergency and urgent cases in a clinical setting, and also to consolidate theoretical knowledge in practice'. The visitors were concerned that, as this placement area is not covered within the programme, the integration of theory into practice and the development of clinical skills to a level recommended by the BPA ('a thorough understanding') is doubtful.

The visitors recognise that this situation has developed as the validating/awarding body award has not been updated since the introduction of the professional body guidance. They feel that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

#### **4.3 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum to enable safe and effective practice.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the programme clearly articulates how theory and practice are integrated to ensure safe and effective practice.

**Reason:** The education provider offers both the theory (at the training centres) and practical (in-hospital placements) elements of the IHCD Paramedic award. In addition, the education provider offers placements in paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies. Students are treated as supernumerary during all these placements.

From discussions with the programme team it was clear that students do not undertake an ambulance placement under the supervision of a paramedic. Nor is it guaranteed that while students are working as an ambulance technician and taking the paramedic award (individuals hold dual status as students and employees), they will be 'on shift' with a paramedic. Should students be in a position where they are 'on shift' with a paramedic, they will not be in a supernumerary capacity. The visitors were worried that without guaranteed supervision by a paramedic on an ambulance the knowledge students gained during the theory element of the programme could stay as theory and not be translated into practice. The visitors were doubtful that the programme design integrated theory and practice sufficiently to enable students to develop the clinical skills to practice safely and effectively.

The visitors recognise that this situation has developed as there is no requirement by the validating/awarding body for students to gain guaranteed clinical supervision by a paramedic on an ambulance. They felt the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

## **5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the programme guarantees that students will gain supervised paramedic experience on an ambulance.

**Reason:** The education provider offers both the theory (at the training centres) and practical (in-hospital placements) elements of the IHCD Paramedic award. In addition, the education provider offers placements in paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies. Students are treated as supernumerary during all these placements.

From discussions with the programme team it was clear that students do not undertake an ambulance placement under the supervision of a paramedic. Nor is it guaranteed that while students are working as an ambulance technician and taking the paramedic award (individuals hold dual status as students and employees), they will be 'on shift' with a paramedic. Should students be in a position where they are 'on shift' with a paramedic, they will not be in a supernumerary capacity.

The visitors were concerned that as the programme does not guarantee students will receive supervised paramedic experience on an ambulance, a students' achievement of the learning outcomes may be affected and the student may not be able to meet all the standards of proficiency. The visitors therefore felt that the number and range of placements were not appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

The visitors recognise that this situation has developed as there is no requirement by the validating/awarding body for students to gain guaranteed clinical supervision by a paramedic on an ambulance. They felt the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

## **5.7 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;**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the learning outcomes during placement are clearly articulated to students and practice placement educators.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team it was clear that learning outcomes have been produced for the paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies placements. An example learning outcome for the paediatric emergency management placement is 'Discuss/observe the features of a seriously ill child'. The visitors felt that the learning outcomes for these placements were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient information about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

**5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

**5.7.3 expectations of professional conduct;**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that references to the expectations of professional conduct are accurate and up to date.

**Reason:** During discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that students are taught about the behaviour expected of them on their placement and that their placements help prepare them for entry to the profession. However, references in the documentation direct students to HPC's code of conduct. The visitors felt that in order to direct students to the standards HPC expects of them once they have joined the profession, the programme documentation must be updated to state HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

It was also clear from the documentation that there was confusion within the code of conduct and standards of professional behaviour regarding an individual's duty as a Registrant. The visitors felt that this must be updated to remove references to 'the Paramedic Board of the Health Professions Council' and to clarify that the standards of conduct, performance and ethics are produced by the HPC and not the Ambulance Service Association.

**5.7 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the following:**

**5.7.4 the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure; and**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure students and practice placement educators are provided with detailed information about the assessment procedures, including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team it was clear that the education provider gives students the validating/awarding body document 'ambulance service paramedic training; training record with continuous assessment reports' which applies to the in-hospital placements. This document requires practice placement educators to witness a student undertaking specific techniques a set number of times. Every time a student 'successfully' performs a technique, the training record is signed. Once the student has successfully performed the technique a set number of times, the learning outcome has been met. From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the validating/awarding body does not provide guidelines on the assessment regulations associated with this document, including: the definition of 'successfully'; how many attempts a student has to perform a technique; or what to do in the case of a failing student. The visitors recognise that this document is produced by the validating/awarding body however they were concerned that without guidelines, there was a risk that assessments could be interpreted and applied differently depending on the mentor.



It was also clear from the documentation and discussion with the programme team that the education provider gives students internally produced clinical objectives for the paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies placements. Again, these documents require practice placement educators to witness a student undertaking specific techniques and if the student performs these techniques to a 'satisfactory' level, the clinical objectives record is signed. From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the education provider does not provide guidelines on the assessment regulations associated with this document, including: the definition of 'satisfactory'; how many attempts a student has to perform a technique; or what to do in the case of a failing student. The visitors were again concerned that without guidelines, there was a risk that assessments could be interpreted and applied differently depending on the mentor.

The visitors recognise that this situation has partly arisen due to the documentation produced by the validating/awarding body. They felt that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

### **5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.**

**Condition:** The education provider must review the process of practice placement educator training.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team it was clear that the education provider has a process in place to provide mentorship training. However, from the discussion with the placement providers it was apparent that not all of the practice placement educators had received training about the validating/awarding body or education provider assessment regulations. The visitors felt that the process of practice placement educator training must be reviewed in order to ensure practice placement educators gain the knowledge, skills and experience of the appropriate assessment regulations to be able to support students accurately and effectively.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure that students who complete the programme can meet the standards of proficiency and are fit to practice.

**Reason:** The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 will require the education provider to revise the programme curriculum and placement arrangements. As a result it is likely that new or amended learning outcomes will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods test the academic and theoretical learning, as well as the practical application of skills, in all the standards of proficiency.

The visitors felt that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

**6.2 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clearly articulate the assessment methods which measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

**Reason:** The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 will require the education provider to revise the programme curriculum and placement arrangements. As a result it is likely that new or amended learning outcomes will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods test the academic and theoretical learning, as well as the practical application of skills, leading to safe and effective practice.

The visitors felt that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

**6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the assessment design; procedures and methods provide a rigorous and effective process.

**Reason:** The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 will require the education provider to revise the programme curriculum and placement arrangements. As a result it is likely that new or amended learning outcomes will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

The visitors feel that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

**6.4 The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the assessment regulations clearly specify the requirements for the measurement of student performance and progression.

**Reason:** The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 will require the education provider to revise the programme curriculum and placement arrangements. As a result it is likely that new or amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods measure student performance and progression through the use of objective criteria.

The visitors felt that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

## **6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure there are mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in assessment.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that there was no external examiner for the programme. The visitors recognise that the validating/awarding body visits the education provider every year to assess the programme against their rules and regulations. However, as the external verifier does not review the paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies placements, which are offered in addition to the in-hospital placements required by the validating/awarding body, the visitors felt this was not equivalent to an external examiner's assessment of a programme.

In addition, from the documentation it was clear that there was no requirement by the validating/awarding body for the education provider to undertake a regular internal review of the programme.

The visitors were concerned that there was no moderation of the programme, either internally or externally, to ensure that the assessment criteria were applied appropriately and consistently. The visitors felt that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

### **6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the assessment regulations clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement during placements.

**Reason:** The conditions which are attached to SETs 4 and 5 will require the education provider to revise the programme curriculum and placement arrangements. As a result it is likely that new or amended learning outcomes and assessment procedures will be proposed. The visitors will need to receive evidence that the assessment procedures and methods measure student performance and progression through the use of objective criteria.

The visitors feel that the education provider may wish to discuss this condition with the validating/awarding body.

### **6.7.4 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for a procedure for the right of appeal for students.**

**Condition:** The education provider must ensure the procedure for a right of appeal for students is up to date.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear there was an assessment, failure, referral and appeals; hospital secondment policy. Within this policy the visitors noted that the local Paramedic Steering Committee played an important role. However, from

the discussion with the placement providers the visitors learnt that the Paramedic Steering Committee no longer operated. The visitors therefore felt that the procedure must be updated to reflect this change.

**6.7.5 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register or propose alternative arrangements.

**Reason:** From the documentation and discussion with the programme team it was apparent that there was no external examiner for the programme. The visitors recognise that the validating/awarding body visits the education provider every year to assess the programme against their rules and regulations. However, the visitors did not feel this was the equivalent of an external examiner's review of a programme as paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies placements, which are offered in addition to the in-hospital placements required by the validating body, are reviewed. The visitors therefore felt the assessment regulations must either clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner or propose alternative arrangements.

## Recommendations

### **2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 education provider should review the use of external advertising materials to promote the programme.

**Reason:** From the documentation it was clear that the education provider uses material produced by the National Leadership and Innovation Agency to promote the programme. The visitors were concerned that this material included incorrect information about continuing professional development and what registrants are required to do to remain on the HPC Register and as such, could be misleading to applicants. The visitors recognise that this material is not produced by the education provider and therefore the education provider can not be expected to update the material. However, the visitors felt that the education provider should review the use of external material such as this to ensure that it is correct and up to date, and make a decision on its usefulness for applicants.

### **3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider enhancing students' access to online medical resources.

**Reason:** The visitors are satisfied that the available resources adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme. The visitors understand the education provider plans to run the programme for two more years only and there are no plans to enhance the physical library resources within the training centres. However, the visitors felt there are many online medical resources which are readily available and which could be useful to students to enhance their learning experience.

## Commendations

### **The visitors wish to commend the following aspects of the programme:**

**Commendation:** The visitors would like to commend the education provider on the inclusion of paediatric emergency management and emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies placements within the programme.

**Reason:** The visitors recognise that these placements are in addition to the in-hospital placements required by the validating body and enhance the student experience. The visitors felt these placements are highly unusual and are therefore best practice which must be commended.

Mrs Jane Topham  
Mr Robert Cartright  
Mrs Patricia Fillis

**YMDDIRIEDOLAETH GIG GWASANAETHAU AMBIWLANS CYMRU  
WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICES NHS TRUST**

Dear Katherine

**RE: Health Professions Council education approvals visit to the National  
Training College (NTC), Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST)**

The HPC approvals report is acknowledged from the visit that was conducted at the WAST NTC on the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008. On first impression the 22 conditions placed against the Trust appears extremely disappointing for an educational and development department that prides itself on its delivery of the IHCD core syllabus for paramedic education and student support. We will use this representation to offer an interpretation and explanation for the conditions imposed and to comply with the Health Professions Order 2001 by providing written response within 28 days. The NTC is however concerned that it has to address 22 conditions in a period of 6 weeks because it appears that some of the conditions imposed will take a little longer to resolve.

The situation is further compromised by the fact that 9 of the conditions relate to the awarding / validating body (IHCD). It is clear from the approvals report that the IHCD core syllabus for paramedic education clearly does not satisfy the registrant body's standards. The verbal explanation provided to offer clarity relating to this issue was greatly appreciated.

The WAST intends to continue to train paramedics under the auspice of the IHCD until summer 2010 to ensure that its workforce requirements are satisfied pending the arrival of the first cohort of university educated registered paramedics. There are currently 16 students on a course in Abergele, North Wales, again, the clarity in relation to their position was welcomed. As determined by WASTs commissioning arrangements there are a further two courses planned for September 2008 and January 2009 (within this financial umbrella).

WAST feels that the majority of the conditions will be accomplished and documentary evidence with the HPC by the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008 deadline. These conditions are detailed at a later stage of this representation. WAST would like to acknowledge to the HPC that many of the conditions relating to the

awarding / validating body (IHCD) can be progressed immediately but will take a lot longer to put into practice. The following demonstrates this principle:

- 1) Conditions against SETs
  - 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.**
  - 4.2 **The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.**
  - 4.3 **Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum to enable safe and effective practice.**
  - 5.5 **The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.**

These conditions are clearly interpreted and WAST will provide these students with a pre-registration preceptorship period that will enable theory to be translated into practice whilst working alongside an experienced registered paramedic.

- 2) Conditions against SETs
  - 6.1 **The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.**
  - 6.2 **Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.**
  - 6.3 **All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.**
  - 6.4 **The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.**
  - 6.7.1. **Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.**

These conditions are again clearly interpreted and WAST will work closely with the awarding / validating body (IHCD) and the Education Leads forum for UK ambulance services. It is clear that an additional module needs to be added to the existing course to ensure the missing academic elements from the SOPs are covered and as a result the syllabus learning outcomes and assessment criteria will need to be reviewed.

During the HPC approval visit WAST commissioning arrangements were discussed and it was explained that the Workforce Education and



Development Unit (WDECU) of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) funded paramedic training in Wales. For the financial year April 2008 to March 2009 WDECU have committed to funding 50 paramedics from their budget. WAST are immediately facing a dilemma that it wishes to meet the conditions imposed by the HPC but financial arrangements now become added to the time constraints. Initial review determines the possible addition of a two to four week module to comply with the conditions in point 1 above, and a two or three week module to comply with point 2 above. WAST will also have to consider the delivery implications associated with point 2 above, and the potential commissioning of Swansea University to deliver this additional academic subject matter.

Considering the implications associated with the above, WAST respectfully requests that the timescales of compliance with the conditions in points 1 & 2 above are lengthened to enable adequate discussion time with the awarding / validating body (IHCD) and its commissioners. Following this potentially lengthy process WAST will need to undertake the preparatory stage which itself will be time consuming. WAST is requesting that the time frame for the documentary evidence submission for these conditions be extended until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 with commencement of the new modules (subject to HPC re-approval) from the first course of the next financial period commencing April 2009. Therefore WAST is requesting that the re-approval of the paramedic programme be extended until April 2008. WAST feels that this extension will be realistic for commissioning negotiations with WDECU to be facilitated.

From the remaining conditions imposed on WAST the following representation is made for consideration:

Condition 2.1

**The admission procedures must give both 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.**

Advertising guidelines are not available on the HPC website and have never been sent to WAST by the HPC. However, we will obtain these guidelines and amend our course advertisement.

### Condition 2.2.5

**The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including accreditation of prior learning and other inclusion mechanisms.**

The AP(e)L process is very different to that of a HEI process. WAST only advertises internally for existing EMTs to progress to paramedic status. WAST does not have an APL / AP(e)L coordinator, therefore section eight of the IHCD rules and regulations is adhered to. Whenever an overseas paramedic or registered nurse has considered using this route in the past they have always decided not to, due to the examination process that they have to undertake. This was clearly explained during the visit.

To satisfy this condition we will amend our course advertisement.

### Condition 3.6

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

Visiting lecturers are all current practising registered professionals and experts in their field. The assurance of continued effective delivery is five-fold:

- (i) As a registered professional they must maintain their registration requirements for CPD
- (ii) They are sent any amended content or objectives prior to their attendance
- (iii) A professional service tutor sits in on a visiting lecturer's session
- (iv) Current practice placement educators, again, are all registered professionals and when they have students attached are visited weekly. This ensures a robust process. All students and PPEs complete evaluation forms which identify concerns
- (v) Visiting lecturers are issued with a thank you letter that refers directly to the session delivered which they can use for their personal CPD portfolio. Examples will be submitted as documentary evidence

### Condition 3.7

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

All students on a paramedic course have the desired previous level of clinical practice and experience. Therefore, they would have all used a defibrillator, sharps and drugs autonomously in hazardous clinical settings. Therefore, the use of such equipment in a safe classroom environment poses little or no risk. The policy documents will be submitted as documentary evidence.

### Condition 3.9

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

It is clearly felt that this condition is covered, and even through an AP(e)L process students will not enter and leave the course. However, the wording on the consent form will be amended.

### Condition 3.11

**Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.**

All students on a paramedic course that WAST facilitates are employees of WAST and attendance of the whole course is mandatory and is recorded on the course register. The actual register viewed by the panel during the visit demonstrated the methods used to allow a student to 'catch-up' on subject matter missed whilst, for example, attending ante-natal clinic appointment.

### Condition 5.7.1

**The learning outcomes to be achieved;**

The learning outcomes for both the emergency obstetric and related gynaecological emergencies, and paediatric emergency management clinical placements were written in collaboration with the experts from the respective fields. There has never been any concern with the interpretation and / or requirements of these learning outcomes. However, WAST will change the wording to simplify.

### Condition 5.7.3

**Expectations of professional conduct;**

The SET cross-mapping document has been amended to include all references that students are provided with, which includes the HPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. However, students have been directed to the Trust's code of conduct and not the HPC's.

The second paragraph content is unclear and clarification is required to enable us to address the issue.

Condition 5.7.4

**The assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure;**

Clear guidance will be written in our documentation to provide the practice placement educators with the information needed to support students accurately and effectively.

Condition 5.8.3

**Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.**

All practice placement areas that WAST uses have been educationally audited under the 'fit for purpose' Welsh Assembly Government guidelines. This audit has accounted for the number of trained practice placement educators in each unit and compared this to the number of students allowed at each placement at any one time. The actual specifics relating to the IHCD assessment guidelines are detailed in face-to-face meetings at the individual unit level. It would not be possible to actually take these staff from their place of work to conduct this process. However, to satisfy this condition clear guidelines will be written.

Condition 6.5

**There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.**

The WAST will employ the services of a suitably qualified external examiner.

Condition 6.7.4

**Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for a procedure for the right of appeal for students.**

The WAST assessment, failure referral and appeals policy will be rewritten to ensure the student appeals procedure is robust.

Condition 6.7.5

**Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the HPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed.**

The WAST will employ the services of a suitably qualified external examiner.

The two recommendations included within the HPC report are welcomed as drivers to improve course advertising and student support. WAST will endeavour to work towards meeting the relevant issues contained within them.

It must be realised that all parties are ultimately working towards the same goals to protect the public and provide a robust educational process. WAST recognises the implications of the conditions imposed and will work with the HPC and other stakeholders to address them.

Yours sincerely

Mr JB Morris  
Senior Education and Development Lead

Cc.

Mrs S Jones, Director of Unscheduled Care / Clinical Director  
Mr A Jenkins, Consultant Paramedic  
Mr G McLean, Unscheduled Care Lead