

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Pearson College
Programme name	HND in Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	27 – 28 January 2015

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'paramedic' must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 30 June 2015. At this meeting, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC approval. 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 HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating 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 and role of HCPC visitors	Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Graham Harris (Paramedic) Diane Whitlock (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	150 per cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	10 September 2015
Chair	Jane Baker (Pearson Education Ltd)
Secretary	Costanza Tobino (Pearson Education Ltd)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

During the visit the HCPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators / mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service users and carers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as these are based within Employer Partners.

The HCPC did not meet with the students as the programme was new so there were no current or past students to meet.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval the visitors must be satisfied that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for the relevant part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 30 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 27 SETs.

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

The visitors did not make any recommendations for the programme.

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

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation, in particular, advertising material to clearly state that this programme is only open to applicants employed by NHS Trusts.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, it was not clear to the visitors who the potential applicants for this programme would be. Discussions with the senior team revealed that NHS Trusts would be the sole provider of potential students for this programme. It was confirmed by the senior team that this programme would not be open to anyone beside NHS Trust employees. However, the documentation provided prior to the visit did not consistently reflect this information. As such, the visitors require the programme team to revise the programme documentation, in particular, admissions material to clearly articulate that students will only be recruited from NHS Trusts.

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

Condition: The education provider must revise the programme documentation, in particular, advertising material to clearly state that the mode of study available for this programme is only through Part time.

Condition: From a review of the documentation, it was not clear to the visitors the modes of study available for this programme. Discussions with the senior team confirmed that the mode of study available for this programme is only through Part time. However, this is not reflected in the documentation. Volume 1, Document 3 Business Case, page 39 “Key elements of the design are to create a flexible programme that students can study while working full-time, and that it is delivered with ambulance services”. Furthermore, the visitors could not determine from the documentation whether applicants whilst remaining an employee of the Employer Partners, would also be required to undertake a minimum numbers of hours of study. As such, the visitors require the programme team to revise the programme documentation, in particular adverting material to clearly state that the mode of study available for this programme is only through Part time.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the information available to potential applicants with particular reference to payment of tuition fees.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, it was not clear to the visitors the arrangement in place for payment of tuition fees for this programme. Discussions with the programme team revealed that the payment of tuition fees would vary, and depend on the partnership arrangement with the Employer Partner. Currently the arrangement in place with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS), is that the tuition fees

associated with the programme would be covered by EMAS. The visitors noted that this may not always be the case depending on the arrangements with the Employer Partner. As such, the visitors consider the cost implication to be an important factor in the decision making process for potential applicants. For this reason the visitors require further evidence of how potential applicants will be provided with information around cost of fees associated with this programme to enable them to make an informed choice on whether to take up an offer of a place on a programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the admissions information to clarify the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning policy for the programme.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team, the visitors were satisfied that there is an accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) policy in place for the programme. The visitors noted that there is a thorough matching process between an applicant's prior learning and the learning outcomes of the programme. However, whilst the partner provider handbook mentions AP(E)L, the visitors could not see how applicants to the programme would be informed about the process, told what amount of credit could be considered through AP(E)L, and whether practice learning could be transferred or not. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the education provider informs potential applicants of the AP(E)L policy and process for the programme. This will ensure that applicants are given the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place on this programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the information available to potential applicants with particular reference to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and any associated costs.

Reason: From the information provided in the documentation and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were clear that all students must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as part of the admissions process to the programme. Volume 1, Programme specification, page 19, "In all cases a successful applicant's offer of a place on the programme will be subject to... an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") check". The visitors also noted in the same documentation, that this process will then be repeated annually, "Continuation on the programme will be subject to a satisfactory annual enhanced DBS check". However, the visitors were unable to determine who will be responsible for any cost associated with DBS checks both at the point of entry and for the annual checks. The visitors recognise arrangements regarding DBS may differ across Employer Partners. Therefore, the visitors require further information regarding how any costs associated with DBS checks would be communicated to potential students. In this way the visitors will be able to consider how the programme can meet this standard.

2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure to detail how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's requirements regarding Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Reason: From the information provided in the documentation, the visitors were clear that all students must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as part of the admissions process to the programme. The programme specification states "In all cases a successful applicant's offer of a place on the programme will be subject to...an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") check" (page 19). Furthermore, the visitors noted in the same documentation, that DBS checks would be repeated annually. During discussions it was revealed that Employer Partners would be responsible for administering DBS checks, and would share the outcome with the education provider. The visitors recognise that this programme will be offered to different Employer Partners and that each Employer Partner may have a different process in place relation to DBS checks. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence of the education provider's process for overseeing criminal convictions checks. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider owns the admissions procedure to apply DBS checks, how the procedures of different Employer Partners work with those of the education provider, and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with consistently. In particular the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a student onto the programme if any issue does arise. Therefore the visitors require further information about the DBS checks that are applied at the point of admission and repeated annually for this programme. In particular the visitors require further evidence of how different Employer Partners' processes would work with the education provider's process, and clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme if an issue arises.

2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about the admissions procedure to detail how it ensures that successful applicants meet the education provider's health requirements.

Reason: From the information provided in the documentation, the visitors were clear that all students must complete a health declaration as part of the admissions process to the programme. The programme specification states "In all cases a successful applicant's offer of a place on the programme will be subject to... a satisfactory occupational health check" (page 19). During discussions with the programme team it was revealed that Employer Partners would be responsible for administering the health declaration, and would share the outcome with the education provider. The visitors recognise that this programme will be offered to different Employer Partners and that each Employer Partner may have a different process in place relation to health declaration checks. However, the visitors were not provided with evidence of the education provider's process for overseeing health checks. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider's own procedures to apply health checks, will work with Employer Partner. Nor could the visitors determine how the health check is used to identify what adjustments could or could not reasonably be made if health conditions were disclosed, and how any issues that may arise would be dealt with

consistently. In particular the visitors could not determine who makes the final decision about accepting a student if adjustments would be required. Therefore the visitors require further information about the health declarations that are applied at the point of admission to this programme. In particular the visitors require further evidence of how different Employer Partners' processes work with the education provider's process and clarification of who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme if adjustments are required.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate areas of responsibility across all areas of the programme.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers, the visitors were unable to determine the lines of responsibility between the education provider and the Employer Partners. It was articulated by the programme team that the education provider would have overall responsibility for the programme, however, throughout the programme team meeting, several areas such as administering DBS checks and approving non-ambulance placements were referred to as being the responsibility of the Employer Partners. The visitors were also unable to locate any formal agreement between education provider and Employer Partners and how formal arrangements would be agreed with other Employer Partners. Without a clear outline of accountability for each aspect of the programme, the visitors were unable to identify how the programme is effectively managed. The visitors could not see how the evidence provided defines the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and therefore require further evidence to clearly articulate the areas of responsibility across the programme.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide further clarification on how the programme is being effectively managed, particularly, in relation to the role of the deputy programme leader.

Reason: From the documentation, the visitors noted the different roles that will contribute to the management of the programme, including the programme leader. During discussion with the programme team, the visitors were informed that a deputy programme leader will be recruited to join the programme team at a later date. The visitors were also informed that some of the responsibilities of the programme leader will be delegated to the deputy programme leader. From the discussions, the visitors were unsure what the deputy programme leader's role and responsibilities would be within the programme team, as no information was provided regarding this role in the documentation. Furthermore, the visitors were unsure how this role would contribute to the management of the programme to ensure that the programme is being effectively managed. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to clarify the role of the deputy programme leader, what stage someone would be appointed to this role, and how they would contribute to the management of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the number of staff that will be in place to deliver the programme to ensure the programme is delivered effectively.

Reason: In the education provider's SETs mapping submission, they referenced the list of the programme team from the Person Specification (Volume 6), and the staff curriculum vitae when evidencing how this standard is met. Considering the evidence, the visitors were not satisfied that there was an adequate number of staff in place to deliver an effective programme at present. Further to this, there was discussion with the senior team around the working contract for staff based at Employer Partners. From the documentation, the visitors noted that clinical tutors will be contracted by the education provider to deliver certain aspects of the programme but would be contracted by the Employer Partner during other times of the year. Although the visitors were satisfied with this arrangement, they were unable to identify the number of clinical tutors that would be contracted by the education provider to ensure an adequate number of staff are in place to deliver an effective programme.

Furthermore, the visitors are aware that the education provider intends to work with a number of Employer Partners, however, the visitors were not provided with information around the recruitment of staff and associated timelines and, in particular, the planned cohort sizes. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the plans in place to ensure that a sufficient number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff will be recruited to the programme team in advance of the programme starting. In addition, the visitors require the programme team to state the size of cohort intended for this programme. In this way, the visitors can determine whether there are an adequate number of staff that will be in place to deliver the programme to ensure the programme is delivered effectively.

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information regarding the staff members that are responsible for each module of the programme, and their relevant specialist expertise and knowledge in regards to their role.

Reason: The documentation submitted prior to the visit included programme team staff CVs and descriptions of the modules. From the documentation, the visitors noted that clinical tutors and unit leaders would teach the core of the programme. However, from a review of the documentation the visitors could not determine who the unit leaders were, and who the clinical tutors were from the list of CVs. Therefore, they were unable to determine which member of staff was responsible for each module. As a result, the visitors were unable to determine that subject areas are being taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. In order to determine whether subject areas are taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge, and therefore whether this standard is met, the visitors require further information that demonstrates who the module leaders are for each module.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the process undertaken to ensure Employer Partners have resources in place to support student learning in all settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided and the meetings at the approval visit, the visitors were made aware of the resources that are available to all students on the programme, such as the online resources. In discussions at the visit, the visitors were made aware that the programme team recognise that due to different Employer Partners being involved, experience of resources could vary across different Employer Partner centres. The visitors were also informed that the programme team would approve Employer Partner centres to ensure that they have appropriate resources in place to support student learning before sending students to the centre. From this information, the visitors understood that this would mean that the education provider would physically visit all Employer Partner sites. However, the visitors could not determine from the evidence provided how approval of Employer Partner centres would be conducted, or what processes would be enacted to identify if students at certain Employer Partner centres lacked access to any resources, such as accessible physical resources, or the security requirements of a placement provider restricting access to online resources. The visitors were also unclear how these processes would ensure that students' access to resources would be comparable in all placement areas, and what the team would do to address any issues of comparable access. In addition, the visitors were unclear of the expectation regarding the provision of equipment to support clinical study. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate how the programme team ensures that all students have access to the resources they require in order to successfully complete the programme. They also require further detail of the approval process in place that will enable the programme team to ensure that students across Employer Partners have resources in place to support student learning in all settings.

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

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider contained several instances of incorrect terminology. For example, Volume 1 (Programme Specification) "Health Care Professions Council" page 4. This should read as 'Health and Care Professions Council'. Also, the visitors noted in the same document, "The programme will need to be approved by the professional body, the HCPC", page 40. The Health and Care Professions Council is a regulator, therefore references to us as a professional body are incorrect. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation submitted. Incorrect and inconsistent statements have the potential to mislead potential applicants and students. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, and ensure that the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of any changes to the programme documentation following the approval visit.

Reason: During the approval visit, the visitors were informed that the programme team will no longer refer to NHS Trusts as 'Partner Providers' but as 'Employer Partners'. The programme team informed the visitors that they intend to revise the documentation to reflect the change in wording. In the meeting with the programme team, the visitors also noted that the programme team intend to make other changes to the programme documentation following the visit. For instance, provide greater clarity for students on certain areas, such as what the "Flexi – week" means for students and what the expectations are during that period in the calendar. The visitors therefore require evidence of any changes to the programme documentation that the education provider makes as part of this approval process, to ensure that the resources to support student learning in all settings are being effectively used.

3.10 The learning resources, including IT facilities, must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information about how they ensure that the resources including IT facilities across Employer Partners are appropriate to the curriculum and are readily available to students and staff.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were aware of the learning resources including IT facilities that are being offered by the education provider such as an online library and an academic skills community. However, the majority of this programme will be delivered either remotely via an online learning environment (OLE) or at Employer Partner centres. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed that the programme team would approve Employer Partner centres to ensure that they have appropriate resources including IT facilities. However, the visitors could not determine from the evidence provided how approval of Employer Partner centres would be conducted, or what policies and procedures would be in place to allow the programme team to ensure that resources across all Employer Partner centres are appropriate to the curriculum and readily available to student and staff. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence as to how the approval process conducted by the programme team ensures that there are sufficient resources including IT facilities across all Employer Partners. The visitors also require evidence to demonstrate how the programme team will ensure that the resources are appropriate to the curriculum and are readily available to students and staff across all Employer Partners. In this way the visitors can determine how the resources to support student learning are being effectively used and how the programme may meet this standard.

3.11 There must be adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings.

Condition: The programme team must provide further information about the facilities available at Employer Partners to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings and how students can access these facilities.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were aware of the resources offered by the education provider that are intended to support the welfare and wellbeing of students. These resources include "student support services: students have 24/7 access to this information" (Partner Provider Handbook, Volume 3). However, the visitors noted that the majority of this programme will be delivered either remotely via "online learning via the Pearson College online learning environment ("OLE")" (Partner Provider Handbook, Volume 3) or at Employer Partner centres. During discussions with

the programme team, the visitors were informed that the programme team would approve all Employer Partner centres to ensure that they have adequate and accessible facilities in place to support the welfare and wellbeing of students. However, the visitors could not determine from the evidence provided how approval of Employer Partner centres would be conducted, or what policies and procedures would be in place to allow the programme team to ensure that facilities across Employer Partner centres are adequate and accessible to support the welfare and wellbeing of students. As such, the visitors were unclear about how the programme team will ensure that there are sufficient resources available at all Employer Partner centres to support the welfare and wellbeing of students. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the programme team ensures there are adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings, and in particular across different Employer Partners. In this way the visitors can determine how this standard is met.

3.15 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 clarify the attendance policy, where attendance is mandatory in relation to online learning environment (OLE), and how this will be communicated to students.

Reason: The visitors noted a lack of clarity in the programme documentation's description of the attendance policy, particularly regarding requirements around the online learning environment (OLE). Volume 3a Partner provider handbook, page 16, states "The Academic Tutor will also follow-up on any student who does not attend or participate in an online tutorial". The visitors were unable to determine from this information how many online tutorials a student could miss before an action is triggered from an academic tutor, as there is no explicit statement regarding this trigger point. The visitors could not determine how there could be a consistent approach across all Employer Partners if there was no explicit statement of mandatory attendance for online tutorials from the education provider for students to follow. As such, the visitors could not see how students were made aware of the follow up process, or of any consequences of missing OLE elements. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the attendance policy in relation to OLE, at which stage a follow up process would be triggered, and how students are informed of this process.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement in the programme.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were directed to the Partner Provider Handbook (Volume 3) which states "Service users and carers will be asked to review different sections of the learning materials and to provide feedback and comment" page 44. From discussions with the service users and carers, the visitors were unsure of the training offered to enable them to review and comment on the learning materials. Furthermore, the visitors were unsure of the appropriate protocols and procedure should the service users wish to contribute to the programme in different ways. The visitors also noted that involvement was very reliant on informal working relationships between the service users and carers and members of the programme

team. The visitors considered that there were risks to service users and carers involvement in its current form, especially if individuals from the service user and carer group or the programme team change. Furthermore, the visitors were unable to determine from the discussion and the documentation provided that a plan is in place for continuing service user and carer involvement in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for further service user and carer involvement and how service user and carer involvement is embedded more formally into the programme's structure.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of the mechanisms that will be in place to ensure that the curriculum will remain current.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to the Partner Provider Handbook (Volume 3) and Programme Specification (Volume 1). From the documentation provided, the visitors were unable to see the mechanisms that will be in place to ensure that the curriculum will remain relevant to current practice. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors were informed of a number of mechanisms that will be employed by the education provider, for example that the curriculum will go through the quality committee group, which includes individuals with specialist subject area knowledge, who will provide feedback and will comment on the currency of the curriculum. The visitors were also informed that feedback from stakeholders will be used to inform the curriculum. However, from the evidence provided the visitors were unclear as to how feedback from colleagues across a number of Employer Partners in practice, and from students, would be fed back to the programme team to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice. In particular the visitors could not determine what arrangements are in place and what mechanisms would allow this feedback to influence the development of the curriculum, particularly as there will be a number of Employer Partners giving feedback. As such, the visitors were unable to make a judgement whether there are appropriate mechanisms in place that will ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of the mechanisms that the programme team will have in place that will ensure that the curriculum will remain current. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the mechanisms that are in place to gather relevant feedback from practice colleagues and students to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice. In this way the visitors will be able to determine how the programme meets this standard.

4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of where the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics are taught throughout the programme, and that students understand the implications of these standards, including how and when they apply.

Reason: From the documentation submitted, the visitors could not identify how students are made aware of the implications of the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs). The visitors were guided to the unit directory (Volume 2) in particular, unit 401, 402, 501 and 503, however, from a review of these modules descriptors, the visitors could not see how the SCPEs were incorporated into the

curriculum, and therefore how the education provider ensures that students understand the implications of the SCPEs. At the visit, the programme team informed the visitors that at the beginning of the programme students will be given a copy of the SCPEs publication to inform them of the standards. However, this standard requires that the curriculum ensures that students understand the implications of the SCPEs, including any impact on their behaviour while studying. Therefore, the visitors require evidence of where within the curriculum the SCPEs are taught throughout the programme, and how the students understand the implications of these standards, to ensure that this standard is met.

4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Condition: The programme team must provide further information about how the learning and teaching activities of the programme will ensure that the curriculum is effectively delivered.

Reason: From the evidence provided the visitors were unclear as to how the curriculum would be delivered to students on the programme. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that this programme would be delivered to students while they were in practice and at Employer Partners' centres via an online learning environment (OLE). The programme team also highlighted during discussions that a two-day prep workshop would be undertaken by members of the programme team going out to placement sites and by the staff of Employer Partners who deliver some elements of the programme directly to students. However, the visitors could not identify what the workshop would consist of, and how the content ensures that the range of learning and teaching approaches used is appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the teaching and learning approaches that are used and how they are appropriate to ensure the effective delivery of the programme.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the range of placement settings required to be facilitated by the Employer Partners to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the vast majority of placements would take place in an ambulance setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and the Employer Partners, but it was also stated that students would have the opportunity to experience placements in alternative settings, such as Accident and Emergency and care homes. This was not reflected in the programme documentation. We do not stipulate the number, duration or range of placements which a student must undertake, but the visitors consider that the learning outcomes of the programme would be difficult to achieve in the current range of placement settings. In a meeting with the placement providers it was highlighted that students were required to achieve 150 hours of supernumerary placement, but it was unclear in which placement setting these hours would be achieved. The visitors were unable to gain a clear outline of the placement settings that students would be required to attend as opposed to those that they may attend. Therefore, the visitors require the programme documentation to be updated to clearly articulate where students are

required to achieve their supernumerary hours and how the full range of placements, required and suggested, are appropriate to supporting the delivery of the programme, and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe and supportive environment at all placement settings.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team, it was clear that the responsibility for ensuring that practice placement are safe and supportive lies with the Employer Partners. “The responsibility of Pearson College is to take reasonable steps to ensure that the placement provider has appropriate policies and processes in place” (Clinical Placement Handbook, Volume 5, page 17). From the discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unable to determine what the reasonable steps would be to ensure a safe and supportive environment for students. The visitors also noted from the documentation that the education provider would be responsible for approving and monitoring non-ambulance service placements. However, during discussions with the programme team the visitors were informed that, due to the vast volume of non-ambulance service placement available, the responsibility of approving and monitoring these placement will shift from the education provider to Employer Partners. This was not reflected in the programme documentation. The visitors were not provided with any information on how Employer Partners will ensure non-ambulance service placements settings will provide a safe and supportive environment. Therefore, the visitors are unclear how the education provider’s system for approving and monitoring placements ensures that all practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require further evidence to show what steps the education provider takes to ensure that practice placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment for students.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: The visitors noted a number of different documents submitted by the education provider to demonstrate how the programme meets this standard. However, in considering the initial documentation submitted and discussions held at the visit, the visitors could not find any evidence of overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements used by the programme. From discussions with the programme team, it was unclear how the education provider would maintain responsibility for the approval and monitoring of practice placements. The visitors could not determine the criteria used by the programme team to assess placements or the overall process undertaken to approve them. The visitors were also unclear how monitoring activities, such as the practice educator and student questionnaires, feed into this process. This applies to all placements, both at ambulance services and in other settings. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the overarching policies, systems and procedures in place regarding the approval and monitoring of placements, and how they are put into practice, to ensure this

standard is met. In particular, the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used to approve placement providers and settings, the overall process for the approval and ongoing monitoring of placements, and how information gathered from placement providers at approval, or during a placement experience is considered and acted upon. Any such evidence should articulate what the process in place is and how this supports the review of the quality of a placement.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how their processes ensure that placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place, and that any issues which arise as a result of these policies are fed back effectively to the education provider.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were directed to the clinical placement handbook section 7 (Volume 5), which gives details about the education provider's commitment to equality and diversity. In addition the visitors were sign posted to the pre-placement audit check list, which includes an item on equality and diversity. However the visitors could not determine from the evidence provided how the equality and diversity policies, both at the education provider and the placement setting, would work in tandem to ensure that any relevant equality and diversity data was being monitored. They were also unsure how any issues, if they arose, would be flagged and who would be responsible for resolving these issues. Therefore the visitors require further information about how any issues which are flagged by monitoring of equality and diversity data at the practice placement are fed back to the education provider and dealt with appropriately. In this way the visitors will be able to consider how this standard can be met by the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at each placement setting.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were directed to Clinical Placement Handbook Section 3 (Volume 5) which states "Partner providers are responsible for allocating suitably qualified and experienced clinical mentors to support students on placement" (page 9). However, the visitors were provided with limited evidence of the quality assurance processes used by the education provider to monitor the qualifications and experience of staff at placement, and to ensure that Employer Partners adhere to the requirements set out in any documentation. As practice placements are sourced and managed by Employer Partners the visitors were unable to confirm that adequate numbers of appropriate and qualified staff would be present in the placement setting to support students in their learning. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show the quality assurance processes used by education provider to ensure that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that placement educators have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors were directed to Clinical Placement Handbook Section 3 (Volume 5) which states “Partner providers are responsible for allocating suitably qualified and experienced clinical mentors to support students on placement” page 9. However, the visitors were provided with limited evidence of the quality assurance processes used by the education provider to monitor the qualifications and experience of staff at placement, and to ensure that Employer Partners adhere to the requirements set out in any documentation. As practice placements are sourced and managed by Employer Partners the visitors were unable to confirm that placement educators would have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support students. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to show the quality assurance processes used by Employer Partners to ensure that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure practice placement educators receive appropriate training.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, as well as discussions at the visit, the visitors noted that the education provider offers all clinical mentors access to mentor induction orientation programme. They similarly noted “clinical mentors who have not attended a mentoring programme with the previous five years will be encouraged to attend refresher training” Clinical placement handbook, Volume 5 (page 10). From the discussions with the programme team, the visitors were unclear about what programme specific training practice placement educators would be required to undertake before they could supervise and assess students’ performance based on the requirements of this programme. The visitors were also unclear how the programme team monitors the training that practice placement educators have undertaken prior to supervising students. The visitors were therefore unclear about how the programme team ensures that all practice placement educators have undertaken the required training activities so that they can undertake the role that is being asked of them. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence of the training that practice placement educators are required to undertake before they supervise a student on this programme. They also require further information of the programme specific training that is offered to practice placement educators to ensure they can assess students in line with the assessment requirements of the education provider. In this way the visitors can determine whether the programme meets this standard.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that there is regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and all Employer Partners.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and the current Employer Partner, it was clear that the processes to provide information to this Employer Partner were working well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors noted that this was due to the close relationship between the education provider and current Employer Partner, who has helped to develop the programme. As it was highlighted at the visit that there were likely to be additional Employer Partners joining the programme, the visitors require further information about the formal mechanisms which are in place to provide all Employer Partners with the necessary information to ensure effective collaboration.

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

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate how students will be fully prepared for placement.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that each Employer Partner programme co-ordinator would be responsible for ensuring that students and practice educators were fully prepared for placement. From the documentation submitted, the visitors noted the Clinical Placement Briefing Document Form, Appendix 8, would be used as guideline to prepare students for placement. From this form, the visitors were unable to see how students will be prepared in relation to the learning outcomes to be achieved, the expectation of professional conduct, the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress or communications and lines of responsibility. The visitors were signposted to other sources of evidence, but from the documentation the visitors were unable to see how students and placement providers would consistently be prepared for placement. Therefore, the visitors require further information on how students and Employer Partners providing placement would be fully prepared for placement.

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

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to clearly articulate how placement providers will be fully prepared for placement.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that each Employer Partner programme co-ordinator would be responsible for ensuring that students and practice educators were fully prepared for placement. From discussions with the placement providers it was clear that the current Employer Partner was confident of the information to be passed to the practice placement educators and to the students. However, the Employer Partner recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new Employer Partners may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new Employer Partners, and therefore students and practice placement educators, would be fully prepared for placement. Therefore, the visitors require further information about the arrangements which are in place to ensure that Employer Partners are preparing both practice educators and students with the information they need before starting their placement.

6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must submit any revised assessment of practice documents for the programme.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module booklets, module specifications and standards of proficiency mapping document. However, during discussions at the visit, the programme team indicated that they will be making revision to the assessment practice documents, such as the Clinical Placement Summary Report (Volume 5a) along with other documents that give detail into the assessment methods. The visitors were unable to determine from the discussions the extent of the changes intended by the programme team. Without seeing the final documents that specify the assessment methods, the visitors will not be able to determine if the chosen assessment methods are in line with the learning outcomes for each module. Therefore, the visitors will need to review changes made to documentation to ensure changes will not adversely affect the assessment of the learning outcomes. The visitors therefore require the education provider to resubmit the practice assessment documents so the visitors can determine this standard is met.

6.5 The measurement of student performance must be objective and ensure fitness to practise.

Condition: The education provider must provide further information on the processes in place to ensure that assessments undertaken at Employer Partner locations are objective and ensure fitness to practise.

Reason: From the documentation received, the visitors noted that the education provider ensured students' performance will be assessed in both academic and placement settings. The visitors noted in the module descriptors that assessment criteria including Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) were used to assess students' performance. However, the visitors had questions around the standardisation in the measurement of student performance in being objective and ensuring fitness to practise. For example, "Practice skill 26: Implement appropriate acute care for the patient with GU complaint" (Volume 5b), the visitors were unsure how the education provider will ensure practice skills (such as the above) being assessed at level 4 will be objective across different Employer Partners. Parity in assessments is a vital part of ensuring that the measurement of student performance is objective and

ensures fitness to practice. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence of the process in place in ensuring assessments undertaken at Employer Partner locations are objective and ensure fitness to practise.

6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms used to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment at Employer Partners.

Reason: From the documentation provided and meetings with the programme team and Employer Partners the visitors were clear that students would undergo a number of assessments which will be managed by Employer Partners. During discussion with the programme team, the visitors were informed that each Employer Partner would carry out the same types of assessment at the same time. Employer Partners would be provided with guidelines outlining the assessment criteria to be used to ensure consistency. Further to this, the visitors were also informed that the education provider would monitor assessments via video link to ensure marking is fair and appropriate. However, the visitors were unable to locate the monitoring mechanisms mentioned in discussion with the programme team, to ensure that each Employer Partner would implement and follow the same assessment methods with the same level of scrutiny. The visitors noted that assurance of consistency across Employer Partners is vital to ensure appropriate standards in assessment. The visitors therefore require further information on the monitoring processes used by the education provider to show that effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence to demonstrate that the assessment regulations and programme documentation clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement for the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to Appendix 11 in Volume 3a (Partner provider handbook appendices) as evidence for this standard. This document presented information on compensation provisions for the Higher National Diploma (HND) and Higher National Certificate (HNC) programme as well as overall marks for the programme. From the documentation submitted, the visitors were unable to find detail within the module descriptors or programme specification as to which modules are core for the programme, and need to be passed in order to progress from Level 4 on to Level 5. They were therefore unable to determine the progression and achievement requirements for the programme. The visitors also noted that there was limited information in the documentation to indicate the maximum credit that a student may carry over to enable them to proceed to the next stage of the programme, or whether all assessment elements must be passed. Therefore the visitors require further clarification of the progression and achievement arrangements for the programme, and how this information would be communicated to students.

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