

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Central Lancashire
Programme name	DipHE Paramedic Practice
Mode of delivery	Full and Part Time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	29–30 January 2009

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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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 11 June 2009. At the Committee meeting on 11 June 2009, 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 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 part of a joint event. The education provider reviewed the programme. The education provider and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	David Whitmore (Paramedic) Glyn Harding (Paramedic)
HPC executive officers (in attendance)	Paula Lescott Anne Shomefun
Proposed student numbers	40
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2009
Chair	John Holloway (University of Central Lancashire)
Secretary	Liz Edwards (University of Central Lancashire)
Members of the joint panel	Alan Rice (St George's, University of London) Jeanie Judge (University of Central Lancashire) Cath Toase (University of Central Lancashire) Julie Pierce Jones (University of Central Lancashire)

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	<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"/>
Validation Reports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review External examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit as the documentation does 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 (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice 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 57 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 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.

The visitors have also made a recommendation.

Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for 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 the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up the offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must review the programme documentation and advertising materials for the programme to follow the guidance provided in the HPC “Regulatory status advertising protocol for education providers”.

Reason: From the documentation submitted by the education provider it was clear that the documentation did not fully comply with the advertising protocol issued by HPC. In particular, the HPC is not a professional body or an accrediting body and should not be referred to as such in any materials related to an HPC approved programme. There are also instances of out-of-date terminology in reference to the registered status of individuals such as “state registered”. It should also be made clear throughout all of the documentation that completion of the programme provides eligibility to apply for HPC registration.

The visitors considered that the terminology could be misleading to applicants and students and therefore require the documentation (including website information) to be thoroughly reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect or out-of-date terminology.

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

Condition: The educational provider must provide documentary confirmation of the number of additional staffing in terms of clinical/tutorial staff seconded from the North West Ambulance Service.

Reason: During the visit the education provider mentioned that more North West Ambulance Service clinical/tutorial staff would be developed to support the programme. Once these plans are finalised after the meeting with the local Strategic Health Authority in February 2009 the visitors require documentary confirmation of the number of additional staffing seconded from the North West Ambulance Service. This information is needed, so as to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The educational provider must provide documentary confirmation of the type of additional staffing in terms of clinical/tutorial staff seconded from the North West Ambulance Service.

Reason: It was apparent from documentation submitted before the visit that 2 out of the 19 members of the programme staff team were paramedics. During the visit the education provider mentioned that more North West Ambulance Service

clinical/tutorial staff would be developed to support the programme. Once these plans are finalised after the meeting with the local Strategic Health Authority in February 2009 the visitors require documentary confirmation of the type of additional staffing seconded from the North West Ambulance Service. This information is needed, so as to ensure that this standard is being met.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit documentation which illustrates a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

Reason: From the discussions with the programme team it was clear that the education provider utilises a multi-professional audit tool and that this is in the process of being reviewed. The visitors did not receive a copy of the finalised version of this tool and to ensure there is a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements, the visitors would like to receive a copy of the finalised document.

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 current and planned number of qualified mentors and details of the region that they will cover.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit the visitors found it difficult to determine the number of mentors currently trained to supervise students during placements. During discussions with the programme and senior team, the visitors learnt that the education provider plans to train more mentors in those regions which currently have limited numbers of mentors. The visitors therefore require documentary confirmation of the current number of trained mentors and the planned number of mentors that will be trained, with details of the regions they will cover. The confirmation is needed so as to ensure that this standard is met.

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 redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that external examiners must be registered unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with HPC.

Reason: The submitted documentation did not contain HPC requirements regarding external examiner recruitment. The visitors, therefore, felt that this needs to be included within the documentation to demonstrate the recognition of these requirements.

Recommendation

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

Condition: The visitors wish to encourage that the education provider maintains the Year 2 students status as guaranteed clinical supervision as much as is possible on practice placements.

Reason: At the visit the educational provider mentioned that in Year 2 students would be on guaranteed clinical supervision while on placement. The visitors would wish to support this approach with a view to encouraging, wherever possible, that Year 2 students remain on guaranteed clinical supervision while on placement in order to further benefit student learning.

Commendation

Commendation: The visitors commended the student competence passport for placements developed by the education provider for its innovative concept, process and application.

Reason: During the visit the programme team provided the visitors with further placement documentation. The visitors were informed that the student competence passport, designed as an aide for both students and placement staff, set out clearly in a tabulation what students were expected to do on placements at a specific point in time. The student competence passport was, therefore, commended as best practice.

David Whitmore
Glyn Harding