

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Portsmouth
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Medical Imaging
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time
<b>Relevant part of the HCPC Register</b>	Radiographer
<b>Relevant modality / domain</b>	Diagnostic radiographer
<b>Date of visit</b>	4 – 5 April 2017

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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 'radiographer' 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 24 August 2017. At the Committee meeting on 24 August 2017, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the conditions outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

## Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HCPC only visit. The education provider and validating body did not validate or review the programmes at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programmes. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. The visit also considered the BSc Radiotherapy and Oncology. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

## Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Beverley Ball (Radiographer) Stephen Boynes (Diagnostic radiographer) Susanne Roff (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Niall Gooch
Proposed student numbers	55 per cohort, 1 cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2017
Chair	Karen Ball (University of Portsmouth)
Secretary	Angela Tacchetti (University of Portsmouth)

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not meet with service users and carers as they were unable to attend the visit. The visitors were however able to meet with university staff responsible for co-ordinating the service users and carers group.

The HCPC did not meet with the students as the programme was new so there were no current or past students to meet. However, the HCPC did meet with students on the existing BSc Diagnostic Radiography, the programme out of which this new programme developed.

## 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 48 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining ten SETs.

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

The visitors have also made a number of recommendations for the programme.

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

## Conditions

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

**Condition:** The education provider must make information for applicants more widely available at earlier stages in the application process, especially concerning costs associated with placements and the arrangements for AP(E)L.

**Reason:** From their review of programme documentation, the visitors noted that there was relatively little material informing potential applicants of the costs associated with placements, or how they might be able to AP(E)L onto the programme. Several students reported in discussions that they had incurred unexpected costs associated with travel and accommodation for placements. Concern was also expressed that it was not made clear to potential applicants that there was a policy preventing them from going on placement at an NHS Trust where they were an employee. The visitors considered that these omissions were important, as students were coming to the programme from a diverse range of backgrounds, and often had family commitments, or had worked as radiographic assistants at NHS Trusts. Similarly, they considered that the lack of clarity about AP(E)L might prevent such potential applicants from making an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place, by discouraging them from applying in the first place. They therefore require that the education provider demonstrate how they will ensure that potential applicants have access to all necessary information as early as possible.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must demonstrate that staff will have appropriate opportunities for scholarly activity and continuing professional development.

**Reason:** The visitors were able to discuss with the senior team and the programme team the arrangements in place for staff on the programme to pursue continuing professional development and higher academic qualifications, for example, keeping their clinical experience current and studying for doctorates. A number of staff were studying for higher qualifications. The visitors were made aware that programme staff were meant to have half a day per week set aside for scholarly activity, but also that this was not always happening and that in general the staff were not always able to pursue scholarly activity. The visitors noted that a new workload model was soon to be introduced. They therefore require that the education provider demonstrates that, under this new model, staff will have adequate time for further studies and scholarly activity, keeping clinical skills up to date, and other responsibilities.

### **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 programme team must demonstrate how they will ensure that there is sufficient study space available to students on the programme.

**Reason:** From discussions with students the visitors became aware that there was limited study space available to students on the programme. There was relatively little dedicated study space for radiography students, and many of the students reported that they had trouble finding quiet study areas in central university facilities, especially around exam time. Some students reported that they had come to campus to find that a learning or teaching session had been cancelled or postponed, and then had to return home in order to find a quiet study space, and felt that this was not a good use of their time. On their facilities tour the visitors noted that the central university library seemed busy and relatively noisy and that there was not a great deal of quiet study space. The visitors considered that, bearing in mind issues with timetabling, the shortage of study space could potentially prevent students from making effective use of programme resources. Discussions with the programme team and senior staff established that they were aware of this issue and were taking steps to try and address it and that there had been recent improvements, but that they were restricted in what they could do because timetabling and use of space was organised centrally. However, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate that, going forward, they are able to ensure sufficient study space for students on the programme.

#### **4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.**

**Condition:** In modules where radiographers learn alongside students from several different professions, the education provider must demonstrate how they ensure that the profession-specific skills and knowledge of radiographers are addressed.

**Reason:** From their review of the programme documentation, the visitors noted that in two cross-professional modules – Foundations of Scientific Inquiry and Research Methods – the module descriptors do not mention radiography students as being on the module. They were therefore unable from the evidence provided to be sure that the profession-specific skills and knowledge of radiographers were being addressed in this interprofessional learning. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they ensure that radiography students' specific needs are being addressed. In this way they can be satisfied that the standard is met.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of what mechanisms are in place for auditing placement sites.

**Reason:** When reviewing programme documentation, the visitors were not able to see evidence of how the education provider ensured that appropriate resources were available on clinical sites where students from the programme attend their practice placements. Discussions with the programme team and the practice placement educators suggested that resources and facilities on placement sites were sufficient and up-to-date, and that documentation showing this was available, but the visitors did not see this evidence. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they ensure that all placements have sufficient resources and facilities. In this way the visitors can be satisfied that all students on placement have access to the resources necessary to support their learning.

### **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 evidence of the number of appropriately qualified and experienced educators available at each placement setting.

**Reason:** The visitors were not able to see documentary evidence of the availability of adequate numbers of staff at placement settings, and what those staff members' qualifications and experience were. In discussions with practice placement educators and the programme team they were informed of a document containing clinical profiles of placement staff. However, without having seen this evidence, or similar evidence such as job descriptions and recruitment policies, the visitors were not able to determine whether all students on placements had access to appropriately experienced staff. Therefore they require that the education provider provide such evidence. In this way they can be confident that the standard will be met.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure that practice placement educators have had up-to-date practice placement educator training.

**Reason:** The visitors were not able to see documentary evidence of the training given to staff at placement settings, how this training is appropriate and how the education provider will ensure that educators have undertaken this training. In discussions with practice placement educators and the programme team the visitors established that there were records of placement staff undertaking training, including SLiP (Supporting Learners in Practice) training. However, without having seen documentary evidence of the training given to practice placement educators, the visitors were not able to determine whether all staff were appropriately trained. Therefore the visitors require that the education provider provide evidence of the training undergone by practice placement educators, including the content of that training, and of their mechanisms for ensuring that placement educators undergo such training and update it as appropriate, and appropriate updating of the training. In this way they can be confident that the standard will be met.

### **5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered.

**Reason:** The visitors were not able to see documentary evidence showing how the education provider ensures that all practice placement educators are appropriately registered, or if they have a policy on when, if ever, to waive this requirement. It was not clear from discussions with the education provider what process was in place for ensuring appropriate professional registration. The visitors were therefore unable to determine whether all placement staff were appropriately registered. Therefore they require that the education provider provide evidence of how they ensure this. In this way they can be confident that the standard will be met.



**6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.**

**Condition:** The education provider is required to provide further evidence to clarify that the approved programme is the only programme which contains any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.

**Reason:** From reading the programme specifications, the visitors were not able to see evidence that students were clearly informed that the only award which would provide eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC was the BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography. The education provider did list step-off points from the programme but did not specify that those would not provide eligibility for HCPC registration. The visitors therefore require the education provider to amend relevant materials for the Diagnostic Radiography programme, so that it is clear that students must successfully complete the programme in order to be eligible to apply for HCPC registration.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate that the assessment regulations clearly specify the requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

**Reason:** From a review of the documentation, the visitors did not see any reference to an aegrotat award in the assessment regulations for this programme. In discussions at the visit, it was unclear whether an aegrotat award would be given for this programme. As such it was not clearly specified that, if an aegrotat is awarded, that this does not provide eligibility for admission to the Register. Therefore, the visitors require evidence which clarifies whether aegrotat awards are given for this programme and, where they are given, that it is clearly communicated to students and staff that students who are awarded an aegrotat award are not eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC.

## Recommendations

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

**Recommendation:** The programme team should continue their efforts to address problems with timetabling.

**Reason:** From discussions with students, the visitors became aware that there was an ongoing problem with timetabling of teaching and learning activities on the programme, for example seminars and lectures being cancelled or rearranged at very short notice. The senior team and programme team both stated that they were doing what they could to resolve this issue at university level. The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met overall, as the senior staff were taking steps to resolve the problems, but they considered that the programme's ability to meet the standard might be endangered in future if the measures being taken to improve the situation with timetabling did not bear fruit.

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

**Recommendation:** The education provider should continue their efforts to broaden the scope of their service user and carer involvement.

**Reason:** The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met overall. However, they noted from their discussion with service user and carer co-ordinators that the profile of service users and carers was not as diverse as it might be. For example, during discussions with staff who work with service users and carers, the visitors noted that those staff were aware of the need to more accurately reflect the local population, in terms of age, socio-economic status, and ethnic background. If this did not happen, there was a risk that those currently involved may no longer be the most appropriate and relevant for the programme. In addition, the visitors did not see evidence that service users and carers had opportunities to give specific formal feedback about their interactions with students, and the programme more generally. There is a questionnaire given to service users and carers but it is a generic university questionnaire and is not focused on the programme. The visitors considered that there was a risk that the lack of formal mechanisms for getting feedback and programme input from service users and carers might lead to service users and carers not being involved in the programme appropriately, if for example existing service users and carers ceased their involvement. They therefore suggest that the programme team consider how they can best increase the involvement of service users and carers in the programme, how they can get more effective feedback, and how they can improve the diversity of the service user and carer groups.

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

**Recommendation:** For the modules which will be new on the programme, the education provider should consider reviewing the modules to ensure that theory and practice are integrated.

**Reason:** From their review of the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team, the visitors were not able to see specifically how theory and practice were integrated across several of the modules. For example, in discussions

with the programme team there was mention of increased use of case studies, but it was not clear where these would be used or how extensively they would be used. The visitors therefore suggest that the education provider review module descriptors to provide more clarity about how students will be able to practise the practical skills they have learned.

### **5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.**

**Recommendation:** The education provider should consider reviewing how they will keep practice placements integral to the programme in the event of increases in student numbers.

**Reason:** The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met overall, i.e. that placements were integral to the programme and that there were good relationships with placement providers. However, given the forthcoming end to the commissioning model for student places, and the fact that there had been an unexpectedly large number of students starting the programme in 2016-17, the visitors considered that it could be appropriate for the education provider to review how they would handle increased demand for placements in the event of possible future increase in student numbers.

Beverley Ball  
Stephen Boynes  
Susanne Roff