

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of the West of England, Bristol
Programme name	Diploma in Higher Education Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Distance learning
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	19 – 20 January 2016

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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 23 March 2016. At the Committee meeting on 23 March 2016, 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 part of a joint event. The education provider validated the programme. The education provider, the professional body and the HCPC 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 HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Frances Ashworth (Lay visitor) Paul Bates (Paramedic) Mark Woolcock (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Alex Urquhart
Proposed student numbers	30 per cohort, two cohorts per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 April 2016
Chair	Kevin Golden (University of the West of England, Bristol)
Secretary	Lisa Connors (University of the West of England, Bristol)
Members of the joint panel	Mandy Lee (University of the West of England, Bristol) Vivien Rolfe (University of the West of England, Bristol) Ruth Heames (University of Coventry)

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 the external examiners' report 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) and FdSc Paramedic Science programmes, 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 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 condition is set on the programme, which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 57 of the SETs have been met and a condition should be set on the remaining one SET.

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 recommendation 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 ensure potential applicants to the programme are given a complete range of information in order to make an informed choice about the programme.

Reason: In the documents provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not determine how students and potential applicants will be provided with the necessary information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programme or otherwise. The visitors were unable to see clearly articulated information on the following:

- number of face to face hours at the education provider;
- information on the range of placements;
- self-study time as part of the programme;
- attendance requirements on the programme; and
- the details of how the programme will be delivered.

As such, the visitors were unable to determine how key information is communicated to potential applicants, to ensure that they are able to make an informed decision regarding whether to take up an offer of a place on the programme. To assess whether this standard is met the visitors need to see the revised programme documentation and the advertising materials.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team continue to communicate the support available to service users and carers involved with the programme.

Reason: The visitors met with two service users and carers who explained how they are involved in the admissions process and run questions and answers sessions with students on the programme. The visitors were satisfied that this involvement met the standard at a threshold level. In the programme team meeting the visitors learnt that there is a service user and carer group in place to provide support and training for service users involved with the education provider. However when meeting with the service users and carers the visitors felt that they could be better informed about these available support and training. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team continue to enhance communication about the support available to service users and carers involved within the programme.

Frances Ashworth
Paul Bates
Mark Woolcock