HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of the West of Scotland
Name of programme(s)	BSc Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	03-04 March 2020
Case reference	CAS-14979-C2G9C8

Contents

Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards
We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally approved on an open-ended basis, subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed on our website.

How we make our decisions
We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint partner visitors to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view on our website.

HCPC panel
We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

David Comber	Paramedic
David Whitmore	Paramedic
Ian Hughes	Lay
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit
There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Chris O'Donnell	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of the West of Scotland
Hazel Shepherd	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of the West of Scotland
Donna Taylor	Internal validation panel	University of the West of Scotland

Daune West	Internal validation panel	University of the West of Scotland
Mark Willis	External subject specialist	University of Sunderland

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 60
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02151

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	

Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	The programme has never run.

We also usually ask to meet the following groups at approval visits, although there may be some circumstances where meeting certain groups is not needed. In the table below, we have noted which groups we met, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	As the programme is new, we met with learners on BSc (Hons) Applied Bioscience programme
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	We did not meet with any service users or carers as there were none involved in the programme yet.
Facilities and resources	Yes	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors
In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions
Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 20 May 2020.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will involve service users and carers in the programme.

Reason: The education provider referred the visitors to page 42 of the Practice Assessment Document, which identified a template of a service user/carer feedback form. The visitors did not meet with any service users or carers at the visit. During discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that they had contacted some

service user and carer groups and sent questionnaires to individuals who had used the ambulance service. The programme team also stated that, as a school, they were looking to set up a service user and carer group. Through these discussions, the visitors could see that the education provider had a strategy in place to involve service users and carers across different health programmes within the school. However, the visitors saw no formalised information that demonstrated how service users and carers are involved in the programme currently, or will be involved in the programme going forward. The visitors considered that they would require further information on how the strategy will be implemented within this particular programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information that identifies who the service users and carers will be and how they will be involved in the programme to ensure their involvement is appropriate.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that non-NHS Scotland practice educators involved in the programme will have access to resources that are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the resources available for teaching on the programme, and discussed resourcing with the programme team and senior team. The visitors noted that the documentation submitted prior to the visit provided information on how learners will access resources but they could not find information on how practice educators (PEs) will access the resources they need to support learning and teaching on the programme. The visitors met with practice educators from various NHS Scotland placements and from non-ambulance service who are involved in the programme. They informed the visitors that they have access to the university's shared resources as well as both NHS Lanarkshire and national libraries. The NHS Scottish ambulance service PEs also said that they have access to the Scottish knowledgebase service – a software where information can be stored and shared. The programme team also informed the visitors that NHS Scottish ambulance and non-ambulance PEs have access to NHS journals and could access information through open access or Google Scotland. From this information, the visitors were satisfied that both NHS Scottish ambulance and non-ambulance PEs will have access to the resources they need to support learning and teaching on the programme. However, they were unclear how non-NHS such as hospices and care homes practice educators, who could also be involved in the programme, would have access to resources and how this was explained to them. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how non-NHS practice educators will have appropriate access to the resources they need to deliver the programme effectively.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The programme team must revise the practice assessment document to ensure it is accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors noted that the Practice Assessment Document (PAD) submitted was still in the draft form. At the visit, the programme team told the visitors that they would be making

changes to the PAD following observations made by some members of the internal and external validation panel. The visitors considered that for them to be able to determine whether this document will be effective and appropriate in the delivery of the programme, they will need to see the amended, final version. The visitors therefore require the education provider to revise and submit the finalised practice assessment document before they can determine that it is accurate and appropriate to deliver an effective programme.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must revise the module descriptors to demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were satisfied that the current learning outcomes for the programme ensure that those who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs for paramedics. However, throughout the visit, both the internal and external validation panel members required the programme team to re-write some of the modules to meet their requirements.

The visitors therefore noted that re-writing the affected modules could result in changes to the learning outcomes. Without seeing the finalised learning outcomes, the visitors were unable to make a judgement on how they enable learners to meet the SOPs for paramedics. The visitors therefore require the education provider to communicate any changes to the learning outcomes, and demonstrate that these ensure that those who successfully complete the programme are able to meet the SOPs for paramedics.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence of the effective processes in place to obtain consent from learners when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching.

Reason: The visitors reviewed page 6 of the practice assessment document as evidence for this standard. From their review, the visitors saw that learners would have had to complete mandatory training prior to undertaking practice-based learning. However, there was no mention of how consent will be sought during practical and clinical teaching. The visitors could not determine the process in place for obtaining learners' consent when they participate as service users in role plays. At the visit, the visitors asked learners about their awareness of how consent policies worked in situations where they were taking part as service users in practical and clinical teaching. The learners indicated that there were no formal processes for obtaining their consent. From this information, the visitors were unclear about how the programme respected individual's rights and reduced the risk of harm, whilst making sure that learners understood what will be expected of them as health and care professionals. In addition, the visitors were unclear how the education provider manages situations where learners decline from participating as service users in practical sessions. To ensure this standard is met, the visitors require evidence of the effective process the education provider has in place for obtaining consent from learners before they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching. The visitors also require evidence to show what

alternative learning arrangements will be put in place where learners do not consent to participating as a service user.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Reason: Prior to the visit, the visitors reviewed evidence for this standard and they were satisfied that the assessments were effective at deciding learners' fitness to practise by the end of the programme. However, during the visit, both the internal and external validation panel members required the programme team to re-write some of the modules to meet their requirements. The visitors considered that re-writing the affected modules could result in changes to the learning outcomes and subsequently, how those learning outcomes were assessed. If changes were made to the assessments, the visitors could not be certain that the new assessments would remain objective, fair and reliably measure learners' progression and achievement. The education provider is therefore required to provide evidence demonstrating that assessments throughout the programme provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 02 July 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available on our website.