HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of West London
Name of programme(s)	MSc Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	26-27 June 2019
Case reference	CAS-14329-X1J3H4

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:

Susanne Roff	Lay
Glyn Harding	Paramedic
Gemma Howlett	Paramedic
Ismini Tsikaderi	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.

Jacqueline Smart	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of West London – Educational Developer: Course Design and Development
Judith Spurett	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of West London – Assistant Registrar
Lesley-Jane Eales-Reynolds	Internal panel	University of West London – Head of ExPERT

		(Expertise for Professionalism in Education, Research and Teaching) Academy
Rosemary Stock	Internal Panel	University of West London – Senior Lecturer
Samantha Paterson	External Advisor	Glasgow Caledonian University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 November 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02047

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. The education provider is

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
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	N/A

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	Yes	Met with learners on the PgDip Nursing programme.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
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 August 2019.

2.1 The admissions process 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 the online advertising materials contain all relevant admissions requirements and important information for applicants.

Reason: In their submission, the education provider has outlined the admission process for applicants with information provided on the website. The visitors also considered the information around the admission criteria they heard in the programme team meeting. However, they were unsure whether all the necessary information regarding admissions criteria they heard about during the meeting are presented on the website, such as the requirement for a referee able to provide information relevant to professional abilities, and how the selection process will work with shortlisted candidates. The visitors were unable to determine whether the applicants would have the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further information which clarifies the admission criteria including the satisfactory reference requirement.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must outline the process in place to identify a suitable person for the course leader role or their replacement, if this becomes necessary.

Reason: The education provider has provided the job description and the person specification for the course leader on the programme. At the visit, the visitors received the curriculum vitae of the person appointed on the course leader role. However, the visitors were unclear on the process to identify a suitable person for the course leader role and, if this becomes necessary, to find a suitable replacement. The visitors were unable to determine how the education provider will ensure that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless, other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence which shows the process for appointing and/or replacing the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme.

4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure learners understand and are able to meet the expectation of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics across modules on the programme.

Reason: The education provider have referenced they considered the standards of conducts performance and ethics (SCPEs) while developing the programme as noted in the course specification and course handbook. From discussions with the programme team, the visitors understood in what ways the education provider intends that the learning outcomes address the SCPEs on the programme. However, the visitors could not see references of the SCPEs in the learning outcomes throughout the programme. The visitors were unable to determine how the education provider ensure the SCPEs are outlined across modules on the programme explicitly through the learning outcomes. The visitors require further evidence which shows the learning outcomes being explicitly linked to the SCPEs across modules on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how service users and learners can withdraw anytime they wish from activities in modules of the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware of consent forms which allow participation in practical sessions for service users and learners. The visitors were made aware there is a process in place for service users and learners to give their consent to engage in these sessions. However, the visitors were unable to see whether those engaging with clinical scenarios on the programme were informed of the possibility to opt out anytime they wish. The visitors therefore require further

evidence which shows how service users and learners are able to withdraw from activities in modules of the programme, if they wish to and this having no ramifications on their experience.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the roles and responsibilities for learners on the programme who are already registered with another regulator.

Reason: In their submission, the education provider provided limited information around the scope of practice in practice-based learning. From the senior team meeting, the visitors noted that the education provider expects learners from different healthcare professions to operate as a student paramedic and remain under that scope of practice regardless of their knowledge, skills and scope of practice in their other profession. From discussions with the practice educators, the visitors understood that the education provider aims to allow existing professionals to build on their existing knowledge. The visitors noted that, with the provider's current approach, there may be incidents in practice where learners do not act within their scope of practice as a registered professional. This might impact on patient safety, and on the registration status of these individuals. It is not for the HCPC to define how these situations should be managed, and the visitors note the complexities of ensuring registered professionals act in a way which enables them to learn and meet competencies as a student paramedic. However, the visitors consider that learners who are also registered in another profession should have clear and legally sound advice about how to act in these situations, to mitigate risks to patient safety and to their own professional registration. Therefore, the visitors were unable to determine whether practice-based learning will take place in a safe environment for learners and service users. The visitors require further evidence which clarifies the scope of practice for learners from other healthcare professions operating as student paramedics on the programme.

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 26 September 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available on our website.