Education and Training Panel – 29 May 2008

Visitor Reports

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The attached visitors' report for the following programme has been sent to the education provider and following a 28 day period the attached representations have been received. The education provider is in the process of meeting the conditions recommended by the HPC Visitors.

Education provider	Programme name	Delivery mode
Open University	Foundation Degree in Health Sciences	Part time
Open University	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Science	Part time
Iron Mill Institute, Exeter	MA Dramatherapy	Part time

Decision
The panel is asked to –

accept the visitors' report for the above named programme(s), including the conditions recommended by the visitors.
or
review the visitors' report for the above named programme(s), and vary the conditions recommended by the visitors, in the light of information included in the education provider's representations.

Background information
None

Resource implications
None

Financial implications
None

Appendices
Visitors reports (3)

Date of paper
19 May 2008

hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Open University
Programme name	Foundation Degree in Health Sciences
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC register	Operating Department Practice
Date of visit	18 and 19 March 2008

Contents

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 'Operating Department Practitioner' 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. The education provider has until Monday 19 May 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 29 May 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Tuesday 27 May 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 3 July 2008.

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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mrs Tracy Huggins (Operating Department Practitioner)
	Mrs Penny Joyce (Operating Department Practitioner)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Ms Charlotte Urwin
Proposed student numbers	10 in first cohort
Proposed start date of programme approval	29 September 2008
Chair	Professor Trevor Herbert (Open University)
Secretary	Ms Caroline Neeson (Open University)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook for S110 course	☒	☐	☐
Student handbooks for individual courses	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Collaborative agreement for S110 course	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☐	☒	☐

The HPC met with students from the pilot programme of the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences. The students were all registered Paramedics undertaking the programme as a trial before it is rolled out nationwide.

The HPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the education provider offers programmes by supported open learning. The specialist teaching accommodation is therefore provided by the student's employer (Sponsor).

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 20 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 43 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.

Conditions

SET 2 *Programme admissions*

2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 redraft and resubmit the advertising materials for the programme to provide full and clear information to applicants about their opportunities upon completion of the programme.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear the advertising material contained references to Assistant Practitioner. The visitors felt that this was misleading as, if the programme gained approval, graduates would be eligible to apply to the HPC Register and if successfully registered, use the protected title of Operating Department Practitioner.

2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure applicants meet the English language requirements of the programme at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement, between the education provider and the Sponsor, requires the Sponsor to ensure that applicants 'meet minimum English language requirements'. The agreement provides the Sponsor with guidance on the level the education provider expects students to have attained. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure applicants had a good command of written and spoken English. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors felt the education provider could not ensure that criminal conviction

checks were undertaken. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.3   The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate health checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'all appropriate health status checks required for the Student's role are met'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the appropriate health requirements were met. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 3 *Programme management and resource standards*

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that practice based courses are appropriately quality assured.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was apparent the Collaborative Agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Sponsor and the education provider. However, the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement and the visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management. The visitors felt that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must submit the Collaborative Agreement for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) course.

Reason: In the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team and senior team it was clear that the Collaborative Agreement for the second practice based module (S210) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme, the Collaborative Agreement for the S210 course must be submitted.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit a strategy for appointing an adequate number of appropriately qualified Associate Lecturers for the practice based courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences award.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and students it was clear the Associate Lecturer plays an important role in supporting the student. One Associate Lecturer has been appointed for the first practice based course (S110 – Health sciences in practice) of the pilot Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. The visitors recognise that prior to the programme being rolled-out nationwide it is difficult to predict student numbers and therefore the number of and location where Associate Lecturers will be needed. However, the visitors felt that until they received further information, in the form of a recruitment strategy, they were unable to fully assess this standard of education and training.

3.7   The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that resources are available and used effectively during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources were provided or used effectively. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.9   Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure student consent is obtained during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'obtain Student consent for participation as patient or client in any practical or clinical teaching activity' and that further guidance is provided in the Information for Mentors publication. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that student consent was being obtained. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that

mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.11   Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the practice placement attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: From the discussion with the programme team it was clear that students are required to undertake all of the placements recommended by the College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP). This was not clearly articulated in the submitted documentation for courses S110 and S210 and as such, the visitors were unclear of the attendance policy surrounding these placements and the monitoring mechanisms which are in place to assess whether students gain this mandatory experience.

3.12   The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the resources adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources provided adequately supported the programme's learning and teaching activities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.13   The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must update and submit evidence that the online library includes Operating Department Practice electronic periodicals and books.

Reason: From searches of the online library and the discussions with the library staff and programme team, it was clear there were no Operating Department Practice electronic periodicals and books available for students to view. The visitors recognise that much of the information students require is provided to them in the form of textbooks. However as there was no Operating Department Practice specific information in the library at the time of the visit, the visitors felt that to provide students with full support throughout the duration of the

programme, the online library must be updated to include Operating Department Practice specific material.

3.13   The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate IT facilities are provided during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'the Student with access to computing facilities' which meet the education provider standard specification. The visitors were satisfied the education provider standard specification is appropriate, however, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that students had access to appropriate IT facilities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 4 *Curriculum standards*

4.1   The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessments, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether graduates would meet the standards of proficiency for Operating Department Practice and as such, the course guides must be submitted.

4.2   The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the requirement to undertake the CODP recommended placements.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the education provider requires students to complete the CODP recommended placements. However, the practice placement documentation does not reflect these discussions and to allow the visitors to fully assess this standard, the practice placement documentation must be updated.

4.6   The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate learning and teaching approaches are used during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide suitable Practice Placements that enable the Student to complete Continuous Assessment and the End of Course Assessment'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate to the subject. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 5 *Practice placement standards*

5.2   There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the student during Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.1   The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe environment during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided a safe environment. The

visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.2   The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure safe and effective practice during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement' and 'carry out regular audits'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided safe and effective practice. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.5   The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the number, duration and range of placements is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was unclear what placements the students were expected to undertake. However, from discussions with the programme team and placement providers it became clear that students are expected to undertake the CODP recommended placements. HPC does not set the number, length or range of placements which a student must undertake and it does not stipulate that students studying to become Operating Department Practitioners must undertake the CODP recommended placements. However, as the programme team confirmed that students would be expected to undertake the CODP recommended placements, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to clearly articulate how the CODP recommended placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a thorough and effective system of monitoring is undertaken for the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'carry out regular audits of Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the

visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that regular audits were carried out or that they were part of a thorough or effective system. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.7.1   Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with each practice placement.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that these competency lists were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient detail about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

The visitors felt that in order for students and placement providers to be fully prepared for placement, the programme documentation must be updated to provide further information about the specific learning outcomes required during the practice based courses.

5.7.2   Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the timings and duration of the placements and any associated records to be maintained.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and the placement providers it was clear that students are required to undertake the CODP recommended placements. However it is not clear in the programme documentation when these placements should occur; how long they should be; or what records must be kept. In order to provide students and placement providers with clear information, the visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated.

5.7.3 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the expectations of professional conduct.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors felt that more information must be included regarding expectations of professional conduct. In particular, the visitors felt the S110 course guide must be updated to reflect that students would be expected to meet HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Information must also be provided to students and placement providers on what will happen in the event of students behaving in an unprofessional manner.

5.7.4 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that information was included in the practice placement documentation regarding assessment procedures. However, the visitors felt that more information must be provided regarding the options available for a failing student.

5.7.5 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate to students and placement providers the lines of communication and responsibility.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that all parties were confident of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitors recognised that all three groups, to varying degrees, had been involved in the development of the programme. The visitors were unclear how any new students or placement providers would be informed about lines of communication and responsibility and as such, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

5.8.1 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately qualified and experienced.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide

students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria provided by the education provider. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the Workplace Mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.2   Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria as provided by the education provider; and advise the education provider of the 'name and professional registration number of the Workplace Mentor'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors were appropriately registered. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.3   Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure Workplace Mentors receive appropriate educator training.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the Student'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors received appropriate educator training. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.10   The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the placement providers.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that the processes to provide information to the placement providers work well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors were concerned that this could be due to the close relationship between the education provider and the Trust who had helped to develop the programme. The visitors would therefore like to see further information about the mechanisms which are in place to provide all placement providers with necessary information.

5.11   Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate when the placement providers must pass information to the education provider and students.

Reason: From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the placement providers were confident of the information to be passed to the education provider and to the student. The placement providers recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new placement providers may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new placement providers would be informed about the information they needed to pass to the education provider and to the student.

5.12   A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the learning and teaching methods used during the practice based courses respect the rights and needs of patients, clients and colleagues.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to schedule 7 of the Collaborative Agreement. Schedule 7 does not demonstrate how the learning and teaching methods of the practice placements respect the needs of patients, clients or colleagues. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to provide evidence of this.

5.13   The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to have in place non-discriminatory policies, though there is no requirement for the Sponsor to monitor their policies. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the anti-discriminatory policies were implemented and monitored accordingly. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 6 *Assessment standards*

6.1   The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them to fully determine whether the assessment design and procedures allowed students to demonstrate fitness to practise.

6.2   Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the assessment methods measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten lists of competencies were too wide reaching and did not allow students to be assessed against the specific learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to ensure the assessment methods adequately assess the learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice.

6.3 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S210 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether all the assessment methods were thorough and effective.

6.5 There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must submit the External Assessors interim reports for the S210 (Improving your health science practice) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that modules are subject to two forms of external scrutiny; external assessment during the development of the course and external examiner scrutiny during course presentation. The visitors noted that the External Assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented and to determine whether there are effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment, the visitors would like to review the External Assessors interim reports.

6.6 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how professional aspects of practice will be integral to assessment procedures.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten competencies were too wide reaching and did not provide the detail necessary to assess a student's familiarity with the idea of their professional responsibility for their own actions, values and ethics, or their understanding of the nature of professional regulation, and the responsibilities this involves.

6.7.1 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate student progression and achievement for Operating Department Practice within the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences was an existing programme to which an Operating Department Practice route had been added. The programme team confirmed that all students graduating from the programme would be awarded the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences. The visitors were concerned that as student progression and achievement for the Operating Department Practice route was not specifically articulated in the programme documentation or award, there was no way of determining whether a graduate had undertaken the Operating Department Practice route or another health care science route.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specific assessment regulations to clearly state that an aegrotat award does not provide eligibility to apply for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: From the documentation it was clear the rules surrounding aegrotat awards are available to students on the website. However, the visitors felt that programme specific information must be made available to students.

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 submit the assessment regulations which clearly specify the education provider's External Examiner arrangements.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that there are External Examiners for all courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. However, the visitors were unable to view the assessment regulations stating the education providers External Examiner policy and would like the opportunity to review them to finalise their assessment of this standard.

Tracy Huggins
Penny Joyce

Abigail Creighton
Health Professions Council
184 Kennington Road
London
SE11 4BU

14 May 2008

Dear Abigail

Comments on HPC Visitors Reports

I am writing to you in Tracey Samuel-Smith's absence on leave with two comments on the factual accuracy of the HPC Visitors Reports for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences and the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice. I understand that you require these comments by 19 May.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 3.2 which states *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S211*. A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 3.2 which reads *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S210*. We would like to reiterate the point made at the visit that the collaborative agreement covers the whole programme and is not module based (or in OU parlance, course based). Therefore, we would be grateful if this condition could be taken out of both reports.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S211 and S2xx*. A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S210 and S2xx*.

External Assessor interim reports are a full and detailed formal report, covering all aspects of the course (or module) and commenting on all the course material available. S211, S210 and S2xx are courses which are currently being written. S211 and S210 are not due for first presentation for another year and a half and S2xx for another two and a half years. Formally, External Assessor interim reports are required for submission to the University six to nine months before the expected first presentation of the course. It is therefore not possible at this stage for the External Assessors to prepare their interim report. Whilst we cannot provide the External Assessor interim reports for these courses at this time we will be happy to provide

copies of the interim reports when they are provided to us which we anticipate will be in another 1-2 years.

We would be grateful if these conditions could either be removed or changed to reflect this situation and applied retrospectively.

I hope these points clarify the situation on two sets of conditions.

Yours sincerely

pp JKt

Caroline Neeson

hpc health professions council

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Open University
Programme name	Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC register	Paramedic Science
Date of visit	18 and 19 March 2008

Contents

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. The education provider has until Monday 19 May 2008 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 29 May 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Tuesday 27 May 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 3 July 2008.

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 an HPC only visit. The education provider did not validate or review the programme at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programme. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Mr Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Mr Andrew Newton (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Mrs Tracey Samuel-Smith
HPC observer	Ms Charlotte Urwin
Proposed student numbers	100
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 October 2008
Chair	Professor Trevor Herbert (Open University)
Secretary	Ms Caroline Neeson (Open University)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook for S110 course	☒	☐	☐
Student handbooks for individual courses	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☒	☐	☐
Collaborative agreement for S110 course	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☐	☒	☐

The HPC met with students from the pilot programme of the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences. The students were all registered Paramedics undertaking the programme as a trial before it is rolled out nationwide.

The HPC did not see the specialist teaching accommodation as the education provider offers programmes by supported open learning. The specialist teaching accommodation is therefore provided by the student's employer (Sponsor).

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 21 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 42 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.

Conditions

SET 2 *Programme admissions*

2.1 The admission procedures must give both 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 submit draft advertising material for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team it became apparent there was confusion about whether advertising material could be produced for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme prior to it gaining approval. As such the education provider took the decision not to produce any material until the programme had gained approval. The visitors felt that in order to fully assess whether the programme meets this standard, draft advertising material must be submitted.

2.2.1 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including evidence of a good command of written and spoken English.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure applicants meet the English language requirements of the programme at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement, between the education provider and the Sponsor, requires the Sponsor to ensure that applicants 'meet minimum English language requirements'. The agreement provides the Sponsor with guidance on the level the education provider expects students to have attained. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure applicants had a good command of written and spoken English. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.2 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including criminal conviction checks.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that criminal conviction checks are undertaken. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the

visitors felt the education provider could not ensure that criminal conviction checks were undertaken. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

2.2.3   The admission procedures must apply selection criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate health checks are undertaken at an appropriate time before the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'all appropriate health status checks required for the Student's role are met'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the appropriate health requirements were met. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 3 *Programme management and resource standards*

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that the practice based courses are appropriately quality assured.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was apparent the Collaborative Agreement clearly sets out the responsibilities of the Sponsor and the education provider. However, the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement and the visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management. The visitors felt that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.2   The programme must be managed effectively.

Condition: The education provider must submit the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) course.

Reason: In the programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team and senior team it was clear that the Collaborative Agreement for the second practice based module (S211) was not available. The visitors felt that in order to fully determine whether there was effective management of the programme, the Collaborative Agreement for the S211 course must be submitted.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit a strategy for appointing an adequate number of appropriately qualified Associate Lecturers for the practice based courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences award.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and students it was clear the Associate Lecturer plays an important role in supporting the student. One Associate Lecturer has been appointed for the first practice based course (S110 – Health sciences in practice) of the pilot Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. The visitors recognise that prior to the programme being rolled-out nationwide it is difficult to predict student numbers and therefore the number of and location where Associate Lecturers will be needed. However, the visitors felt that until they received further information, in the form of a recruitment strategy, they were unable to fully assess this standard of education and training.

3.7   The resources to support student learning in all settings must be used effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure that resources are available and used effectively during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources were provided or used effectively. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.9   Where students participate as patients or clients in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure student consent is obtained during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'obtain Student consent for participation as patient or client in any practical or clinical teaching activity' and that further guidance is provided in the Information for Mentors publication. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that student consent was being obtained. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that

mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.11   Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the practice placement attendance policy and associated monitoring mechanisms.

Reason: From the discussion with the programme team it was clear that students are required to undertake all of the placements recommended by the British Paramedic Association (BPA). This was not clearly articulated in the submitted documentation for courses S110 and S211 and as such, the visitors were unclear of the attendance policy surrounding these placements and the monitoring mechanisms which are in place to assess whether students gain this mandatory experience.

3.12   The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the resources adequately support the learning and teaching activities of the programme during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to ensure that 'a suitable teaching venue and appropriate equipment' is provided. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the resources provided adequately supported the programme's learning and teaching activities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

3.13   The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must update and submit evidence that the online library includes Paramedic specific texts and journals.

Reason: From searches of the online library and the discussions with the library staff and programme team, it was clear there were no Paramedic specific texts or journals available for students to view. The visitors recognise that much of the information students require is provided to them in the form of textbooks and that there are plans to introduce Paramedic specific material once the pilot programme enters the second year. However as there was no Paramedic specific information in the library at the time of the visit, the visitors felt that to

provide students with full support throughout the duration of the programme, the online library must be updated to include Paramedic specific material.

3.13　The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate IT facilities are provided during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'the Student with access to computing facilities' which meet the education provider standard specification. The visitors were satisfied the education provider standard specification is appropriate, however, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that students had access to appropriate IT facilities. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 4 *Curriculum standards*

4.1　The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessments, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether graduates would meet the standards of proficiency for Paramedics and as such, the course guides must be submitted.

4.2　The programme must reflect the philosophy, values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the curriculum guidance for the profession.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the requirement to undertake the BPA recommended placements.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team it became apparent that the education provider requires students to complete the BPA recommended placements. However, the practice placement documentation does not reflect these discussions and to allow the visitors to fully assess this standard, the practice placement documentation must be updated.

4.6   The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the subjects in the curriculum.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate learning and teaching approaches are used during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide suitable Practice Placements that enable the Student to complete Continuous Assessment and the End of Course Assessment'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used were appropriate to the subject. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 5 *Practice placement standards*

5.2   There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the placement.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to provide 'staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the student during Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.1 The practice placement settings must provide a safe environment.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a safe environment during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided a safe environment. The

visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.3.2 The practice placement settings must provide safe and effective practice.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure safe and effective practice during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'complete a risk assessment for each Practice Placement prior to its commencement' and 'carry out regular audits'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the practice placements provided safe and effective practice. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the number, duration and range of placements is appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation submitted prior to the visit it was unclear what placements the students were expected to undertake. However, from discussions with the programme team and placement providers it became clear that students are expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements. HPC does not set the number, length or range of placements which a student must undertake and it does not stipulate that students studying to become Paramedics must undertake the BPA recommended placements. However, as the programme team confirmed that students would be expected to undertake the BPA recommended placements, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated to clearly articulate how the BPA recommended placements are appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure a thorough and effective system of monitoring is undertaken for the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'carry out regular audits of Practice Placements'. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that regular

audits were carried out or that they were part of a thorough or effective system. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.7.1 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the learning outcomes associated with each practice placement.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that these competency lists were too wide reaching and did not provide the student or the placement provider with sufficient detail about the specific learning outcomes which must be attained.

The visitors felt that in order for students and placement providers to be fully prepared for placement, the programme documentation must be updated to provide further information about the specific learning outcomes required during the practice based courses.

5.7.2 Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the timings and duration of the placements and any associated records to be maintained.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and the placement providers it was clear that students are required to undertake the BPA recommended placements. However it is not clear in the programme documentation when these placements should occur; how long they should be; or what records must be kept. In order to provide students and placement providers with clear information, the visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated.

5.7.3   Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the expectations of professional conduct.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the expectations of professional conduct.

Reason: From the documentation the visitors felt that more information must be included regarding expectations of professional conduct. In particular, the visitors felt the S110 course guide must be updated to reflect that students would be expected to meet HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Information must also be provided to students and placement providers on what will happen in the event of students behaving in an unprofessional manner.

5.7.4   Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the practice placement documentation to clearly articulate the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of failure.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that information was included in the practice placement documentation regarding assessment procedures. However, the visitors felt that more information must be provided regarding the options available for a failing student.

5.7.5   Students and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about and understanding of the communication and lines of responsibility.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate to students and placement providers the lines of communication and responsibility.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team, placement providers and students it was clear that all parties were confident of the lines of communication and responsibility. However, the visitors recognised that all three groups, to varying degrees, had been involved in the development of the programme. The visitors were unclear how any new students or placement providers would be informed about lines of communication and responsibility and as such, the visitors felt the programme documentation must be updated.

5.8.1   Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must have relevant qualifications and experience.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately qualified and experienced.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide

students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria provided by the education provider. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure that the Workplace Mentors were appropriately qualified and experienced. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.2 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must be appropriately registered.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure the Workplace Mentor is appropriately registered.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide students with a designated Workplace Mentor' who meets the criteria as provided by the education provider; and advise the education provider of the 'name and professional registration number of the Workplace Mentor'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors were appropriately registered. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure Workplace Mentors receive appropriate educator training.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to 'provide staff with appropriate expertise to supervise and support the Student'. However, as the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the Workplace Mentors received appropriate educator training. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

5.10 The education provider must ensure necessary information is supplied to practice placement providers.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that all necessary information is supplied to the placement providers.

Reason: From the documentation and discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that the processes to provide information to the placement providers were working well and both parties understood what to expect. However the visitors were concerned that this could be due to the close relationship between the education provider and the Trust who had helped to develop the programme. The visitors would therefore like to see further information about the mechanisms which are in place to provide all placement providers with necessary information.

5.11   Practice placement providers must ensure necessary information is available at the appropriate time for both the education provider and students.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate when the placement providers must pass information to the education provider and students.

Reason: From the discussion with the placement providers it was clear that the placement providers were confident of the information to be passed to the education provider and to the student. The placement providers recognised that, as they had been involved in the development of the programme, they knew the processes to follow but that new placement providers may require further information. The visitors were unclear as to how new placement providers would be informed about the information they needed to pass to the education provider and to the student.

5.12   A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of patients or clients and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the learning and teaching methods used during the practice based courses respect the rights and needs of patients, clients and colleagues.

Reason: In the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were directed to schedule 7 of the Collaborative Agreement. Schedule 7 does not demonstrate how the learning and teaching methods of the practice placements respect the needs of patients, clients or colleagues. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to provide evidence of this.

5.13   The placement providers must have an equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policy in relation to candidates and students, together with an indication of how this will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate the mechanisms which will be in place to ensure appropriate anti-discriminatory policies are in place and monitored during the practice based courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the Collaborative Agreement requires the Sponsor to have in place

non-discriminatory policies, though there is no requirement for the Sponsor to monitor their policies. As the programme team confirmed they do not monitor the Sponsors' adherence to the Collaborative Agreement, the visitors were concerned that the education provider could not ensure the anti-discriminatory policies were implemented and monitored accordingly. The visitors felt this did not reflect the education provider's responsibilities as part of overall programme management and that mechanisms must be put in place to ensure the requirements of the education provider and the HPC are met.

SET 6 *Assessment standards*

6.1   The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them to fully determine whether the assessment design and procedures allowed students to demonstrate fitness to practise.

6.2   Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes and skills that are required to practice safely and effectively.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how the assessment methods measure the learning outcomes and skills required to practice safely and effectively.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publication states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten lists of competencies were too wide reaching and did not allow students to be assessed against the specific learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice. The visitors felt that the programme documentation must be updated to ensure the assessment methods adequately assess the learning outcomes required for safe and effective practice.

6.3   All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must draft and submit course guides, which include module descriptions and assessment strategies, for the S211

(Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear the course guides for S211 and S2xx were not available. Summary information was provided prior to the visit but the visitors felt that this did not contain sufficient detail for them fully assess whether all the assessment methods were thorough and effective.

6.5   There must be effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment.

Condition: The education provider must submit the External Assessors interim reports for the S211 (Developing as a Paramedic Scientist) and S2xx (The psychology of health and ill health) courses.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that modules are subject to two forms of external scrutiny; external assessment during the development of the course and external examiner scrutiny during course presentation. The visitors noted that the External Assessor provides an interim report six to nine months before the course is presented and to determine whether there are effective mechanisms in place to assure appropriate standards in the assessment, the visitors would like to review the External Assessors interim reports.

6.6   Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme documentation to clearly articulate how professional aspects of practice will be integral to assessment procedures.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussions with the programme team and placement providers it was clear that competency checklists are produced for both practice placement courses and that they are the main assessment tool for the profession specific elements of the programme. The S110 Information for Mentors publications states 'Every profession in healthcare science has its own set of professional codes of conduct and practice, and the number of individual competency statements is large. It is not feasible for you or the OU to assess each statement individually, so, in consultation with relevant professional bodies, we have devised a top ten list of competencies which you are asked to assess'. The visitors felt that the top ten competencies were too wide reaching and did not provide the detail necessary to assess a student's familiarity with the idea of their professional responsibility for their own actions, values and ethics, or their understanding of the nature of professional regulation, and the responsibilities this involves.

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

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the programme specific assessment regulations to clearly state that an aegrotat award does not provide eligibility to apply for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: From the documentation it was clear the rules surrounding aegrotat awards are available to students on the website. However, the visitors felt that programme specific information must be made available to students.

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 submit the assessment regulations which clearly specify the education provider's External Examiner arrangements.

Reason: From the documentation and the discussion with the programme team it was clear that there are External Examiners for all courses leading to the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences programme. However, the visitors were unable to view the assessment regulations stating the education providers External Examiner policy and would like the opportunity to review them to finalise their assessment of this standard.

Vince Clarke
Andrew Newton

Abigail Creighton
Health Professions Council
184 Kennington Road
London
SE11 4BU

14 May 2008

Dear Abigail

Comments on HPC Visitors Reports

I am writing to you in Tracey Samuel-Smith's absence on leave with two comments on the factual accuracy of the HPC Visitors Reports for the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences and the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice. I understand that you require these comments by 19 May.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 3.2 which states *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S211.* A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 3.2 which reads *The programme must be managed effectively – OU to submit collaborative agreement for S210.* We would like to reiterate the point made at the visit that the collaborative agreement covers the whole programme and is not module based (or in OU parlance, course based). Therefore, we would be grateful if this condition could be taken out of both reports.

In the report on the Foundation Degree in Paramedic Sciences there is a condition under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S211 and S2xx.* A similar condition appears in the report on the Foundation Degree in Health Sciences: Operating Department Practice under 6.5 which asks the *OU to submit External Assessors interim reports for S210 and S2xx.*

External Assessor interim reports are a full and detailed formal report, covering all aspects of the course (or module) and commenting on all the course material available. S211, S210 and S2xx are courses which are currently being written. S211 and S210 are not due for first presentation for another year and a half and S2xx for another two and a half years. Formally, External Assessor interim reports are required for submission to the University six to nine months before the expected first presentation of the course. It is therefore not possible at this stage for the External Assessors to prepare their interim report. Whilst we cannot provide the External Assessor interim reports for these courses at this time we will be happy to provide

copies of the interim reports when they are provided to us which we anticipate will be in another 1-2 years.

We would be grateful if these conditions could either be removed or changed to reflect this situation and applied retrospectively.

I hope these points clarify the situation on two sets of conditions.

Yours sincerely

pp JRetan

Caroline Neeson

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	The Iron Mill Institute (Validated by the University of Worcester)
Programme name	MA in Dramatherapy
Mode of delivery	Part time
Relevant part of HPC register	Arts therapy
Relevant modality	Dramatherapy
Date of visit	5 and 6 March 2008

Contents

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 'Dramatherapist' 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. The education provider has until Friday 25 April to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 29 May 2008. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by Tuesday 6 May 2008. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Education and Training Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Education and Training Committee on Thursday 3 July 2008.

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 University of Worcester validated the programme. The University of Worcester and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the University of Worcester. 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 University of Worcester, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Dr Susan Hogan (Art Therapist) Dr Bruce Bayley (Dramatherapist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Miss Abigail Creighton and Miss Elisa Simeoni
Proposed student numbers	18 students
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2008
Chair	Mr Joe Hodgson (University of Worcester)
Secretary	Ms Deborah Hodson (University of Worcester)
Members of the joint panel	Ms Linda Rolfe (External Panel Member) Mr David Powley (External Panel Member)

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	☒	☐	☐
Descriptions of the modules	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	☒	☐	☐
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	☒	☐	☐
Practice placement handbook	☒	☐	☐
Student handbook	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	☒	☐	☐
External examiners' reports from the last two years	☐	☐	☒

The HPC did not review external examiners' report from the last two years prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators/mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☐	☐	☒
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (e.g. specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

The HPC did not meet with student as the programme was new so there were no current or past students to meet.

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 52 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 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 for the programme.

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 number of commendations. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that references to the roles and requirements of the professional body and the regulatory body are accurate and up-to-date.

Reason: The documentation currently fails to distinguish the different roles and requirements of the regulatory and professional bodies. For example, in the additional course requirements in the programme specification, there are numerical values quoted as HPC requirements and these are actually requirements of BADth (British Association of Dramatherapists), not HPC.

The documentation does not consistently tell students about the link between completing the programme and eligibility to register with the HPC. For example, the wording in the letters of introduction could be misleading as all students would need to apply to register with HPC after they have completed their programme. You should make sure that your documents clearly tell students that completing the programme means they are "eligible to apply for registration with HPC". There is no guarantee that they will be able to register with the HPC and use the protected title. It is important that the information is updated so that applicants have the correct information they require to take up a place on the programme.

2.2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Condition: The education provider must review the admissions procedures to ensure that criminal convictions checks have been completed by the point of registration onto the programme.

Reason: The current admission procedures require the criminal convictions checks to be completed during the first term and before students go onto placements. The visitors felt that the current timing was too late and that unidentified criminal convictions could affect students' participation in training groups, personal development groups and supervision groups and in addition might affect their ability to negotiate their first placement.

2.2.3 The admission procedures must apply selection criteria and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must review the admissions procedures to ensure that occupational health clearance been completed by the point of registration on to the programme.

Reason: The current admission procedures require the occupational health clearance to be completed during the first term and before students go onto

placements. The visitors felt that the current timing was too late and that unidentified health issues could affect students' participation in training groups, personal development groups and supervision groups and in addition might affect their ability to negotiate their first placement.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide written confirmation that the University of Worcester has successfully validated the programme.

Reason: The visitors received a partnership agreement during the visit between the University of Worcester and the Iron Mill Institute. They heard the discussions between the two bodies and are aware that the University of Worcester is intending to approve the programme subject to conditions. The visitors are confident that progress will be made, in terms of meeting the conditions set by the University of Worchester's validation panel; however there is no guarantee of validation until all the conditions will be met. The visitors felt that final written confirmation of the validation was needed to assure the security of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must recruit an additional clinical process supervisor to the programme team.

Reason: The education provider intends to recruit a cohort of up to 18 students. There is currently enough qualified and experienced staff to deliver two clinical process supervision groups which would mean 9 students in each group. The visitors felt that smaller student numbers in each group were needed to ensure effective delivery. In the meeting with the programme team, the programme team explained that they wish to have a maximum of 8 students in each group and intended to recruit an additional clinical process supervisor so they can recruit 18 students.

3.12 The resources provided, both on and off site, must adequately support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence that the work rooms at the X-centre are suitable for confidential work.

Reason: During the tour of facilities, the visitors saw the work rooms which will be used for supervision groups, training groups and personal development groups. The space currently has open exits and glass walls which are not suitable for the confidential teaching and learning activities. The visitors and the programme team discussed options of using screens, furniture and signage to close off spaces. Evidence is required to show that the work rooms are modified for confidential work.

3.13 The learning resources, including the stock of periodicals and subject books, and IT facilities (including internet access), must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence that core texts and internet access are available on site at the X-Centre.

Reason: The visitors saw the list of textbooks and journals due to be ordered, the lists of textbooks and journals currently available and saw the space of the future library. They received confirmation from the senior team that the finances are in place to buy the textbooks and journals and create the library space. However, they explained that they wished to wait until the validation event, until making the final commitment to purchase the new textbooks and journals.

Whilst the visitors were encouraged by the progress and plans to date, they wished to receive confirmation that all the text books and journals (already identified in the booklet provided during the senior team meeting) were on-site at the X-Centre and accessible to students. In addition, they wished to receive confirmation that the on-line resources available through the University of Worcester virtual learning environment were accessible at the X-Centre, following successful validation.

5.5 The number, duration and range of placements must be appropriate to the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must redraft and resubmit the information which details the number, duration and range of placements, so that it is clear how students gain access to a wide range of learning experiences in a variety of practice environments.

Reason: It was unclear from the documentation how students access a range of groups and individual placements and a variety of placement experiences (e.g. schools settings, hospital settings, prison settings). During the meeting with the placement providers it was clarified that groups and process supervision allowed students to learn from other students' placement experiences and one module included a short compulsory prison and school placement.

The placement tutors have a role in ensuring that students see a range of clients groups. The visitors felt that it was important this information is included in the documentation so that students and future programme team members can see what is expected of them and that practice is consistent.

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

Condition: The education provider must clarify the system used for approving and monitoring all placements and must articulate it in the documentation.

Reason: The documentation was not clear about the system used for approving and monitoring all placements. The meeting with the placements providers clarified this but the visitors felt that this must be articulated in the documentation so that students and future programme team members can see what systems are used.

For example, the documentation should be updated in order to include; policies and processes for approving placements; systems for ongoing monitoring and assessing placements; how feedback from students is collected, analysed and acted on; how the education provider gains feedback from practice placement educators and co-ordinators, and make sure that channels of communication are clear; how the education provider feeds this information back into their processes; and how the education provider deals with placements where difficulties arise.

6.1 **The assessment design and procedures must assure that the student can demonstrate fitness to practice.**

Condition: The education provider must review the assessment criteria in order to demonstrate a clear link between each criterion and the achievement of the HPC standards of proficiency.

Reason: Although the assessment criteria for written assignments were clear, the assessment criteria for continuous assessment (used to assess the ability to use supervision effectively) and clinical practice placements was less clear. The criteria are currently very broad and because of this it is not explicit how each criterion contributes to the achievement of the standards of proficiency. The visitors need to make sure that a student has been assessed in each of the standards of proficiency, so they can practice their profession safely and effectively. As there is no clear link between the criteria used in continuous and clinical assessment and the individual standards of proficiency, the visitors currently do have this assurance. The education provider's review of the assessment criteria could include the rewording of specific criterion, the insertion of additional criteria or the referencing of the standards of proficiency to the criterion.

6.4 **The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.**

Condition: The education provider must clarify what the elements are that underpin each assessment criteria.

Reason: The assessment criteria used for continuous assessment (used to assess the ability to use supervision effectively), dramatic presentation and performance and clinical practice placements is currently very broad. The visitors were concerned that without more explicit guidance these broad criteria could be interpreted subjectively. They felt further clarification about what underpins each criteria would assure them that objective and consistent criteria would be applied when assessing students.

Recommendations

5.8.3 Unless other arrangements are agreed, practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider developing guidelines for the practice placements mentors' role.

Reason: The information the placement mentors received about their role is limited, and there is no annual refresher training organised by the education provider. As the placement mentors do not have a significant role in the assessment of students on placement and those met during the meeting were content with the information they received, the visitors did not wish to insist on any mandatory training. Instead, the visitors felt that the development of guidelines for placement mentors could help make their role clearer to them.

Commendations

The visitors wish to commend the following aspects of the programme,

Commendation: The organic and holistic environment in which the programme has been placed and the optimism and energy that informs the positive potential of this programme.

Reason: The education provider delivers the programme within an environment that has an established tradition of arts therapy and creative arts activities on site. It has active links with creative and therapeutic arts projects in Europe and abroad via the on-going work and links of the Director of the education provider. The X-Centre provides the programme with a fertile and active holistic approach to creative arts and community life linking this actively to training and development initiatives.

Commendation: The clear progression of students from year to year and the achievement of the awards entitled Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and MA.

Reason: The stages of achievement within each year are clearly titled and valued, which is useful for students who receive a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma. The visitors felt that the approach employed in this programme should be commended as it values each stage of learning in its own right by giving each stage a clear place in the development of the MA. It demonstrates a caring and creative way of valuing the learning of each student at each stage of the programme, giving a sense of worth to each developmental level of the programme, regardless of whether or not the student continues past the Postgraduate Certificate level or Postgraduate Diploma level.

<div align="right">
Dr Susan Hogan
Dr Bruce Bayley
</div>

Details of correspondence between the HPC Executive Officers, the visitors (Susan Hogan and Bruce Bayley) and The Iron Mill Institute, Exeter following the sending of the visitors' report to the Education provider on 28 March 2008 concerning the condition 6.4.

Email sent by Sarah Scoble, The Iron Mill Institute, Exeter to Elisa Simeoni, Education Officer, on 4 April 2008.

Dear Elisa,

Good to talk with you yesterday.

This is to confirm that it is 6.4 of the visitors' report, which still baffles me. It would be helpful to have further explanation as to exactly what is required.

Year on year the programme has been commended by the external Examiner for the rigour of its assessment procedures.
e.g. From the two most recent reports from the External Examiner: 2005/2006 "The internal assessment is rigorous and well managed. Commendation must go to the internal assessors, not only for the thoroughness of the marking in summative assessment tasks, but also the formative assessments."
2006/2007 "The overall attention to the assessment, both administratively and in the quality of feedback was exemplary. The feedback is both robust and specific, referring to both the criteria and in some cases broader questions that the work provoked."

I hope that I am not sounding defensive! I am simply unsure what more the visitors would like to see by way of assessment procedures.
Current procedure for internal marking and moderating: Students are provided with a handout which describes the aims, requirements and assessment procedures of each assignment as it occurs within the course. As I explained as the visit, the assessment-specific criteria sheets used by the members of the marking team to focus them on the key areas of each assessment and to guide them in establishing the appropriate marking band of Fail through to Distinction. The detailed grade Classification and Marking Criteria then guide the assessor in establishing the student's specific % mark in a consistent and objective manner. The assessors work separately in the first instance and then meet to discuss their marks, to moderate and to agree the final marks to be awarded.

I look forward to receiving further guidance regarding this condition.

All good wishes, Sarah

Email sent by Elisa Simeoni on 8 April 2008 to the two HPC visitors, Susan Hogan and Bruce Bayley.

Hello Susan and Bruce,

I hope you are both well.

Following the sending of the visitors' report to the education provider, Sarah Scoble, the programme leader of the MA in Dramatherapy at the Iron Mill Institute in Exeter, would like to have more information about the condition 6.4. Please see her email below.

Please could you get back to me with further explanation and clarification about what you expect them to do concerning this condition 6.4 in order I can give her more information? Could you please liaise first together to make sure about what you are expecting and then get back to me by this Friday (11 April) at the latest?

If the education provider considers that this condition is not justified, they might make a representation about this.

The condition 6.4 of the visitors' report is the following:

6.4 The measurement of student performance and progression must be an integral part of the wider process of monitoring and evaluation, and use objective criteria.

Condition: *The education provider must clarify what the elements are that underpin each assessment criteria.*

Reason: *The assessment criteria used for continuous assessment (used to assess the ability to use supervision effectively), dramatic presentation and performance and clinical practice placements is currently very broad. The visitors were concerned that without more explicit guidance these broad criteria could be interpreted subjectively. They felt further clarification about what underpins each criteria would assure them that objective and consistent criteria would be applied when assessing students.*

I am also attaching the visitors' report you have agreed on to this email.

Many thanks for your cooperation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Elisa

Because the two visitors didn't agree on the response that should be given to the education provider, and as Elisa Simeoni was out of the office, Osama Ammar, Education manager, got back to visitors on 16 April 2008 for further clarification.

Dear Bruce and Susan,

Thanks for your email and phone call. Apologies for continuing the negotiation around this area, but I feel Sarah will need to be guided by us to be able to understand specifically what is required of her. I just wanted to restate where it looks like we are in terms of providing details to Sarah.

Firstly, we are not able to provide another institution's methodology as an answer to Sarah's questions as it implies that it may be the only solution and that we are being prescriptive in our approach. Therefore, we need to find a way to this without an example.

Having discussed the matter with Bruce, it appears to be the case that the conditions placed on SETs 6.1 and 6.4 are essentially tackling the same area but with different specific approaches. The condition under SET 6.1 indicates that the assessment criteria in certain areas does not relate clearly to demonstrating fitness to practice. The condition under SET 6.4 indicates that the assessment criteria in certain areas does not illustrate a defined and objective framework within which to allocate marks / grades.

It appears that what we need to do is communicate clearly to Sarah the areas in which you feel the assessment criteria are not meeting these two standards. I believe from the reasons for both conditions that we are looking mainly in the continuous assessment and assessment related to clinical placement, but I also note that for the condition in relation to SET 6.4 an additional specific area is dramatic presentation and performance.

Perhaps it would be useful to agree what the minimum amount of work required to meet these conditions would be? Bruce has indicated that to meet SET 6.1 there would need to be an articulation of the relationship between assessment criteria and standards of proficiency. Would this also meet the condition under SET 6.4 by underpinning the assessment criteria with the objective framework of the SOPs? If this is the case, we can get two standards met by the same exercise.

If this is the case, we can state to Sarah that **the two conditions require her to revisit the assessment criteria in the areas above (ie not written assignments which appear to have much more robust criteria) and ensure that they are linked to the standards of proficiency. This exercise will ensure that the assessments are demonstrably governed by a design that not only assures fitness to practice but is also objective in its methodology.**

I'm sure you can understand that coming at it from my viewpoint is challenging so please forgive me if this is gross over-simplification. I hope at least it works as the starting point from which to send a few brief sentences to Sarah to put her on the right track.

Regards

Osama

Following visitors' responses, this email has been sent to the education provider on 17 April 2008 in order to clarify, regarding their request, the condition 6.4. A document named "Personal skills in portrait format" was attached to this email (please see appendix 2).

Dear Sarah,

Elisa has asked me to move forward your request for clarification about one of the conditions whilst she has been away on a visit. There has been some discussion from the visitors and the following is the clarification that has been given. Elisa will be back in the office on Monday, so if you have any questions she will be able to deal with them then.

"This was the issue about lack of clarity around how assessments are made. This works on three levels. Good practice suggests assessments are benchmarked (attached is an example of benchmarking, which should not be considered to be a prescriptive requirement) then there should be further descriptors which help elaborate the content of the benchmarking aimed towards enhancing their clarity. Thirdly, this should be clearly linked to the assessment criteria.

The impression from the documentation was that assessment is rather ad hoc and subjective at present and that there was a need to develop published objective criteria to enable greater parity of assessment and lessen the possibility of student grievance procedures."

Regards

Osama

Part One: Personal Skills

	Very Poor F / 5	Unsatisfactory Fm / 8	Satisfactory D / 11	Good C / 13	Very Good B / 16	Excellent A / 22	Half Way	Final Mark
Integrate Feedback	The student is unable to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor despite significant support.	The student is sometimes able to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor with support.	The student is able to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor with support.	The student is able to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor with minimal support.	The student is very good in their ability to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor.	The student is excellent in their ability to accept guidance and direction and respond to feedback from clients, the team, and supervisor.		
Dependability	The student is unable to display appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks without significant guidance.	The student is sometimes able to display appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks with guidance.	The student is able to display appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks with guidance.	The student is able to display appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks with minimal guidance.	The student generally shows appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks.	The student always shows appropriate involvement without prompting; punctual arrival; and assumption of responsibility for agreed tasks.		
Appear Professional	The student is unable to dress appropriately for work and appear alert and interested without significant guidance	The student sometimes dresses appropriately for work and appears alert and interested with guidance	The student dresses appropriately for work and appears alert and interested with guidance	The student dresses appropriately for work and appears alert and interested with minimal guidance	The student generally dresses appropriately for work and appears alert and interested	The student is always dressed appropriately for work and appears alert and interested		
Behave Professionally	The student is unable to adhere to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adhere to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrate with the multidisciplinary team; liaise with appropriate personal; have appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrate professional ethics concerning confidentiality without significant guidance.	The student sometimes adheres to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adheres to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrates with the multidisciplinary team; liaises with appropriate personal; has appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrates professional ethics concerning confidentiality with guidance.	The student adheres to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adheres to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrates with the multidisciplinary team; liaises with appropriate personal; has appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrates professional ethics concerning confidentiality with guidance.	The student adheres to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adheres to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrates with the multidisciplinary team; liaises with appropriate personal; has appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrates professional ethics concerning confidentiality with minimal guidance.	The student is very competent in adhering to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adheres to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrates with the multidisciplinary team; liaises with appropriate personal; has appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrates professional ethics concerning confidentiality.	The student is excellent and highly reflective in adhering to the code of conduct for Art Therapists; adheres to the boundaries and regulations of the organisation; integrates with the multidisciplinary team; liaises with appropriate personal; has appropriate relationships with clients and staff; and demonstrates professional ethics concerning confidentiality.		
Respond Suitably to Pressure	The student is unable to be mature in coping with his or her own process; see problems in perspective and cope with demanding clients in stressful situations without significant guidance.	The student can sometimes be mature in coping with his or her own process; see problems in perspective and cope with demanding clients in stressful situations with guidance.	The student is mature in coping with his or her own process; able to see problems in perspective and able to cope with demanding clients in stressful situations with guidance.	The student is mature in coping with his or her own process; able to see problems in perspective and able to cope with demanding clients in stressful situations with minimal guidance.	The student is very good in demonstrating maturity in coping with his or her own process; able to see problems in perspective and able to cope with demanding clients in stressful situations.	The student is excellent in demonstrating maturity in coping with his or her own process; able to see problems in perspective and able to cope with demanding clients in stressful situations.		
Demonstrate Self awareness	The student is unable to self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately without significant guidance	The student can sometimes self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately with guidance	The student can self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately with guidance	The student can self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately with minimal guidance	The student is very good in their ability to self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately	The student is excellent in their ability to self reflect in an open and honest way; and respond to constructive criticism appropriately		
						Total		

MA IN DRAMATHERAPY
University of Worcester (validated, subject to conditions, March 2008)

OBSERVATIONS:

This attachment is to set out observations on three conditions set by the Visitors at the approval meeting for the above programme, on 5th and 6th March 2008.

Condition 6.4:
The staff team has responded to this condition by fine-tuning and making a number of changes to their assessment procedures. However, we should like to make a formal 'observation' on this condition, in case the Visitors were to consider that the staff team has not met this condition satisfactorily.

The amendments and an explanation are outlined in the *Response to the Health Professions Council Visitors' Report of the meetings held on 5th and 6th March 2008 at the Iron Mill Institute, Exeter, to approve the MA in Dramatherapy provided by the Iron Mill Institute and to gain validation by the University of Worcester,* of 5th May 2008.

Conditions 2.2.2 and 2.2.3:
These conditions concern CRB (2.2.2) and Occupational Health (2.2.3) clearance. Documents and procedures have been changed in accordance with the conditions set, requiring that criminal conviction checks and occupational health clearance are completed <u>by the point of registration onto the programme</u>.

However, the staff team considers it appropriate to make an 'observation' on these conditions and requests that the HPC Education and Training Committee deliberates the consequences of the changes made:

Introductory statement:
Prior to the conditions being set, the programme operated a three-stage procedure as follows:

1. <u>On applying</u> for a place on the course, candidates were required to declare, in writing, any disabilities or special needs and any support required. They were also required to declare any relevant criminal convictions.
2. <u>At interview</u>, students were asked to declare if they had any health issues which they considered would prevent them from undertaking the education programme. They were also required to sign a form to declare any criminal convictions and cautions they had received, which might debar them from clinical placement practice in NHS or Social Services or in Education or, in the longer term refuse them entry to the prospective Health Council Register - or to declare that they had not received any criminal convictions or cautions, as outlined above, nor were under investigation for any such offence. This form was countersigned by the interviewer.
3. <u>During induction</u> at the start of the programme (September), procedures for CRB and Occupational Health checks were explained to students, who in turn were supported in completing paperwork to set the investigation/clearance in motion.

The staff team considers that these procedures allowed ample time to gain the required CRB and Occupation Health clearance by the start of term two (January), for the scheduled start of the programme's clinical placement practice.

Observations:
By bringing the requirement for CRB and Occupation Health clearance forward to <u>prior to the point of registration</u>, the staff team is concerned that:

   a) the University of Worcester programme has been brought out of line with the requirements of other MA in Dramatherapy programmes in the U.K., in relation to the checks
   b) students will not have the benefit of face-to-face staff support, during the induction period, when application procedures can be explained and students can be supported through the process of applying
   c) students may well find the procedures more onerous without the face-to-face support of staff and their peer group
   d) the new procedure would seem to be less efficient, since the staff consider it easier and more economical to deal with a group of applicants together, who tend to raise common questions, than with eighteen isolated individuals, who, prior to registration, may each wish to ask questions by email or telephone. The staff team considers that it is more effective to administrate and manage these procedures with the student cohort within the induction period of the programme.

Sarah Scoble
Programme Leader, MA in Dramatherapy
15th May 2008