

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The Robert Gordon University
Name of programme(s)	Master of Diagnostic Radiography (MDRad), Full time BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography, Full time
Approval visit date	3 – 5 July 2018
Case reference	CAS-13152-X8K4T8

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Executive Summary

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

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

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

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

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

How we make our decisions

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

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

HCPC panel

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

HCPC diagnostic radiograph and dietetic panel members	
Ian Hughes	Lay
Tracy Clephan	Dietitian
Linda Mutema	Radiographer - Diagnostic radiographer
Amal Hussein	HCPC executive
HCPC occupational therapy and physiotherapy panel members	
Angela Ariu	Occupational therapist
Karen Harrison	Physiotherapist
Manoj Mistry	Lay
Shaista Ahmad	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

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

Janine Bolger	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	The Robert Gordon University
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Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Master of Diagnostic Radiography (MDRad)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Radiographer
Modality	Diagnostic radiographer
First intake	01 September 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01920

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Radiographer
Modality	Diagnostic radiographer
First intake	01 September 1997*
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01980

*From 1 September 2018, applicants can no longer apply to the BSc (Hons) Diagnostic radiography as this programme has been incorporated in to an integrated Master of Diagnostic radiography (MDRad) and now exists as a HCPC registerable exit award from this programme

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

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

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

Required documentation	Submitted	Reason(s) for non-submission
Programme specification	Yes	
Module descriptor(s)	Yes	

Handbook for learners	Yes	
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes	
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes	
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes	
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes	This is a new programme and as such, there is no external examiner reports available.

We also expect to meet the following groups at approval visits:

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	The visitors met with learners from the existing BSc (Hons) diagnostic radiography.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

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

Conditions

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

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 31 July 2018.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Reason: From review of programme documentation and discussions with current learners, the visitors were not able to see an effective process which enables learners to highlight concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users. They were aware that there was a formal policy in place, “Professional Conduct”, but from discussions with the learners they did not seem to be familiar with it. The learners suggested that they had tended to rely on informal pathways by which concerns could be raised, but the visitors considered that this was insufficient for the standard to be met, as it appeared to be dependent on relationships between learners and educators rather than a process. The visitors considered that the lack of awareness of a formal policy would make it harder for all learners to understand what constituted acceptable behaviour across different contexts and in different practice-based learning settings. They also considered that it would be difficult for learners to know what to do if a concern involved the person to whom they would normally report concerns on an informal basis, and that the lack of awareness of a formal process might mean a lack of equity or consistency in how concerns were dealt with. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that learners and educators are aware of the formal process for raising concerns. In this way they can determine whether there is an effective process.

Section 5: Visitors’ recommendation

Considering the education provider’s response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 22 August 2018 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC’s decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).