

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Derby
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Radiographer
Date of visit	1 – 2 April 2009

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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 'Radiographer' or 'Diagnostic Radiographer' 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 ongoing approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 July 2009. At the Committee meeting on 29 July 2009, the ongoing approval of the programme was re-confirmed. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider to consider major changes proposed to the programme. The major change affected the following standards - curriculum standards, practice placements standards and assessment standards. The programme was already approved by the HPC and this visit assessed whether the programme continued to meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider and validating body validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes – BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy and MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration). The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. Separate reports exist for the other programmes. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the education provider and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Shaaron Pratt (Radiographer) Richard Price (Radiographer)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Paula Lescott
HPC observer	Rachel Greig
Proposed student numbers	40
Initial approval	January 1993
Effective date that programme approval reconfirmed from	September 2009
Chair	Doug Carr (University of Derby)
Secretary	Lesley Sawley (University of Derby)
Members of the joint panel	Christine Jones (Internal Panel Member) Ann Minton (Internal Panel Member) Charles Sloane (College of Radiographers)

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators/mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for ongoing 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 ongoing approval of the programme is reconfirmed.

The visitors agreed that 57 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 6 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for ongoing 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 number of recommendations 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 ongoing 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 commendation. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider.

Conditions

2.1 The admission procedures must give both the 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 revisit all the programme documentation to ensure that the terminology in use is reflective of the current landscape of statutory regulation.

Reason: The documentation submitted by the education provider did not fully comply with the advertising guidance issued by HPC. In particular, it should be made clear throughout all documentation that HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for those who complete the programme but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'. The visitors considered that this clarification would benefit both applicants and students and therefore require the documentation to be amended.

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 formalise the policy on student consent and ensure that the protocols used to gain consent are clearly articulated to students on the programme.

Reason: From the programme documentation and the information supplied at the visit, the policy for obtaining consent from students was initially unclear. It became apparent that an informal consent procedure was applied on the programme, and for the benefit of both students and the programme team this process should be formalised to ensure that all situations requiring student consent were stipulated for and that the pathway for opt-out was clear to the students throughout the programme. The visitors need to receive evidence in the form of a consent policy and the method of obtaining consent (such as a consent form) to ensure that this standard is being met.

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 programme team must review the module descriptor for Imaging Studies: Preparing for Practice to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to distinguish disease and trauma processes as they manifest on diagnostic images.

Reason: From the information contained within the module descriptor for Imaging Studies: Preparing for Practice it was difficult to determine where students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to distinguish disease and trauma

processes as they manifest on diagnostic images. The visitors felt that the module descriptor and the learning outcomes need to make explicit that this standard is being met in order to ensure that those who complete the programme successfully attain all of the required standards of proficiency.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further documentation that articulates clearly the system used for the approval and monitoring of placements.

Reason: The submitted programme documentation did not sufficiently detail the processes that the education provider uses to approve and monitor practice placements. In discussion with the programme team and with the practice placement educators, it became apparent that relevant systems were in place that aim to assure the quality and parity of the placement experience. However, the visitors require further documentary evidence to be satisfied that the systems in place are formalised, and are indeed providing a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring placements.

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

Condition: The programme team must review the module descriptor for Imaging Studies: Preparing for Practice to clearly identify, within the learning outcomes and assessment, where students will meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to distinguish disease and trauma processes as they manifest on diagnostic images.

Reason: From the information contained within the module descriptor for Imaging Studies: Preparing for Practice it was difficult to determine where the students would demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to meet HPC standards of proficiency 2b.4 – be able to distinguish disease and trauma processes as they manifest on diagnostic images. The visitors felt that the module descriptor, the learning outcomes and the assessment for this module need to make explicit that this standard is being met in order to ensure that those who complete the programme successfully attain all of the required standards of proficiency.

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 revisit the programme documentation to clearly articulate that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register.

Reason: In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail regarding the policy for aegrotat awards for the programme. The visitors need to see evidence that this policy is clearly communicated within the documentation to ensure that this standard is being met.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team revisits the criminal convictions check process in order to formalise the policy both on entry and throughout the duration of the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided and discussions at the visit it was clear that whilst there was a criminal convictions check process in place, a formal policy had not been established. The visitors were content with the information that they were provided with regarding the programme teams' process which is applied for applicants to the programme. However the visitors also felt that formalising this process and providing further clarity within the documentation on these arrangements would be helpful to all parties involved in the programme.

3.6 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team continue to pursue staff development in the area of discipline specific research within the radiography department.

Reason: In discussion, the programme team indicated that a number of staff members were involved in active research but recognised that staff development mainly focused on learning and teaching. The visitors recognised that the programme team would like to extend staff development to more discipline specific areas and wanted to support this continued development and encourage wider interactions with external bodies in this field, such as professional bodies, with this recommendation.

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.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team revisits the module descriptor content to fully reflect the learning and progression that takes place throughout the course of the programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that the module descriptors and the learning outcomes did not always match and therefore they did not always fully reflect the full development of skills over the course of the programme. The visitors were content that the majority of the standards of proficiency were being met on the programme but felt that a review of the module descriptor content and learning outcomes would provide further clarity and reflect the learning and progression taking place. This would therefore be helpful to all parties involved in the programme.

4.7 Where there is inter-professional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the education provider continues to review inter-professional learning modules in order to maintain their relevance to all professions involved.

Reason: From discussions with the students and the programme team at the visit it was clear that inter-professional modules had been in use for many years and were being developed over time. From comments received by students regarding past experiences, the visitors felt that these modules should continue to be reviewed and developed to ensure that the needs of diagnostic radiography students are addressed, that the content of these modules is relevant to radiographic practice and that tutors have profession specific knowledge across all professions involved in these modules.

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend that the programme team revisits the module descriptor content to fully reflect the learning and progression that takes place throughout the course of the programme and the appropriateness of assessment methods utilised.

Reason: From a review of the documentation and discussions with the programme team it was clear that the module descriptors and the learning outcomes did not always match and therefore they did not always fully reflect the full development of skills over the course of the programme. The visitors also found it difficult to determine where all learning outcomes were being assessed. The visitors were content that the majority of the standards of proficiency were being met on the programme but felt that a review of the module descriptor content, learning outcomes and indication of how these were assessed would provide further clarity and reflect the learning and progression taking place. This would therefore be helpful to all parties involved in the programme.

Commendations

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

Commendation: The visitors wished to commend the programme team for the clinical skills laboratory resource.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were shown the clinical skills laboratory resource and how these were utilised for patients. The visitors felt that this was an excellent resource that benefitted the community and as this realistic environment and patient experience was accessible for students, demonstrated a level of resource and access that was innovative and of best practice.

Shaaron Pratt
Richard Price