

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University Campus Suffolk
Validating body / Awarding body	University of East Anglia and University of Essex
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	25 – 26 November 2014

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Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 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 HCPC keep a register of health and care 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. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 26 March 2015. At the Committee meeting, the programme was approved. 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 HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC 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 education provider validated the programme. The education provider and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name and role of HCPC visitors	Glyn Harding (Paramedic) Mark Nevins (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	25 per cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	April 2015
Chair	Neil Cooper (University Campus Suffolk)
Secretary	Alison McQuin (University Campus Suffolk)
Members of the joint panel	Anne Johnston (Internal Panel Member) Amanda Blaber (External Panel Member) Sue Innes (External Panel Member) Emma Parker (External Panel Member) Stephen Smith (External Panel Member) Gavin Tash (External Panel Member) Kay Thompson (External Panel Member)

Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC did not review external examiners' reports prior to the visit as there is currently no external examiner as the programme is new.

During the visit the HCPC 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"/>
Service users and carers	<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"/>

The HCPC met with students from the Operating department practitioner and nursing programmes as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval the visitors must be satisfied 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 the relevant 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 53 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining five SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

Conditions

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

Condition: The education provider must revisit the admissions information provided to ensure that applicants to the programme are informed of the expectations of the admissions process, and in particular that the selection process will not be held on two consecutive days.

Reason: The visitors were provided with information at the visit regarding the admissions process, which requires applicants to attend an interview at a selection day before being offered a place on the programme. The information provided indicated that applicants would be invited to a two day selection process. During discussions with the programme team it was revealed that the two day selection process will not be held on two consecutive days, instead applicants will be informed after the first day whether they will be invited for the second stage of the interview which will be held on a different day. From a review of the programme documentation, the visitors could not see where this information was communicated to potential applicants to the programme. Therefore the visitors require further evidence as to how the programme team ensure that applicants to the programme are fully informed of the requirements of the selection process and in particular, that the selection process will not be held on two consecutive days. In this way the visitors can determine how applicants are fully informed about the admissions process before deciding to apply and take up an offer of a place on the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided and during discussions with the senior management team at the visit, the visitors noted that plans to recruit an additional part time staff member have been agreed. However, from discussions with the senior team, it was clear that the additional part time staff member will not be in post until next year. Furthermore, the visitors were unable to determine how, following the recruitment to this post, there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that staff with specialist expertise and knowledge are in place to deliver the programme.

Reason: The education provider included staff curriculum vitae with the documentation. The visitors were content that some of the staff have specialist

expertise and knowledge to deliver this programme, however, they noted that only one staff member was a registered paramedic. During discussions with the senior team and the programme team, the visitors learnt that the education provider is planning to recruit another member of staff who will be a paramedic and will also consider employing visiting paramedic tutors for the delivery of this programme. The visitors were concerned about whether subject areas were being taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge. The visitors therefore require information on any additional staffing resources that are in place to support the delivery of an effective programme, to include details of the visiting staff members of the programme team and their allocated areas of responsibility across the programme. Or any details on plans for further recruitment of subject specific staff members. This condition is in line with SET 3.5. The education provider should detail how they ensure that staff have relevant specialist expertise and knowledge to deliver the programme effectively and how the professional aspects of practice will be delivered to students by those who don't have the professional knowledge and skills that they require to be a Registrant.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensures that practice placements have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff. For this standard, the education provider referenced the 'Educational Audit' tool used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around how the process is used to ensure that an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff are in place at practice placement setting. From discussions with the programme team and the practice placement provider, the visitors were told that local and regional work is currently on going in ensuring that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff at practice placement setting via the 'East of England Paramedic Partnership Group meetings'. The visitors acknowledge that the Partnership group is still at early development stage. However, the visitors were unable to see from the use of the 'Educational Audit' and the 'East of England Paramedic Partnership Group meetings' how the education provider ensures that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting. To ensure this standard is met the visitors require further evidence to show that the education provider has systems in place and a monitoring mechanism to ensure that there are adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

- **the learning outcomes to be achieved;**
- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The programme team must provide further information on the learning outcomes for non-ambulance service placements, including methods of assessment, and any alignment to academic modules.

Reason: The visitors noted from discussions with the programme team that there will be placements in non-ambulance service settings. From the Paramedic course handbook it was clear that East Anglian Ambulance Trust will be providing the core placements for this programme but students will also 'experience working as a paramedic in an urban area'. The visitors noted the importance of ensuring students have sufficient exposure to a variety of situations such as within hospital settings and other non NHS placements. However, the visitors could not find further detail in the documentation to support these placement experiences, specifically regarding how these placements will be integrated with the programme, or information of the learning outcomes and associated assessments. The visitors therefore require further evidence that the students and placement educators in non-ambulance placement settings are given sufficient information to understand the learning outcomes to be achieved, and are therefore fully prepared for placement in non-ambulance settings.

5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:

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- **the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained;**
- **expectations of professional conduct;**
- **the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and**
- **communication and lines of responsibility.**

Condition: The programme team must provide further information as to how the education provider ensures placement educators and students in the placement settings are fully prepared for placements.

Reason: The documentation received included a practice placement handbook. However, the visitors could not determine how the education provider ensured students, practice placement providers and educators are fully prepared for each individual placement particularly regarding the students' scope of practice and expectation at each individual placement. Within the programme team meeting, the visitors were made aware that students will be fully prepared for placements by undergoing a placement induction. Discussions with the students revealed a varied experience of placement induction and also a varied impression regarding how well they felt prepared for

placement. The visitors therefore require information about the mechanisms in place which demonstrates how the education provider ensures students are fully prepared for placement and practice educators are made aware of students' scope of practice for each placement and expectation at placement. This standard is also link to the other condition placed on SET 5.11 above. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to support the way the placement educators and students will be prepared.

Recommendations

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend the programme team consider further strengthening the current and future plans for service user and carer involvement.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the service users and carers are involved in the programmes and are therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, during discussions with the programme team, it was indicated that there are planned future developments with service user and carer involvement in different aspects of the programme, such as developing a forum for service users and carers. However, the programme team provided limited detail about how this would be done, or how the forum will directly impact this programme. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team consider further strengthening the current and future plans for service user and carer involvement. The visitors suggest that any developments, such as those mentioned, may lead to more robust service user and carer involvement in the programme and may provide a greater depth to students' learning and other aspects of the programme.

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

Recommendation: The visitors suggest the education provider considers engaging with current and other placement providers to ensure that the number of appropriately qualified practice educators is adequate for the student numbers.

Reason: From the evidence provided in the programme documentation and the programme team meeting at the visit, this recommendation is linked to the condition set on 5.6. Discussions with the programme team revealed, that in certain practice placement settings, the level of support provided to students by mentors will vary because the placement providers will provide students' placements for other programme. Which may result in mentors taking on more than one student at a time. Therefore, visitors would like to recommend that the education provider considers working closely with current and other placement providers to ensure the number of appropriately qualified practice educators is adequate for the student numbers.

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

Recommendation: The visitors recommend the programme team revise the course handbook to clearly articulate the progression and development from level four to level six.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the assessment regulations clearly specify requirements for students progression and achievement within the programme. Therefore, this standard is met. However, the visitors noted that the information presented to students could be stronger in guiding them through the progression and achievement expected from level four to level six. In particular it was noted that the course handbook could clearly articulate this information. The visitors suggest that by revising the course handbook students can gain a greater understanding of the skill level required at each stage of the programme.

Glyn Harding
Mark Nevins