

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	St George's, University of London
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science (In Service)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of the HCPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	25 – 26 August 2016

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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 8 December 2016. At the Committee meeting on 8 December 2016, 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 originally visited the programme at the education provider's request with the intention of considering major changes proposed to the programme, however upon further review at the visit, it became clear that the visitors were there to consider the approval of a new programme. Therefore the visit assessed whether the new programme met the standards of education and training (SETs) and ensured that those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was an HCPC only visit. The education provider and endorsing body did not validate or endorse 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 and role of HCPC visitors	Anthony Hoswell (Paramedic) Glyn Harding (Paramedic) Nick Drey (Lay visitor)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
HCPC observer	Tamara Wasylec
Proposed student numbers	70 per cohort, one cohort per year
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2017
Chair	Jane Lindsay (St George's, University of London)
Secretary	Derek Baldwinson (St George's, University of London)

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	☒	☐	☐
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	☒	☐	☐

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	☒	☐	☐
Programme team	☒	☐	☐
Placements providers and educators / mentors	☒	☐	☐
Students	☒	☐	☐
Service users and carers	☒	☐	☐
Learning resources	☒	☐	☐
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	☒	☐	☐

The HCPC met with students from the Foundation Science Degree in Paramedic and BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, 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 43 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 14 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 did not set any 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

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the resources to support student learning throughout the programme are clear and consistently reflective of the current setting for registration of paramedics.

Reason: In review of the documentation submitted prior to the visit, the visitors noted a number of inaccurate references to the HCPC. For instance it refers to the HCPC's former name, 'Health Profession Council' on page 6 of the 'module descriptor'. In addition to this, the visitors noted on page 22, that there is reference to HCPC's Standards of proficiency (SOP) 18, however, there is no SOP 18 for paramedics. Also within the programme documentation there are a number of references to the 'Health Profession Council Codes of conduct'. These references do not accurately reflect the HCPC as the regulatory body, and could potentially lead to misinterpretation as to its requirements and guidance for students. The visitors therefore require the programme documentation to be reviewed to ensure that all references are clear and accurate. In this way the visitors can be sure that the documentary resources available to support students' learning are being effectively used and that this standard is met.

3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence of the formal protocols to obtain informed consent from students when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, and the protocols for managing situations when students decline from participating.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted a consent form was included in the submission. In assessing the evidence the visitors note that the consent form makes reference to London Ambulance Service (LAS). However, the programme currently seeking approval is in partnership with South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB). The visitors were therefore unable to determine how applicants from SECAMB would consent when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching would be gained. In addition, from this evidence the visitors could not determine the protocols whereby the education would manage a situation where a student does not give consent in practical or clinical teaching. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the formal protocols to obtain informed consent from SECAMB students when they participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching and for managing situations when SECAMB students decline from participating.

3.15 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 provide further evidence that demonstrates where students' attendance is mandatory and how the attendance mechanisms are effectively communicated and monitored.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the visitors noted on page 18 of the student handbook that “100% attendance is required in both university lectures, skills, simulation and practice placements”. In discussions with the programme team it was confirmed that students are expected to attend all practice placements including non-ambulance settings as these placements are integral to the programme. However, in discussions with the practice placement providers it was revealed that non-ambulance placements are not mandatory, this was echoed by students and their experience of being able to substitute their non-ambulance placement for traditional ambulance placements. From the discrepancies regarding non-ambulance placement, the visitors were unable to determine which aspect of placement is mandatory and how students starting the programme would be informed of this attendance policy, how it would be enforced and what, if any, repercussions there may be for students who fail to attend. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the attendance policy, what parts of the programme are mandatory and how this is communicated to students. They also require further evidence to demonstrate how students are made aware of what effect contravening this policy may have on their ability to progress through the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence to demonstrate how service users and carers will be involved in the programme

Reason: From the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine the exact nature of service user and carer involvement in the programme. The programme documentation suggested service users and carers will be involved in programme delivery. During discussions at the visit, it was indicated service users and carers are only involved in ad hoc delivery of one module of the programme. From the discussions with the programme team it was clear that formal future plans to involve service users and carers throughout the programme have yet to be finalised. At the meeting with service users and carers, the visitors met with the programme team who will be managing service users and carer involvement. During this meeting, the visitors heard that although no formal plans were in place for involvement, the intention is to involve service users and carers however, limited details about how the involvement will work was provided by the programme team. The visitors were unable to determine from the discussions or from the documentation provided that a plan is in place for how service users and carers will continue to be involved in the programme. In order to determine that this standard is met the visitors require further evidence demonstrating the plans for future service user and carer involvement.

4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence on how they will ensure paramedic specific skills and knowledge are being adequately addressed within the ‘inter-professional learning’ (IPL) module.

Reason: From a review of the documentation prior to the visit, the visitors noted that there are two modules whereby IPL will take place as well as a stimulation scenario known as ‘SLAM collaboration’. In assessing the collaborative curriculum for the interprofessional learning that students will undertake as part of this programme the visitors were unable to determine how profession specific skills and knowledge will be addressed as part of this IPL. In discussions with the programme team, the visitors

heard that the 'SLAM collaboration' which will include a paramedic has yet to be finalised. As such the visitors did not see the finalised version of the collaborative curriculum and how profession specific skills and knowledge will be addressed as part of this interprofessional learning. In addition, in assessing the modules the visitors were unable to determine how paramedic specific skills and knowledge will be addressed in the IPL modules identified. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence about the collaborative curriculum for the programme. In this way the, the visitors will be able to review the revised collaborative curriculum to ensure that when there is interprofessional learning in the programme the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group are adequately addressed.

5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of the number, duration and range of placement settings that students will experience to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would have the opportunity to experience placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. However, the visitors were unable to gain a clear understanding of the different range of non-ambulance placement settings, such as the non-ambulance setting, that were on offer to students, and which of these settings students would be mandatory and have associated learning outcomes attached. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the education provider ensures there is an appropriate range of placements to support the delivery of the programme, and the achievement of the learning outcomes.

5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure a safe and supportive environment at alternative (non-ambulance) placement settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrated that placements provided by SECamb provide a safe and supportive environment for students. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show there is a process to ensure a safe and supportive environment at placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that that there are similar processes in place for placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at SECamb, but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The

visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the education provider ensures a safe and supportive environment at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they maintain a thorough and effective system of approving and monitoring placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process intended to demonstrate that the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements at SECamb. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show that the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that there are similar processes in place for placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at SECamb, but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to show how the education provider maintains a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring placements at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure equality and diversity policies are in place at alternative (non-ambulance) placement settings.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrated that equality and diversity policies are in place for practice placements at SECamb. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show that there is a process to ensure there are equality and diversity policies at alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that there are similar processes in place in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at SECamb,

but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to demonstrate how the education provider ensures that equality and diversity policies are in place at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrated that there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place in practice placements at SECamb. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show there is a process in place to ensure an adequate number of staff in alternative (non-ambulance) settings placements, who are appropriately qualified and experienced. The programme team informed visitors that that there are similar processes in place for placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the ones in place for placements at SECamb, but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience, and due to the background of the staff at these placements. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to show how the education provider ensures an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff are in place within placements at alternative (non-ambulance) settings.

5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure practice placement educators in alternative (non-ambulance) settings have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrates that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience in practice placements at SECamb. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show there is a process to ensure staff at alternative (non-ambulance) settings have relevant skills, knowledge and experience. The programme team informed visitors that that there

are similar processes in place in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the one in place for placements at SECamb, but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience, and due to the background of the staff at these placements. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to show how the education provider ensures practice placement educators at alternative (non-ambulance) settings have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

Condition: The programme team must provide further evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators in alternative (non-ambulance) settings have undertaken appropriate placement educator training.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrates that practice placement educators at SECamb undertake appropriate practice placement educator training. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show a process to ensure that practice placement educators will undertake appropriate practice placement educator training in alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that there are similar processes in place in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the one in place for placements at SECamb but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience, and due to the background of the staff at these placements. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to show how the education provider ensures practice placement educators at alternative (non-ambulance) settings undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.

5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.

Condition: The programme team must provide evidence to demonstrate how they ensure that practice placement educators in alternative (non-ambulance) settings are appropriately registered, or agree other arrangements with the HCPC.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. The visitors were provided with an audit process which demonstrated how the education provider ensures practice placement educators at SECamb are appropriately registered. However, the visitors did not see evidence to show that the education

provider has a process in place to ensure that practice placement educators are appropriately registered in alternative (non-ambulance) settings. The programme team informed visitors that there are similar processes in place in alternative (non-ambulance) settings as the one in place for placements at SECamb, but did not see these processes reflected in the documentation, and were therefore unable to judge whether they were appropriate. The visitors noted that there may be differences in policies for ambulance service and non-ambulance service placements, due to the nature of the placement experience, and due to the background of the staff at these placements. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence to show how the education provider ensures all practice placement educators at alternative (non-ambulance) settings are appropriately registered, or to agree other arrangements with the HCPC.

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 alternative (non-ambulance) placements, including methods of assessment, and any alignment to academic modules.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors understood that the majority of placements would take place in an ambulance service setting. This was confirmed in meetings with the programme team and with placement providers. These discussions also clarified that students would be expected to undergo placements in alternative (non-ambulance) settings, such as the accident and emergency department of a hospital. 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, regarding how these placements will be integrated with the programme, or information of the learning outcomes and associated assessments. They 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.

Anthony Hoswell
Glyn Harding
Nick Drey