HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The University of Bolton
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Full time Degree Apprenticeship for Operating Department Practitioners - Level 6, Flexible
Approval visit date	21 August 2018
Case reference	CAS-13237-C5N6X6

Contents

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:

Joanne Thomas	Operating department practitioner
Christine Stogdon	Social worker (Approved mental health professional)
Diane Whitlock	Lay
Niall Gooch	HCPC executive
John Archibald	HCPC executive (observer)
Rabie Sultan	HCPC executive (observer)

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.

Andy Graham	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Bolton
Marina Kirby	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Bolton

| Christine Hall | Internal panel member | University of Bolton |
| Stephen Wordsworth | Internal panel member | University College Birmingham |

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
Proposed first intake	01 November 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20 (across both routes)
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP01936

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.

Programme name	Degree Apprenticeship for Operating Department Practitioners - Level 6
Mode of study	FLX (Flexible)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
Proposed first intake	01 November 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20 (across both routes)
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP01939

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
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	Not Required

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	Learners were scheduled to attend but they did not come to the meeting.
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 24 October 2018.

2.1 The admissions process 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 clarify in information provided to applicants the costs associated with the programme, and the planned start date for the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the documentation provided for this standard, including information to be included on the admissions web pages for the programmes. They could not see in this documentation where prospective applicants could find clear information about the likely additional costs that learners may incur, for example around practice-based learning. They were not clear where the education provider would inform applicants with pre-existing health conditions whether they were incur any extra costs, for example in having to obtain a fitness certificate from a doctor, for which they might be charged. They also noted that the documentation informed applicants that the programme had a September start date, when in fact it will start in November. The visitors considered that there was a risk that applicants would not have the information they required to make an informed choice about whether to take up an offer of a place. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that all applicants have access to appropriate information to enable an informed choice.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they will have a person with overall professional responsibility in place within an appropriate timeframe, and that there exists an appropriate job description and person specification for the role.

Reason: The visitors were not clear from the programme documentation that there was a person in place who had overall professional responsibility for the programmes, or that there was a clear procedure for appointing such a person. In discussions at the visit the senior team informed the visitors that an appointment would be made soon but they were unable to state definitively who this would be. The visitors were not able to see a job description and person description specifically tailored to these particular programmes. The documents they were shown relating to this were generic documents and did not lay out particular requirements relating to operating department practice provision. The visitors were unable to make judgment as to whether the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programmes would be appropriately qualified and experienced, and so require the education provider to submit more evidence.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the parts of the programmes specifically relating to operating department practice will be effectively delivered in the absence of programme staff with a background in operating department practice.

Reason: From their review of staff CVs and from discussions with the senior team and programme team at the visit, the visitors were aware that only one member of the programme team was a registered operating department practitioner (ODP). Other staff on the programme team had a nursing background. They considered that this might raise difficulties with how effectively the programme could be delivered, as non-ODP staff may not have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver some parts. From discussions on the visit, the visitors considered that the education provider did not have a process in place to ensure that educators are suitable and well-equipped, for example a plan for developing the ODP knowledge base of non-ODP teaching staff. Additionally,

the visitors were not provided with a clear breakdown of which staff would be teaching which parts of the programme, meaning that they were unable to make a judgment about how well all parts of the curriculum were appropriately covered. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence showing how they will ensure that all subject areas are delivered by staff with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence clarifying what information will be contained in the final version of the placement handbook.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the practice-based learning handbook submitted as part of the visit documentation. They noted that there was important information for learners missing from this handbook, including clear timelines of practice-based learning and information which would help learners understand the place of practice-based learning within the programmes. At the visit it was confirmed by the programme team that the handbook seen by the visitors was a draft version and that the content had not yet been finalised. The visitors considered that as a practice-based learning handbook was an important resource to support learning, the lack of clarity about its contents meant that this standard was not met. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence showing what information will be provided in the practice-based learning handbook and how this information effectively supports learning in these settings for educators and learners.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the programme handbook clearly informs learners that successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility to apply for admission to the Register.

Reason: The visitors noted that on page 6 of the programme handbook learners were told that if they successfully completed the programme they would be "eligible for admission to the Register". They considered that this might be misleading for learners, as completion of HCPC-approved programmes confers eligibility to apply for admission, rather than granting an automatic right to be admitted. They therefore require the education provider to amend any information provided to learners so that this distinction is clear.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the learning outcomes on the programme ensure that learners are enabled to meet standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners 4.1 and 14.5.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this standard, including a document which mapped learning outcomes to the standards of proficiency for

operating department practitioners (ODPs). From the programme documentation they were aware that there was not a module dedicated to anaesthesia on the programme. This is not in itself a problem from an HCPC perspective, as the HCPC does not have specific standards around module content or focus. However, as good knowledge of anaesthesia is an important component of safe and effective practice for ODPs, the visitors considered that in the absence of such a module the topic should be covered in depth elsewhere in the programme modules, and they could not see from the documentation whether this was the case. The programme team informed the visitors that anaesthesia was covered in depth across several programme modules, but it was not clear to the visitors from the documentation where this learning took place. They considered that there was not enough detail around how module learning outcomes address the following SOPs, which state that ODPs must:

- 4.1 be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- 14.5 be able to undertake appropriate anaesthetic, surgical and post-anaesthesia care interventions, including managing the service user's airway, respiration and circulation

They require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating how the learning outcomes will ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency noted above.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners in practice-based learning will be enabled to collect appropriate consent from service users.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided for this standard, which included university-level policies on service user consent. They were not able to see an example of a consent form or a guide for learners to how consent should be obtained. They also discussed this issue with the programme team. From their document review and from these discussions, it was not clear to them how the education provider would ensure that learners obtain appropriate consent from service users while in practice-based learning. They were unable to clarify the issue with existing learners from related programmes as no learners were able to attend the scheduled learners meeting. The issue was raised with service users. It was not clear from the responses given by service users that learners on the operating department practice programmes would be enabled to gather appropriate consent. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will prepare and enable learners to obtain appropriate consent from service users, including consent gained in practice-based learning environments

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the assessment strategy and design on the programme ensure that learners are enabled to meet standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners 4.1 and 14.5.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this standard, including a list of assessment methods which would be used on the programme. From the programme documentation they were aware that there was not a module dedicated to anaesthesia on the programme, and so it was not clear to them how knowledge of anaesthesia would be assessed. As noted in the reasoning for the condition under SET 4.1 above, the absence of an anaesthesia module is not in itself a problem from an HCPC perspective. However, as good knowledge of anaesthesia is an important component of safe and effective practice for ODPs, the visitors considered that in the absence of such a module it should be clear how assessment of anaesthetic knowledge and expertise would be carried out. The programme team informed the visitors that anaesthesia was covered in depth across several programme modules, but it was not clear to the visitors from the documentation where the assessment of this learning took place. In particular, they considered that there was not enough detail around the assessment of the following SOPs, which state that ODPs must:

- 4.1 be able to assess a professional situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the problem
- 14.5 be able to undertake appropriate anaesthetic, surgical and post-anaesthesia care interventions, including managing the service user's airway, respiration and circulation

They require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating how the assessment strategy and design on the programme will ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency noted above.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how learners are enabled to understand the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided for this standard, including university-level assessment policies, information about types of assessment and assessment timelines. They were also able to discuss assessment with the programme team. From their review and from these discussions, it was not clear to the visitors how the learners would be enabled to understand the assessment pathway through the two different programmes. They could not see in the evidence a guide for learners about what they needed to pass, and when, to progress through the programme. The programme team were not able to explain to the visitors how they would ensure that all learners understood this. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will specify requirements for progression and achievement for all learners across both programme routes (full-time and degree apprenticeship).

6.7 The education provider must ensure that at least one external examiner for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the process and the timescales for appointing an external examiner for the programme.

Reason: From their review of programme documentation and from discussions with the programme team, the visitors were aware that an external examiner had not yet been appointed. They were not clear from the documentation or discussions when one would be appointed, or what the process was for appointing one – for example, they were not able to see evidence relating to the specific requirements for an external examiner for this particular programme. The visitors were therefore not able to be satisfied that at least one external examiner for the programme would be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, a registered operating department practitioner. They require the education provider to submit evidence clarifying the appointment process, requirements for the role, and the expected timescales.

Recommendations
We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the sample audit form to ensure that it has appropriate institutional branding.

Reason: The visitors considered that this standard was met as there was a system in place for ensuring the quality of practice-based learning, and that it was thorough and effective. However, from their review of documentation the visitors were aware that one of the sample audit forms for practice-based learning was headed "University of Manchester", rather than "University of Bolton". They considered that there was a risk that this would be confusing to users of the form and potentially impede the effectiveness of the audit system. They therefore recommend that the education provider review these forms to ensure that their purpose and meaning is clear.

Section 5: Outcome from second review

Second response to conditions required
The education provider responded to the conditions set out in section 4. Following their consideration of this response, the visitors were satisfied that the conditions for several of the standards were met. However, they were not satisfied that the following conditions were met, for the reasons detailed below. Therefore, in order for the visitors to be satisfied that the following conditions are met, they require further evidence.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they will have a person with overall professional responsibility in place within an appropriate timeframe, and that there exists an appropriate job description and person specification for the role.

Reason condition not met at this time: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this condition, including a description of steps taken by the education provider to appoint a programme leader and a curriculum vitae for the person who had been appointed. The visitors considered that while this person seemed appropriate in most respects, they did not appear to have previous experience leading a programme. This is not a problem in itself but it was not clear from the evidence how the programme leader would be supported once in post. Without evidence of what support would be in place, they were not able to determine whether the person would be capable of leading the programme and organising the delivery, as required by the role of person with overall professional responsibility. They therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence demonstrating how this person will be supported, in particular how the new programme leader will collaborate with Brian Smith, who developed the programme and retains a consultancy role for the programme. Additionally, the visitors noted that they had not evidence of a job description and person specification for the role as required in the condition, and require further evidence relating to this part of the condition.

Suggested documentation: Evidence demonstrating what appropriate arrangements are in place to support Richard Oldfield as the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme, and demonstrating that there is an appropriate job description and person specification for the role.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the parts of the programmes specifically relating to operating department practice will be effectively delivered in the absence of programme staff with a background in operating department practice.

Reason condition not met at this time: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this condition. This included curriculum vitaes for new programme staff, a Senior Lecturer Richard Oldfield and a Lecturer Heather Darwen, and an email from one of the education provider's partner Trusts setting out arrangements for the Trust recruiting staff to support the programme. The visitors noted that both of the new staff members appeared to be employed by the Trust and not the education provider, making them appear to be visiting lecturers rather than permanent staff. While this arrangement is not necessarily problematic, the visitors considered that it could possibly create confusion of roles or responsibilities, which might mean that the programme could not be delivered effectively. They therefore require further evidence clarifying the employment status of these staff members, and demonstrating that the education provider has considered how to ensure that these individuals are well equipped to take part in teaching and to support learning.

Suggested documentation: Evidence clarifying whether the new programme staff are being employed by the education provider or the Trust, and demonstrating that their employment arrangements will support their ability to deliver their knowledge and expertise.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that the assessment strategy and design on the programme ensure that learners are enabled to meet standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners 4.1 and 14.5.

Reason condition not met at this time: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this condition, including a narrative of how the education provider would ensure that their assessment strategy integrated the standards of proficiency (SOPs). They considered that this evidence represented good progress by the education provider towards meeting the condition. However, it was not clear to the visitors how the SOPs 4.1 and 14.5 would be assessed in practice, for example they could not see a practice document that specifies the practice competences. The visitors considered that understanding how assessment of the SOPs in practice would be helpful in letting them determine if the education provider could ensure this assessment in practice standard was met.

Suggested documentation: An example of a practice document that shows how the assessment of practice competences involved in SOPs 4.1 and 14.5 is carried out.

Section 6: 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 30 January 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available on our website.