

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Queen Margaret University
Programme name	Local Anaesthesia for HPC registered podiatrists
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Chiropodist / Podiatrist
Relevant entitlement(s)	Local anaesthetic
Date of visit	12 January 2012

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Chiropodist' or 'Podiatrist' 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.

As well as approving educational programmes for people who want to join the Register, the HPC also approve a small number of programmes for those already on the Register. The post-registration programmes we currently approve are supplementary prescribing programmes (for chiropodists / podiatrists, radiographers and physiotherapists) and programmes in local anaesthetics and prescription-only medicine (for chiropodists / podiatrists).

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 6 March 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 2 April 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 10 May 2012.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and continued to ensure that those who complete the programme meet the standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

This visit was part of a joint event. The education provider and validating body, validated the programme. The education provider, 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 the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HPC's standards. A separate report, produced by the education provider, outlines their decisions on the programme's status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Paul Blakeman (Chiropodist / podiatrist) Alison Wishart (Chiropodist / podiatrist)
HPC executive officer(s) (in attendance)	Victoria Adenugba
Proposed student numbers	20
Proposed start date of programme approval	October 2012
Chair	Douglas McBean (Queen Margaret University)
Secretary	Dawn Martin (Queen Margaret University)
Members of the joint panel	Sara Wood (Internal Panel Member)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

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"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Podiatry programme, 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 assured that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet the standard of proficiency (SOP) for this entitlement.

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 40 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 17 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 did not make any 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 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.

Conditions

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the programmes security within the education provider.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors received no documentary evidence of the business plan and rationale for the development of this programme. Through discussions with the senior managers the visitors learnt that this programme had been developed to meet the demand from The Institute of Chiropodists and Podiatrists who had some members who wanted to expand their scope of practice and gain the Local Anaesthesia (LA) annotation on their HPC registration. At the visit the visitors also learnt from both the senior management and programme team that the expected cohort would be 20 per year with the staff who currently work on the other podiatry programmes working on this new programme. The visitors considered that there was insignificant evidence provided to show the security of this programme, or how this programme would run alongside the existing podiatry programmes and how the staffing provision would work. The visitors require further evidence to ensure that the programme is secure within the education provider, is not under any threat and has enough support.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the management structure for this programme and clearly highlight roles and responsibilities.

Reason: From discussions with the programme team and a review of the programme documentation the visitors were unclear about the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in this programme. The visitors noted that this programme would run whilst existing podiatry programmes were running and that staff from the existing programmes would also work on this programme. However, the visitors received no further evidence to show the management structure of this programme or the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved to illustrate the systems in place to manage this programme alongside the existing podiatry programmes. The visitors therefore require further evidence to ensure that this programme is effectively managed.

3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Condition: The education provider must ensure there are systems in place for the monitoring and evaluation of this programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit there was no documentary evidence provided regarding the formal processes in place for the regular monitoring and evaluation of this programme and the initial and ongoing monitoring of its placements. Through discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that the external examiners who monitored the undergraduate podiatry programme were

expected to also monitor this programme. However, the visitors did not receive further information to show how the education provider acts upon the information gathered and about the overall processes by which the programme team would regularly evaluate the programme's effectiveness including the approval and monitoring of placements. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to ensure that this programme and its placements have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate further information about the resources to support student learning in their programme documentation.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to this visit provided information regarding the Learning Resource Centre (LRC), academic staffing on the programme and support available for students with disabilities (Submission Document, Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Module Handbook). Through discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that an induction to the LRC was available to students, personal academic tutors and pastoral support would be allocated to each student, and student support facilities were available to all students enrolled with the education provider. The visitors considered that there were sufficient resources available to support student learning however inadequate information was provided to students about the resources and how they could be accessed at placements. The visitors noted that this information was available online but it was not directed to or made available in the documentation provided to students. To ensure that students are aware of all the resources available to support their learning, the visitors require the programme documentation to be revisited.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate all aspects of the students' complaints processes to students.

Reason: The SETs mapping document submitted indicated that the education provider's general complaints process would be applicable to this programme. However the documentation submitted prior to this visit (Submission Document, Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Module Handbook) provided no information regarding the general complaints procedure and was not clear in articulating that they could be found within the 'QMU Assessment and Registration Regulations' section of the website. The visitors considered that the general complaints process was sufficient however inadequate information was provided to students about the process or where it could be found. The visitors noted that this information was available online but it was not clearly directed to or made available in the documentation provided to students. The visitors require further information to ensure that students are aware of how their concerns about the programme or allegations of harassment or discrimination would be dealt.

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 clearly articulate areas of the programme where attendance is mandatory and monitored and highlight the consequences of missing any compulsory element.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to this visit did not articulate what elements of the programme required mandatory attendance or how this would be monitored. Through discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that Block 1 (the theoretical module) is a mandatory element that students must attend and pass before they could go onto Block 2 (the placement module). The visitors were concerned that the lack of information provided to students about attendance could lead to students not attending all or some of Block 1 and still be able to pass onto Block 2 upon appeal if the mandatory attendance of Block 1 was not made clear. To ensure that all students are safe to practise in Block 2 the visitors therefore require further information that clearly outlines to students where attendance is mandatory, the consequences of missing any mandatory element and associated monitoring mechanisms.

3.16 There must be a process throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate all aspects of the students' fitness to practise committee to students.

Reason: The SETs mapping document submitted indicated that the Education provider's fitness to practice committee would be used to "deal with relevant concerns / complaints about healthcare students profession related conduct." However documentation submitted prior to this visit (Submission Document, Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Module Handbook) provided no information regarding students' profession-related conduct or the fitness to practise committee. The visitors considered that the fitness to practise committee was sufficient however inadequate information was provided to students about this or where it could be found. The visitors noted that this information was available online but it was not clearly directed to or made available in the documentation provided to students. The visitors therefore require the further information that clearly articulates the students' profession-related conduct and the fitness to practise process to students.

4.6 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Condition: The education provider must revise programme documentation to clearly articulate the requirement for reflective thinking within student logbooks.

Reason: During discussions with the programme team and practice placement educators the visitors learnt that the logbook was for students to complete and provide reflective thinking after they completed a local anaesthesia injection. The visitors learnt that the students' reflective thinking was a compulsory part of their logbook. However the visitors felt there was insufficient space set aside for

reflective thinking within the logbook and there was no articulation about the compulsory need for students to undertake reflective thinking. The visitors were concerned that without clear articulation that recording reflective thinking was compulsory some students would not do so leading to discrepancies in what the students submitted. The visitors also considered that the logbook did not effectively encourage students to consider their own practice. To ensure that the programme supports and develops autonomous and reflective thinking, the visitors require the programme documentation be revisited.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure all placement settings provide a safe and supportive environment.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to this visit (Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Practice Placement Handbook) detailed the “Responsibility of the clinical supervisor”, one of which being to “Provide a safe clinical environment which fulfil health and safety requirements and demonstrate compliance with infection control policy”. However no evidence was provided as to how the education provider would check and monitor this responsibility or how students would be informed about the risks and safety issues before or on placement. The visitors considered that there was insufficient evidence provided to show that placement settings provided a safe and supportive environment and that students were clearly made aware of the support available to them whilst on placement. As the programme team have overall responsibility for each placement the visitors would like to receive further information to ensure that the education provider checks the safe and supportive environment of placements and makes students aware of the policies and procedures in place to support their learning.

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 of how they will approve and monitor placements.

Reason: During discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that the main bulk of placements would be held at Sheffield Chiropody and Podiatry Centre, but if a student was unable to go to Sheffield or travel to Queen Margaret University they could find an alternative placement. However no evidence was provided as to how the education provider would initially approve and monitor placements. The visitors were concerned that the education provider did not have systems in place to approve placements before they used them or how they would regularly monitor placements to ensure they continued to meet the requirements of the education provider. As the programme team have overall responsibility for each placement the visitors would like to receive further information to ensure that the education provider has a thorough and effective system in place to approve and monitor their placements.

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 ensure placement providers have equality and diversity policies in place in relation to students.

Reason: From a review of the programme documentation and discussions with the programme team the visitors could find no evidence of a mechanism in place to check and monitor equality and diversity policies at placements. The visitors were also unable to determine how students on placements would know how to gain access to these policies and what they should do if they felt that they had been discriminated against. The visitors therefore considered that there was insignificant evidence provided to show how the programme team made sure that equality and diversity policies were in place at placements and how they articulated this information to students. The visitors therefore require further information to show how this standard is met.

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

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

Reason: Documentation submitted by the education provider prior to this visit (Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Practice Placement Handbook) detailed the "Responsibility of the clinical supervisor". During discussion with the programme team the visitors also learnt that all clinical supervisors' CV's would be checked before they were approved to supervise students. However no information was provided as to how staff numbers at placements were to be checked. The visitors considered that there was insignificant evidence provided to show how the programme team made sure that there was enough members of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to support the students in their learning in a safe environment. The visitors therefore require further information to show how this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that practice placement educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Reason: Documentation submitted by the education provider prior to this visit (Local Anaesthesia for HPC Podiatrists, Practice Placement Handbook) detailed the "Responsibility of the clinical supervisor". During discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that the education provider would check all practice placement educators' knowledge, skills and experience. However no evidence was provided of the mechanisms the education provider would use to ensure and monitor these requirements. The visitors therefore considered that there was insignificant evidence provided to show how the programme team approved practice placements educators before they used them or how they

would monitor practice placement educators to ensure they have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors therefore require further information to show how this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must clearly articulate to practice placement educators the training they must complete before they can supervise students.

Reason: The SETs mapping document submitted indicated that the education provider offered a 'Facilitating Practice Based Learning Module' to all clinicians who take students on placement. Through discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that there was also the chance to observe some local anaesthesia sessions held by the education provider. However the visitors did not receive any evidence regarding the content of the module or how the practice placement educators are made aware of the module or the chance to observe a session. The visitors considered that there was insignificant evidence provided to show how the programme team would monitor and ensure that all practice placement educators had been trained before taking on students and offered refresher training when necessary. They also felt there was insufficient information about when and how the 'Facilitating Practice Based Learning Module' and opportunity to observe a session would be clearly articulated to practice placement educators as it was not detailed within the programme documentation. Therefore the visitors require further evidence to ensure that the training is suitable and that the education provider will make sure that all practice placement educators receive initial and regular refresher training.

5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that regular and effective collaboration takes place between the education provider and practice placement providers.

Reason: Through discussions with the programme team the visitors learnt that practice placement educators would be offered training and the chance to observe some local anaesthesia sessions held by the education provider before they took on board students from this programme. However no further information was given regarding how other regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider would take place. The visitors were concerned that, depending on how regularly refresher training was undertaken, this could be on a yearly basis or longer. They therefore considered that there was insufficient evidence provided to show how the programme team would support a partnership and ongoing relationship with its practice placement providers through the duration of this programme. To ensure that the education provider works together effectively with its practice placement providers, the visitors require further evidence.

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 education provider must clearly articulate to practice placement educators and students all the information they need to be fully prepared for placements.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to this visit did not fully articulate all the information that a student and practice placement educator would need to be fully prepared for placements. In discussion with the programme team it arose that the 'Facilitating Practice Based Learning Module' would be the tool used to inform practice placement educators and attendance at this was mandatory. Practice placement educators were also offered the chance to observe a local anaesthesia session before they took on students. However, within the documentation submitted, there was no indication about the expected duration of a placement or acceptable number of attempts a student could make in order to achieve their 6 successful injections. The visitors could also find no mention of how to contact the education provider or whom to contact if practice placement educators or students had concerns whilst at placement. The visitors considered that the information provided to both practice placement educators and students within the programme documentation was limited and did not clearly articulate important information. The visitors therefore require further information to ensure that sufficient information is provided to fully prepare practice placement educators and students for placement.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the strategy and design ensures that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standard of proficiency for this entitlement.

Reason: Documentation submitted prior to this visit did not clearly articulate the acceptable duration for a student to complete this programme in. There was also insufficient information in the documentation regarding the acceptable number of attempts a student could make in order to achieve their 6 successful local anaesthesia (LA) injections. During discussion with the programme team the visitors learnt that this programme is expected to last 1 academic year and that students are expected to pass the programme during this time completing both Block 1 (the theoretical) and 2 (the placement). The visitors also learnt that students were limited in the number of attempts they could undertake before they achieved their 6 successful LA injections however some flexibility would be given

as to the number of attempts a student could make. The visitors are satisfied that this programme allows a successful student to meet standard of proficiency (SOP) 2b.4 if completed within the academic year and if students achieve their 6 successful injections within an acceptable number of attempts. However, the visitors were concerned that without clearly articulating the maximum length of the programme or maximum number of attempts allowed, the programme was opened to appeals and there was a potential for a student to complete the programme without meeting the SOP. To ensure that all students are fully informed and upon successful completion meet the standard of proficiency for this entitlement, the visitors require the programme documentation be revisited.

Paul Blakeman
Alison Wishart

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust & Prometheus Medical
Validating body / Awarding body	IHCD (part of Edexcel)
Programme name	IHCD Paramedic Award
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Paramedic
Date of visit	10 – 11 January 2012

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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 15 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 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. The education provider has until 28 February 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report by 29 February 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the ongoing approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 29 March 2012.

Introduction

The HPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HPC 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 an HPC only visit. The education provider and awarding body did not validate or review the programmes at the visit and the professional body did not consider their accreditation of the programmes. The education provider supplied an independent chair and secretary for the visit. While this visit considered the collaborative programme between South Western Ambulance Service and Prometheus Medical the visit also considered the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust IHCD Paramedic Award. A separate visitor report exists for this programme.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Paul Bates (Paramedic)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	12 per cohort (8 cohorts per year)
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 April 2012
Chair	David Halliwell (South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust)
Secretary	Samantha Edwards (Prometheus Medical)

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"/>

The HPC met with students from the South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust IHCD Paramedic Award, as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

The meeting with students was conducted via teleconference.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 52 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 5 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 recommendation 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 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.

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 programme documentation and any advertising material to ensure that the terminology in use is accurate and reflective of the current terminology used in relation to statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted that the programme documentation submitted by the education provider included instances of incorrect terminology in relation to the HPC. In particular, there were instances of terminology suggesting that a successful graduate would become a certified HPC paramedic (e.g. Advertising Material Booklet, p6). It was also the case that the documentation refers to the 'HPC code of conduct' (e.g. Paramedic Objective Book 2011, p10). Any successful graduate of the programme becomes eligible to apply to the Register and would not be able to use the protected title until they were on the HPC Register. The HPC does not have a 'code of conduct' which a registrant must follow. Instead registrants must act in accordance with the HPC's Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The visitors considered the terminology to be misleading to applicants and students and therefore required the programme documentation to be reviewed to remove any instance of incorrect terminology throughout.

2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.

Condition: The education provider must clarify within the programme documentation if there is accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) applied during admission to the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation that the education provider has a policy of recognising prior experiential and prior certificated learning in line with the requirements of the validating body. However, in discussion with the programme team, the visitors noted that the requirement for applicants to the programme to have held the equivalent of an ambulance technician qualification for a year, limits any opportunity for AP(E)L. As such it was anticipated that no applicant to the programme would be able to gain accreditation for prior experiential learning other than that gained while completing an ambulance technician qualification. As such the visitors were unclear as to how the stated AP(E)L policy for the programme would work in practice and what criteria would be used to assess any prior experiential learning. The visitors therefore require clarification of the AP(E)L process, how it will be employed and what criteria, if any, will be used to assess any prior experiential learning. The visitors also require further evidence of how this process is communicated to applicants to ensure that this standard is met.

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 clarify within the programme documentation any formal policy for dealing with any issues around student attendance, particularly in the academic environment.

Reason: Within the documentation provided the visitors noted that students are informed that attendance is mandatory while on practice placement and that attendance is monitored. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that that the expectation is that all aspects of the academic programme are similarly mandatory and that attendance is monitored through the use of student registers. However, in discussion with the students, the visitors noted that the students were unaware of the mandatory attendance expectations while they were in the academic environment and what repercussions there would be if they failed to attend. The visitors could also not identify what repercussions there would be for students who failed to attend any element of the practice placements. Therefore the visitors require clarification of the policy employed by the education provider to determine what would happen to a student who failed to attend any of the mandatory elements of the programme. The visitors also require further evidence of how the programme team communicate to students where attendance is mandatory.

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 education provider must provide further evidence of how they fully prepare students and practice placement educators for the placement aspects of the programme.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors were clear that by the end of the programme students would have to have undertaken a series of placement experiences and demonstrated a defined set of competencies. Further discussion with the programme team clarified that the number of hours students were required to spend on practice placement were sufficient for students to meet the required learning outcomes. However, in discussion with the students, it was highlighted that they were unclear as to the specific amount of time they were required to spend on practice placement.

The visitors were also made aware that the students on this programme would mainly be coming from a different background to those on the programme designed for civilian ambulance technicians. However, the visitors were unclear about how the competencies that were required to be demonstrated during each

placement block are clearly communicated to students and practice placement educators. The programme documentation did not provide sufficient evidence for the visitors to determine what broad set of competencies each student would be expected to have met after each placement block. The visitors were therefore unsure about how the programme team ensured that the students would be demonstrating competencies which were within their scope of practice at each stage of the programme.

The visitors therefore require further information about how the programme team ensure that the set of competencies a student would be expected to meet on each placement block is clearly communicated to student and practice placement educators .This evidence should also include information about how students and practice placement educators are informed of the requirements for the number of hours a student needs to spend on practice placement. This is to ensure that students and practice placement educators are aware of the requirements for successful completion of each placement block and that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme are clearly specified.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit the visitors noted that students are able to re-sit any assessment twice and if a student failed to pass after two re-sits they would not be able to progress though the programme. The documentation also clearly stated that for the first three modules students are required to pass all assessments within an individual module to progress to the next module within the programme. However, the visitors noted that the documentation did not highlight this requirement for the fourth module 'Unit 4'. In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that similar regulations were in place for the final module 'Unit 4'. However, during further discussion, it was articulated that students could fail all assessments initially and then continue on the programme until the opportunities for re-sitting assessments had been exhausted. The visitors felt that this policy was not clearly articulated and may result in students having to 'trail' failure of academic assessments into the practice placement areas of the programme to complete the programme in the time allocated. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the criteria for progression and achievement within the programme, particularly for 'Unit 4'. This evidence should also include clarification of how the programme team clearly specify what assessments a student would have to pass prior to undertaking any practice placement experience. In this way the visitors can be sure that this standard is met.

Recommendations

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 education provider should consider keeping the demographic of the applicants to the programme under review.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team it was clarified that applicants to this programme would be drawn from eligible candidates within the armed forces who have suitable experience and qualifications. By limiting the pool of applicants to this demographic the programme could ensure that successful applicants to the programme will have the experience required to complete the programme and meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for paramedics. This is in addition to the requirement for any applicant to the programme to have held the equivalent ambulance technician qualification for up to a year. The visitors are therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, the visitors noted that the programme will be advertised on the website of Prometheus Medical and may lead to candidates from outside the target demographic applying. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that, while very unlikely, a non armed forces applicant could potentially apply to the programme in the future and be successful. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team keep the demographic of applicants to this programme under review. In this way the programme team can ensure that, if necessary, additional entry requirements will be applied to civilian applicants and that the learning and teaching provided is appropriate for their experience. In this way the programme team may be able to ensure that the programme can prepare applicants from any demographic to successfully complete the programme and meet the relevant SOPs.

Paul Bates
Vince Clarke

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bradford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Blood Science)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	4 – 5 January 2012

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Biomedical scientist' 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 27 February 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report 1 March 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 29 March 2012.

Introduction

This visit was the result of the education provider amending their currently approved BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes and reforming them into a new training route. Given the similarity between the approved programmes and the new programme, it was agreed the approval of this programme would incorporate those who enrolled for the September 2011 cohort. Those students will be eligible to apply for registration upon successful completion of the programme with the caveat that the education provider will have to meet all conditions in this report including any conditions the visitors set specifically for the first cohort of students who commenced the programme in September 2011. The education provider plans to recruit students to a generic programme – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences. During the second year of this programme the students decide which of four pathways they wish to complete. The programme award reflects the pathway title the student has completed. The visitors will recommend approval for this pathway title – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Blood Science)

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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes: BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Infection Science), BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science), and BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Cellular Science). 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. A separate report produced by the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Bill Gilmore (Biomedical scientist) Robert Keeble (Biomedical scientist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	30 (across all pathways)
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2011
Chair	Chris Gale (University of Bradford)
Secretary	Sharon Roscoe (University of Bradford)
Members of the joint panel	Betty Kyle (Institute of Biomedical Science) Sarah Pitt (Institute of Biomedical Science)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit, there have been no past external examiners' reports as the programme is new.

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"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programme, the BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science programme and the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science) programme.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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.

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 revise all programme documentation to ensure that references to students' potential employment are current and that they reflect the requirements for statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussions with the students, that graduates for the programme are expected to graduate and work as healthcare science practitioners. In discussions with the programme team, and the placement providers, it was clear that this has been articulated to students in the expectation that this will be a professional role within the NHS by the time these students will graduate. The visitors considered that this could lead to students having unrealistic expectations of a professional role which has not currently been fully defined and utilised by NHS employers. The visitors also noted that students were aware of the requirements of registration with the HPC but were less clear about the process of registration and the use of the protected title biomedical scientist.

In particular the visitors noted instances of incorrect or unclear use of terminology in relation to statutory regulation such as 'The programme is intended to: Provide a Medical Education England Healthcare Science Programme board and IBMS accredited and HPC approved degree which will allow you to gain employment as a Healthcare Scientist Practitioner...' (Programme Specification p4). While correct, this use of terminology could be inferred to mean that HPC is the statutory regulator for healthcare scientists or that the requirements of MEE mirror that of the HPC. The programme documentation also includes such statements as 'Healthcare Scientists and Biomedical Scientists play an essential role in the National Health Service' (Course Handbook p4) which suggest that healthcare scientists are currently employed with the NHS.

The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to reflect the current situation in regards to potential employment and the requirements for statutory regulation. In this way the visitors can be sure that students are aware of their potential future employment situation and are aware of the requirements for professional regulation when they graduate.

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 provide evidence of the information provided to applicants which articulates the routes through the programme and the employment opportunities for successful graduates.

Reason: In discussion with the students the visitors were clear that the routes through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes had been clearly

explained to applicants prior to them taking up a place on the programme. The visitors also noted that the students were aware of possible avenues for employment if they successfully completed the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that no advertising material or written information had been produced for the healthcare science programmes. As this was the case visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore the visitors require evidence of the information that will be provided to applicants and prospective students about the healthcare science programmes. In particular they require evidence of how applicants will be informed of the differing routes through the programme, the constraints around the availability of placements and what employment opportunities will be open to successful graduates of the programme.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme rationale and specification to better reflect the provision and the programme's place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors noted, in the documentation provided, that the statement headed 'Health Care Scientist Training at the University of Bradford' focused primarily on the genetics route through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes. The other routes through the programme are described as extensions into other areas of the life sciences. The visitors also noted that in the Course Handbook (p4) and the Programme Specification (p 2-3) that emphasis was placed on Healthcare Science's '...new flexible career structure' and ability to '...enable patients to receive safer care, [and] faster diagnosis'. In discussion with the senior team and the programme team it was made clear to the visitors that the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes would be delivered alongside existing biomedical science programmes and in many cases share teaching. This model of provision has been designed to make the new programmes more efficient and ensure that they remain viable in the future. It was also made clear that it was the intention of the programme team to continue to produce graduates who would be eligible to become biomedical scientists. The visitors highlighted that this was not reflected in the programme rationale which heavily emphasised the new healthcare science programmes, particularly the genetics pathway. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to more accurately reflect the programmes' place within the education provider's business plan. The documentation should also ensure that the aim of producing graduates who will work as biomedical scientists should also be articulated.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the arrangements in place which articulate how the education provider will move from the provision of applied biomedical sciences programmes to the healthcare science programmes.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine how students who are following the current applied biomedical science programmes will either complete their studies or transfer onto one of the new healthcare science programmes. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that this was being done in a phased way and that it would affect students at different stages of the programmes in different ways. It was anticipated that this transfer between the previous programmes and the new could take up to six years to be fully realised. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the transfer of provision, and students, from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes to the new healthcare science programmes is anticipated to work. In this way the visitors can determine how the education provider is continuing to ensure that all students will be able to successfully complete a full programme of study and become eligible to apply to the Register.

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 programme team must provide further detail of how they monitor student attendance at the relevant learning and teaching activities on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that there were clear statements which identify where student attendance is mandatory on the programme. The visitors also noted that there were mechanisms in place for which monitoring student attendance at practical and clinical teaching sessions. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that, due to education provider policies, similar mechanisms were not in place to monitor student attendance at taught elements of the programme. This was a result of having large numbers of students, from several different programmes, attend some of the modules associated with this programme which made the use of a register unfeasible. As a result of this the visitors were unclear how the programme team ensures that students can meet all of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) associated with the taught elements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team monitor students' attendance at taught elements of the programme and what action is taken if students consistently fail to attend.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must provide further detail of the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct and how it may be implemented.

Reason: In discussion with the students and with the programme team it was made clear that there are processes in place which deal with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. However, the visitors could find only limited information in the programme documentation about the formal procedure for dealing with any issues around professionalism. The visitors were subsequently unclear about how the criteria for the referral of any issue to a disciplinary committee were applied and how students were informed of this. They were also

unclear about how an issue may progress to a disciplinary committee if the Head of School deemed it necessary. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the formal process in place to deal with any issues around students' profession-related conduct. This evidence should also highlight how students are made aware of this process and what criteria may be used to determine if the formal process is implemented.

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 of the criteria used to approve and monitor practice placements and in what circumstances a placement would not be used.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware of the processes involved in approving and monitoring practice placements. This involved initial visits prior to students attending the placement and subsequent visits during student's time on placement. This is complimented by monitoring processes which gather information from the placements, and the attendant students, each year. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine what criteria are used by the education provider to approve and monitor practice placements. The visitors could also not determine under what circumstances the programme team would not utilise the offer of a practice placement or what action would be taken if a placement was deemed unsuitable. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used by the programme team to ensure that a practice placement site can provide students with suitable placement experiences. The visitors also require an indication of the action that would be taken if serious concerns were raised about a placement and what circumstances would mean that a placement site would not be used. In this way the visitors can be sure that the programme team maintain thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

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 education provider must identify how students are made aware of their employment status when on placement and what limits are imposed on their time in placement to ensure that they obtain the required experience.

Reason: In the documentation provided the visitors noted that 'Students on placements will be subject to the same terms and conditions as trainee staff in the laboratory' (Course Handbook p7). In discussion with the practice placement providers it was highlighted that this was the intention as this is what happens for students on the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes. The

visitors also noted, in discussion with the programme team, that students, while eligible for the same terms and conditions of employment as trainee staff, would not be able to take pro-rata holiday entitlements. This is because any holiday taken while on placement may impair students' ability to meet the required learning outcomes. However, the visitors could not identify how students and practice placement providers were informed that the terms and conditions which students may be able to receive should not be applicable where they negatively impact on the placement experience. The visitors were also unclear as to how any entitlements students may receive were made available to all students in order to provide equality of experience. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students and practice placement providers are fully aware of the requirements regarding any potential employment benefits. This evidence should also include how the programme team will manage any disparities between employment benefits to ensure all students get a similar placement experience. In this way the visitors can be sure that this standard is met.

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 education provider must clarify further the role and responsibilities of practice placement educators, particularly in stage 3 of the programme, and highlight how they are prepared to undertake this role.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussion with the programme team, that external expertise will be used to teach some of the content, particularly that which is specific to the different routes through the programme. This involvement of external staff increases in stage 3 of the programme and extends to supervision of students' research projects while they are undertaking practice placements. The visitors were made aware that the practice placement providers were aware of this requirement and that they felt that the practice placement educators would be able to fulfil these roles. However, the visitors could not determine what these roles would be and what specific teaching and learning responsibilities would be taken on by staff external to the programme, particularly in stage 3. The visitors were also unclear about how the programme team were going to prepare practice placement providers and educators to fulfil these roles and quality assure any teaching and learning delivered externally. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the specific roles and responsibilities that will be taken on by any external staff and what preparation for these roles will be provided by the programme team. In particular the visitors require further evidence of what the requirements will be for those practice placement educators supervising stage 3 research projects and how they will be prepared to undertake this role.

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 education provider must provide further detail of the expected placement experience at each stage of the programme and how this information is provided to fully prepare practice placement educators and student for placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that by the end of the programme student would have to have undertaken a series of placement experiences and demonstrated a defined set of competencies. For each placement a placement agreement is signed by the placement educator, student and member of the programme team which details what competencies need to be demonstrated by the student during that placement. However, the visitors were unclear about how the demonstration of the ability to meet the competencies demonstrated a clear progression through the programme and how this progression was communicated to students and practice placement educators. The visitors could also not determine what broad set of competencies each student would be expected to have met after each placement block to enable them to progress to the next stage of the programme. The visitors therefore require further information about the broad set of competencies the programme team would expect a student to have met after each placement block. This evidence should also include information about how students and practice placement educators are informed of these requirements to prepare them for placement. This is to ensure that students and practice placement educators are aware of the requirements for successful completion of each placement block and that this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students while on placement will be implemented in to ensure successful students meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation

provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy will ensure that a student who successfully graduates from the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the use of both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment tools for students’ placement experience will work in practice.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy provides a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external frameworks can be measured.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students will ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to students’ successful completion of practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if

a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment procedure ensures that professional aspects of practice are integral to the successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further clarification of the requirements for progression of students through the programme, particularly if student’s fail to complete the placement aspects of the programme successfully.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how students are made aware of the requirements for achievement and successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme. The visitors can thereby be sure that students are aware of the requirements for achievement within the programme and that this standard can be met.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of where in the programme documentation it is clearly articulated that an aegrotat award will not provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not identify where it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. The visitors were also unclear as to how this information is clearly communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the programme documentation it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. In this way the visitors can be sure that this information is available to students and that this standard is met.

Recommendations

4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the mechanisms designed to ensure that students understand what evidence based practice is.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided the visitors noted that evidence based practice is embedded in the learning outcomes of several modules. Therefore the visitors are satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were aware that while the students described the process of using evidence to inform practice they were unclear that this could be termed 'evidence based practice'. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team review the current mechanisms by which evidence based practice is encouraged and taught to reinforce what evidence based practice is and where students will be using it in the programme. In this way the programme team may be able to further embed the term within the teaching and learning activities of the programme.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider exploring and highlighting the interprofessional nature of the programme further.

Reason: The visitors noted a statement in the documentation provided (SETs mapping document) that students on this programme do not undertake any specific inter-professional learning. The visitors were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the programme team it was clear that students will share taught modules with students from the biomedical science programmes and also other programmes within the university. It is also the case that the students on this programme will be working with biomedical scientists and healthcare scientists from several different specialisms. The visitors recommend that the programme team considers what the term interprofessional learning may cover and how the positive aspects of this can be emphasised in this programme. In this way the programme team may be able to enhance students understanding of the benefit of the acquisition of skills pertinent to autonomous practitioner, to aid future work in a multi-professional environment.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping the timetabling of placements under review to ensure that students on the programme can meet all of the relevant learning outcomes required in the time available.

Reason: In reviewing the programme documentation the visitors were made aware of the number, duration and range of practice placements that students were required to undertake in order for them to achieve the required learning outcomes. They were therefore satisfied that this standard has been met. However, from this review they also noted that the majority of the placement experience will be taking place in time allocated for holiday in the education provider's academic calendar. In discussion with the programme team, and with students, the visitors clarified that any additional time required in placement would also have to be taken in these periods. The visitors noted that there were several weeks either side of the of the 'block' of time allocated for practice placement during which any additional experience on placement could be timetabled. The visitors recommend that this timetable is kept under review by the programme team to ensure that students who may require additional time in placement can complete this in the time allocated for the programme. In this way the programme team can ensure that all students have the opportunity to meet the learning outcomes associated with practice placement experience in the time available.

Robert Keeble
Bill Gilmore

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bradford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Cellular Science)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	4 – 5 January 2012

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Biomedical scientist' 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 27 February 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report 1 March 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 29 March 2012.

Introduction

This visit was the result of the education provider amending their currently approved BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes and reforming them into a new training route. Given the similarity between the approved programmes and the new programme, it was agreed the approval of this programme would incorporate those who enrolled for the September 2011 cohort. Those students will be eligible to apply for registration upon successful completion of the programme with the caveat that the education provider will have to meet all conditions in this report including any conditions the visitors set specifically for the first cohort of students who commenced the programme in September 2011. The education provider plans to recruit students to a generic programme – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences. During the second year of this programme the students decide which of four pathways they wish to complete. The programme award reflects the pathway title the student has completed. The visitors will recommend approval for this pathway title – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Cellular Science)

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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes: BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Infection Science), BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science), and BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Blood Science). 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. A separate report produced by the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Bill Gilmore (Biomedical scientist) Robert Keeble (Biomedical scientist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	30 (across all pathways)
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2011
Chair	Chris Gale (University of Bradford)
Secretary	Sharon Roscoe (University of Bradford)
Members of the joint panel	Betty Kyle (Institute of Biomedical Science) Sarah Pitt (Institute of Biomedical Science)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit, there have been no past external examiners' reports as the programme is new.

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"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programme, the BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science programme and the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science) programme.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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.

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 revise all programme documentation to ensure that references to students' potential employment are current and that they reflect the requirements for statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussions with the students, that graduates for the programme are expected to graduate and work as healthcare science practitioners. In discussions with the programme team, and the placement providers, it was clear that this has been articulated to students in the expectation that this will be a professional role within the NHS by the time these students will graduate. The visitors considered that this could lead to students having unrealistic expectations of a professional role which has not currently been fully defined and utilised by NHS employers. The visitors also noted that students were aware of the requirements of registration with the HPC but were less clear about the process of registration and the use of the protected title biomedical scientist.

In particular the visitors noted instances of incorrect or unclear use of terminology in relation to statutory regulation such as 'The programme is intended to: Provide a Medical Education England Healthcare Science Programme board and IBMS accredited and HPC approved degree which will allow you to gain employment as a Healthcare Scientist Practitioner...' (Programme Specification p4). While correct, this use of terminology could be inferred to mean that HPC is the statutory regulator for healthcare scientists or that the requirements of MEE mirror that of the HPC. The programme documentation also includes such statements as 'Healthcare Scientists and Biomedical Scientists play an essential role in the National Health Service' (Course Handbook p4) which suggest that healthcare scientists are currently employed with the NHS.

The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to reflect the current situation in regards to potential employment and the requirements for statutory regulation. In this way the visitors can be sure that students are aware of their potential future employment situation and are aware of the requirements for professional regulation when they graduate.

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 provide evidence of the information provided to applicants which articulates the routes through the programme and the employment opportunities for successful graduates.

Reason: In discussion with the students the visitors were clear that the routes through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes had been clearly

explained to applicants prior to them taking up a place on the programme. The visitors also noted that the students were aware of possible avenues for employment if they successfully completed the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that no advertising material or written information had been produced for the healthcare science programmes. As this was the case visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore the visitors require evidence of the information that will be provided to applicants and prospective students about the healthcare science programmes. In particular they require evidence of how applicants will be informed of the differing routes through the programme, the constraints around the availability of placements and what employment opportunities will be open to successful graduates of the programme.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme rationale and specification to better reflect the provision and the programme's place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors noted, in the documentation provided, that the statement headed 'Health Care Scientist Training at the University of Bradford' focused primarily on the genetics route through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes. The other routes through the programme are described as extensions into other areas of the life sciences. The visitors also noted that in the Course Handbook (p4) and the Programme Specification (p 2-3) that emphasis was placed on Healthcare Science's '...new flexible career structure' and ability to '...enable patients to receive safer care, [and] faster diagnosis'. In discussion with the senior team and the programme team it was made clear to the visitors that the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes would be delivered alongside existing biomedical science programmes and in many cases share teaching. This model of provision has been designed to make the new programmes more efficient and ensure that they remain viable in the future. It was also made clear that it was the intention of the programme team to continue to produce graduates who would be eligible to become biomedical scientists. The visitors highlighted that this was not reflected in the programme rationale which heavily emphasised the new healthcare science programmes, particularly the genetics pathway. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to more accurately reflect the programmes' place within the education provider's business plan. The documentation should also ensure that the aim of producing graduates who will work as biomedical scientists should also be articulated.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the arrangements in place which articulate how the education provider will move from the provision of applied biomedical sciences programmes to the healthcare science programmes.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine how students who are following the current applied biomedical science programmes will either complete their studies or transfer onto one of the new healthcare science programmes. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that this was being done in a phased way and that it would affect students at different stages of the programmes in different ways. It was anticipated that this transfer between the previous programmes and the new could take up to six years to be fully realised. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the transfer of provision, and students, from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes to the new healthcare science programmes is anticipated to work. In this way the visitors can determine how the education provider is continuing to ensure that all students will be able to successfully complete a full programme of study and become eligible to apply to the Register.

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 programme team must provide further detail of how they monitor student attendance at the relevant learning and teaching activities on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that there were clear statements which identify where student attendance is mandatory on the programme. The visitors also noted that there were mechanisms in place for which monitoring student attendance at practical and clinical teaching sessions. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that, due to education provider policies, similar mechanisms were not in place to monitor student attendance at taught elements of the programme. This was a result of having large numbers of students, from several different programmes, attend some of the modules associated with this programme which made the use of a register unfeasible. As a result of this the visitors were unclear how the programme team ensures that students can meet all of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) associated with the taught elements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team monitor students' attendance at taught elements of the programme and what action is taken if students consistently fail to attend.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must provide further detail of the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct and how it may be implemented.

Reason: In discussion with the students and with the programme team it was made clear that there are processes in place which deal with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. However, the visitors could find only limited information in the programme documentation about the formal procedure for dealing with any issues around professionalism. The visitors were subsequently unclear about how the criteria for the referral of any issue to a disciplinary committee were applied and how students were informed of this. They were also

unclear about how an issue may progress to a disciplinary committee if the Head of School deemed it necessary. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the formal process in place to deal with any issues around students' profession-related conduct. This evidence should also highlight how students are made aware of this process and what criteria may be used to determine if the formal process is implemented.

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 of the criteria used to approve and monitor practice placements and in what circumstances a placement would not be used.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware of the processes involved in approving and monitoring practice placements. This involved initial visits prior to students attending the placement and subsequent visits during student's time on placement. This is complimented by monitoring processes which gather information from the placements, and the attendant students, each year. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine what criteria are used by the education provider to approve and monitor practice placements. The visitors could also not determine under what circumstances the programme team would not utilise the offer of a practice placement or what action would be taken if a placement was deemed unsuitable. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used by the programme team to ensure that a practice placement site can provide students with suitable placement experiences. The visitors also require an indication of the action that would be taken if serious concerns were raised about a placement and what circumstances would mean that a placement site would not be used. In this way the visitors can be sure that the programme team maintain thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

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 education provider must identify how students are made aware of their employment status when on placement and what limits are imposed on their time in placement to ensure that they obtain the required experience.

Reason: In the documentation provided the visitors noted that 'Students on placements will be subject to the same terms and conditions as trainee staff in the laboratory' (Course Handbook p7). In discussion with the practice placement providers it was highlighted that this was the intention as this is what happens for students on the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes. The

visitors also noted, in discussion with the programme team, that students, while eligible for the same terms and conditions of employment as trainee staff, would not be able to take pro-rata holiday entitlements. This is because any holiday taken while on placement may impair students' ability to meet the required learning outcomes. However, the visitors could not identify how students and practice placement providers were informed that the terms and conditions which students may be able to receive should not be applicable where they negatively impact on the placement experience. The visitors were also unclear as to how any entitlements students may receive were made available to all students in order to provide equality of experience. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students and practice placement providers are fully aware of the requirements regarding any potential employment benefits. This evidence should also include how the programme team will manage any disparities between employment benefits to ensure all students get a similar placement experience. In this way the visitors can be sure that this standard is met.

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 education provider must clarify further the role and responsibilities of practice placement educators, particularly in stage 3 of the programme, and highlight how they are prepared to undertake this role.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussion with the programme team, that external expertise will be used to teach some of the content, particularly that which is specific to the different routes through the programme. This involvement of external staff increases in stage 3 of the programme and extends to supervision of students' research projects while they are undertaking practice placements. The visitors were made aware that the practice placement providers were aware of this requirement and that they felt that the practice placement educators would be able to fulfil these roles. However, the visitors could not determine what these roles would be and what specific teaching and learning responsibilities would be taken on by staff external to the programme, particularly in stage 3. The visitors were also unclear about how the programme team were going to prepare practice placement providers and educators to fulfil these roles and quality assure any teaching and learning delivered externally. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the specific roles and responsibilities that will be taken on by any external staff and what preparation for these roles will be provided by the programme team. In particular the visitors require further evidence of what the requirements will be for those practice placement educators supervising stage 3 research projects and how they will be prepared to undertake this role.

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 education provider must provide further detail of the expected placement experience at each stage of the programme and how this information is provided to fully prepare practice placement educators and student for placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that by the end of the programme student would have to have undertaken a series of placement experiences and demonstrated a defined set of competencies. For each placement a placement agreement is signed by the placement educator, student and member of the programme team which details what competencies need to be demonstrated by the student during that placement. However, the visitors were unclear about how the demonstration of the ability to meet the competencies demonstrated a clear progression through the programme and how this progression was communicated to students and practice placement educators. The visitors could also not determine what broad set of competencies each student would be expected to have met after each placement block to enable them to progress to the next stage of the programme. The visitors therefore require further information about the broad set of competencies the programme team would expect a student to have met after each placement block. This evidence should also include information about how students and practice placement educators are informed of these requirements to prepare them for placement. This is to ensure that students and practice placement educators are aware of the requirements for successful completion of each placement block and that this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students while on placement will be implemented in to ensure successful students meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation

provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy will ensure that a student who successfully graduates from the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the use of both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment tools for students’ placement experience will work in practice.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy provides a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external frameworks can be measured.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students will ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to students’ successful completion of practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if

a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment procedure ensures that professional aspects of practice are integral to the successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further clarification of the requirements for progression of students through the programme, particularly if student’s fail to complete the placement aspects of the programme successfully.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how students are made aware of the requirements for achievement and successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme. The visitors can thereby be sure that students are aware of the requirements for achievement within the programme and that this standard can be met.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of where in the programme documentation it is clearly articulated that an aegrotat award will not provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not identify where it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. The visitors were also unclear as to how this information is clearly communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the programme documentation it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. In this way the visitors can be sure that this information is available to students and that this standard is met.

Recommendations

4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the mechanisms designed to ensure that students understand what evidence based practice is.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided the visitors noted that evidence based practice is embedded in the learning outcomes of several modules. Therefore the visitors are satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were aware that while the students described the process of using evidence to inform practice they were unclear that this could be termed 'evidence based practice'. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team review the current mechanisms by which evidence based practice is encouraged and taught to reinforce what evidence based practice is and where students will be using it in the programme. In this way the programme team may be able to further embed the term within the teaching and learning activities of the programme.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider exploring and highlighting the interprofessional nature of the programme further.

Reason: The visitors noted a statement in the documentation provided (SETs mapping document) that students on this programme do not undertake any specific inter-professional learning. The visitors were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the programme team it was clear that students will share taught modules with students from the biomedical science programmes and also other programmes within the university. It is also the case that the students on this programme will be working with biomedical scientists and healthcare scientists from several different specialisms. The visitors recommend that the programme team considers what the term interprofessional learning may cover and how the positive aspects of this can be emphasised in this programme. In this way the programme team may be able to enhance students understanding of the benefit of the acquisition of skills pertinent to autonomous practitioner, to aid future work in a multi-professional environment.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping the timetabling of placements under review to ensure that students on the programme can meet all of the relevant learning outcomes required in the time available.

Reason: In reviewing the programme documentation the visitors were made aware of the number, duration and range of practice placements that students were required to undertake in order for them to achieve the required learning outcomes. They were therefore satisfied that this standard has been met. However, from this review they also noted that the majority of the placement experience will be taking place in time allocated for holiday in the education provider's academic calendar. In discussion with the programme team, and with students, the visitors clarified that any additional time required in placement would also have to be taken in these periods. The visitors noted that there were several weeks either side of the of the 'block' of time allocated for practice placement during which any additional experience on placement could be timetabled. The visitors recommend that this timetable is kept under review by the programme team to ensure that students who may require additional time in placement can complete this in the time allocated for the programme. In this way the programme team can ensure that all students have the opportunity to meet the learning outcomes associated with practice placement experience in the time available.

Robert Keeble
Bill Gilmore

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bradford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	4 – 5 January 2012

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Executive summary

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The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 27 February 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report 1 March 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 29 March 2012.

Introduction

This visit was the result of the education provider amending their currently approved BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes and reforming them into a new training route. Given the similarity between the approved programmes and the new programme, it was agreed the approval of this programme would incorporate those who enrolled for the September 2011 cohort. Those students will be eligible to apply for registration upon successful completion of the programme with the caveat that the education provider will have to meet all conditions in this report including any conditions the visitors set specifically for the first cohort of students who commenced the programme in September 2011. The education provider plans to recruit students to a generic programme – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences. During the second year of this programme the students decide which of four pathways they wish to complete. The programme award reflects the pathway title the student has completed. The visitors will recommend approval for this pathway title – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science)

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HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
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Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2011
Chair	Chris Gale (University of Bradford)
Secretary	Sharon Roscoe (University of Bradford)
Members of the joint panel	Betty Kyle (Institute of Biomedical Science) Sarah Pitt (Institute of Biomedical Science)

Sources of evidence

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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 HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit, there have been no past external examiners' reports as the programme is new.

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 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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.

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 revise all programme documentation to ensure that references to students' potential employment are current and that they reflect the requirements for statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussions with the students, that graduates for the programme are expected to graduate and work as healthcare science practitioners. In discussions with the programme team, and the placement providers, it was clear that this has been articulated to students in the expectation that this will be a professional role within the NHS by the time these students will graduate. The visitors considered that this could lead to students having unrealistic expectations of a professional role which has not currently been fully defined and utilised by NHS employers. The visitors also noted that students were aware of the requirements of registration with the HPC but were less clear about the process of registration and the use of the protected title biomedical scientist.

In particular the visitors noted instances of incorrect or unclear use of terminology in relation to statutory regulation such as 'The programme is intended to: Provide a Medical Education England Healthcare Science Programme board and IBMS accredited and HPC approved degree which will allow you to gain employment as a Healthcare Scientist Practitioner...' (Programme Specification p4). While correct, this use of terminology could be inferred to mean that HPC is the statutory regulator for healthcare scientists or that the requirements of MEE mirror that of the HPC. The programme documentation also includes such statements as 'Healthcare Scientists and Biomedical Scientists play an essential role in the National Health Service' (Course Handbook p4) which suggest that healthcare scientists are currently employed with the NHS.

The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to reflect the current situation in regards to potential employment and the requirements for statutory regulation. In this way the visitors can be sure that students are aware of their potential future employment situation and are aware of the requirements for professional regulation when they graduate.

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 provide evidence of the information provided to applicants which articulates the routes through the programme and the employment opportunities for successful graduates.

Reason: In discussion with the students the visitors were clear that the routes through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes had been clearly

explained to applicants prior to them taking up a place on the programme. The visitors also noted that the students were aware of possible avenues for employment if they successfully completed the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that no advertising material or written information had been produced for the healthcare science programmes. As this was the case visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore the visitors require evidence of the information that will be provided to applicants and prospective students about the healthcare science programmes. In particular they require evidence of how applicants will be informed of the differing routes through the programme, the constraints around the availability of placements and what employment opportunities will be open to successful graduates of the programme.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme rationale and specification to better reflect the provision and the programme's place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors noted, in the documentation provided, that the statement headed 'Health Care Scientist Training at the University of Bradford' focused primarily on the genetics route through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes. The other routes through the programme are described as extensions into other areas of the life sciences. The visitors also noted that in the Course Handbook (p4) and the Programme Specification (p 2-3) that emphasis was placed on Healthcare Science's '...new flexible career structure' and ability to '...enable patients to receive safer care, [and] faster diagnosis'. In discussion with the senior team and the programme team it was made clear to the visitors that the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes would be delivered alongside existing biomedical science programmes and in many cases share teaching. This model of provision has been designed to make the new programmes more efficient and ensure that they remain viable in the future. It was also made clear that it was the intention of the programme team to continue to produce graduates who would be eligible to become biomedical scientists. The visitors highlighted that this was not reflected in the programme rationale which heavily emphasised the new healthcare science programmes, particularly the genetics pathway. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to more accurately reflect the programmes' place within the education provider's business plan. The documentation should also ensure that the aim of producing graduates who will work as biomedical scientists should also be articulated.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the arrangements in place which articulate how the education provider will move from the provision of applied biomedical sciences programmes to the healthcare science programmes.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine how students who are following the current applied biomedical science programmes will either complete their studies or transfer onto one of the new healthcare science programmes. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that this was being done in a phased way and that it would affect students at different stages of the programmes in different ways. It was anticipated that this transfer between the previous programmes and the new could take up to six years to be fully realised. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the transfer of provision, and students, from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes to the new healthcare science programmes is anticipated to work. In this way the visitors can determine how the education provider is continuing to ensure that all students will be able to successfully complete a full programme of study and become eligible to apply to the Register.

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 programme team must provide further detail of how they monitor student attendance at the relevant learning and teaching activities on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that there were clear statements which identify where student attendance is mandatory on the programme. The visitors also noted that there were mechanisms in place for which monitoring student attendance at practical and clinical teaching sessions. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that, due to education provider policies, similar mechanisms were not in place to monitor student attendance at taught elements of the programme. This was a result of having large numbers of students, from several different programmes, attend some of the modules associated with this programme which made the use of a register unfeasible. As a result of this the visitors were unclear how the programme team ensures that students can meet all of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) associated with the taught elements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team monitor students' attendance at taught elements of the programme and what action is taken if students consistently fail to attend.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must provide further detail of the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct and how it may be implemented.

Reason: In discussion with the students and with the programme team it was made clear that there are processes in place which deal with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. However, the visitors could find only limited information in the programme documentation about the formal procedure for dealing with any issues around professionalism. The visitors were subsequently unclear about how the criteria for the referral of any issue to a disciplinary committee were applied and how students were informed of this. They were also

unclear about how an issue may progress to a disciplinary committee if the Head of School deemed it necessary. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the formal process in place to deal with any issues around students' profession-related conduct. This evidence should also highlight how students are made aware of this process and what criteria may be used to determine if the formal process is implemented.

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 of the criteria used to approve and monitor practice placements and in what circumstances a placement would not be used.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware of the processes involved in approving and monitoring practice placements. This involved initial visits prior to students attending the placement and subsequent visits during student's time on placement. This is complimented by monitoring processes which gather information from the placements, and the attendant students, each year. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine what criteria are used by the education provider to approve and monitor practice placements. The visitors could also not determine under what circumstances the programme team would not utilise the offer of a practice placement or what action would be taken if a placement was deemed unsuitable. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used by the programme team to ensure that a practice placement site can provide students with suitable placement experiences. The visitors also require an indication of the action that would be taken if serious concerns were raised about a placement and what circumstances would mean that a placement site would not be used. In this way the visitors can be sure that the programme team maintain thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

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 education provider must identify how students are made aware of their employment status when on placement and what limits are imposed on their time in placement to ensure that they obtain the required experience.

Reason: In the documentation provided the visitors noted that 'Students on placements will be subject to the same terms and conditions as trainee staff in the laboratory' (Course Handbook p7). In discussion with the practice placement providers it was highlighted that this was the intention as this is what happens for students on the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes. The

visitors also noted, in discussion with the programme team, that students, while eligible for the same terms and conditions of employment as trainee staff, would not be able to take pro-rata holiday entitlements. This is because any holiday taken while on placement may impair students' ability to meet the required learning outcomes. However, the visitors could not identify how students and practice placement providers were informed that the terms and conditions which students may be able to receive should not be applicable where they negatively impact on the placement experience. The visitors were also unclear as to how any entitlements students may receive were made available to all students in order to provide equality of experience. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students and practice placement providers are fully aware of the requirements regarding any potential employment benefits. This evidence should also include how the programme team will manage any disparities between employment benefits to ensure all students get a similar placement experience. In this way the visitors can be sure that this standard is met.

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 education provider must clarify further the role and responsibilities of practice placement educators, particularly in stage 3 of the programme, and highlight how they are prepared to undertake this role.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussion with the programme team, that external expertise will be used to teach some of the content, particularly that which is specific to the different routes through the programme. This involvement of external staff increases in stage 3 of the programme and extends to supervision of students' research projects while they are undertaking practice placements. The visitors were made aware that the practice placement providers were aware of this requirement and that they felt that the practice placement educators would be able to fulfil these roles. However, the visitors could not determine what these roles would be and what specific teaching and learning responsibilities would be taken on by staff external to the programme, particularly in stage 3. The visitors were also unclear about how the programme team were going to prepare practice placement providers and educators to fulfil these roles and quality assure any teaching and learning delivered externally. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the specific roles and responsibilities that will be taken on by any external staff and what preparation for these roles will be provided by the programme team. In particular the visitors require further evidence of what the requirements will be for those practice placement educators supervising stage 3 research projects and how they will be prepared to undertake this role.

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 education provider must provide further detail of the expected placement experience at each stage of the programme and how this information is provided to fully prepare practice placement educators and student for placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that by the end of the programme student would have to have undertaken a series of placement experiences and demonstrated a defined set of competencies. For each placement a placement agreement is signed by the placement educator, student and member of the programme team which details what competencies need to be demonstrated by the student during that placement. However, the visitors were unclear about how the demonstration of the ability to meet the competencies demonstrated a clear progression through the programme and how this progression was communicated to students and practice placement educators. The visitors could also not determine what broad set of competencies each student would be expected to have met after each placement block to enable them to progress to the next stage of the programme. The visitors therefore require further information about the broad set of competencies the programme team would expect a student to have met after each placement block. This evidence should also include information about how students and practice placement educators are informed of these requirements to prepare them for placement. This is to ensure that students and practice placement educators are aware of the requirements for successful completion of each placement block and that this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students while on placement will be implemented in to ensure successful students meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation

provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy will ensure that a student who successfully graduates from the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the use of both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment tools for students’ placement experience will work in practice.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy provides a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external frameworks can be measured.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students will ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to students’ successful completion of practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if

a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment procedure ensures that professional aspects of practice are integral to the successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further clarification of the requirements for progression of students through the programme, particularly if student’s fail to complete the placement aspects of the programme successfully.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how students are made aware of the requirements for achievement and successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme. The visitors can thereby be sure that students are aware of the requirements for achievement within the programme and that this standard can be met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate how those students who began the programme in September 2010 have been made aware that their route to Registration is through completion of the IBMS certificate of competence.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors clarified that the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science (Genetics Science) had commenced in 2010, one year earlier than the other healthcare science pathways. The HPC is unable to grant retrospective approval of new education and training programmes and as such students who began this programme in 2010 will be unable to use their degree qualification to apply to the Register. However, as part of this education programme students from this cohort will be completing the IBMS portfolio which

will enable them to apply to the IBMS for the award of a certificate of competence. The IBMS certificate of competence is an approved education programme and as such students from this cohort will be eligible to apply to the Register once they have been granted this certificate. The visitors noted in the programme documentation that this route to the Register is not detailed or explained to students. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of how the programme team will ensure that students from this cohort are aware of this requirement and the process they will have to go through in order to be eligible apply to the Register.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of where in the programme documentation it is clearly articulated that an aegrotat award will not provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not identify where it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. The visitors were also unclear as to how this information is clearly communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the programme documentation it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. In this way the visitors can be sure that this information is available to students and that this standard is met.

Recommendations

4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the mechanisms designed to ensure that students understand what evidence based practice is.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided the visitors noted that evidence based practice is embedded in the learning outcomes of several modules. Therefore the visitors are satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were aware that while the students described the process of using evidence to inform practice they were unclear that this could be termed 'evidence based practice'. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team review the current mechanisms by which evidence based practice is encouraged and taught to reinforce what evidence based practice is and where students will be using it in the programme. In this way the programme team may be able to further embed the term within the teaching and learning activities of the programme.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider exploring and highlighting the interprofessional nature of the programme further.

Reason: The visitors noted a statement in the documentation provided (SETs mapping document) that students on this programme do not undertake any specific inter-professional learning. The visitors were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the programme team it was clear that students will share taught modules with students from the biomedical science programmes and also other programmes within the university. It is also the case that the students on this programme will be working with biomedical scientists and healthcare scientists from several different specialisms. The visitors recommend that the programme team considers what the term interprofessional learning may cover and how the positive aspects of this can be emphasised in this programme. In this way the programme team may be able to enhance students understanding of the benefit of the acquisition of skills pertinent to autonomous practitioner, to aid future work in a multi-professional environment.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping the timetabling of placements under review to ensure that students on the programme can meet all of the relevant learning outcomes required in the time available.

Reason: In reviewing the programme documentation the visitors were made aware of the number, duration and range of practice placements that students were required to undertake in order for them to achieve the required learning outcomes. They were therefore satisfied that this standard has been met. However, from this review they also noted that the majority of the placement experience will be taking place in time allocated for holiday in the education provider's academic calendar. In discussion with the programme team, and with students, the visitors clarified that any additional time required in placement would also have to be taken in these periods. The visitors noted that there were several weeks either side of the of the 'block' of time allocated for practice placement during which any additional experience on placement could be timetabled. The visitors recommend that this timetable is kept under review by the programme team to ensure that students who may require additional time in placement can complete this in the time allocated for the programme. In this way the programme team can ensure that all students have the opportunity to meet the learning outcomes associated with practice placement experience in the time available.

Robert Keeble
Bill Gilmore

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	University of Bradford
Programme name	BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Infection Science)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Biomedical scientist
Date of visit	4 – 5 January 2012

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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 15 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'Biomedical scientist' 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 approval of the programme. The education provider has until 27 February 2012 to provide observations on this report. This is independent of meeting any conditions. The report and any observations received will be considered by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 29 March 2012. At this meeting, the Committee will accept the visitors' recommended outcome, including the conditions. If necessary, the Committee may decide to vary the conditions.

The education provider is due to redraft and resubmit documentary evidence in response to the conditions outlined in this report 1 March 2012. The visitors will consider this response and make a separate recommendation to the Committee on the approval of the programme. It is anticipated that this recommendation will be made to the Committee on 29 March 2012.

Introduction

This visit was the result of the education provider amending their currently approved BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes and reforming them into a new training route. Given the similarity between the approved programmes and the new programme, it was agreed the approval of this programme would incorporate those who enrolled for the September 2011 cohort. Those students will be eligible to apply for registration upon successful completion of the programme with the caveat that the education provider will have to meet all conditions in this report including any conditions the visitors set specifically for the first cohort of students who commenced the programme in September 2011. The education provider plans to recruit students to a generic programme – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences. During the second year of this programme the students decide which of four pathways they wish to complete. The programme award reflects the pathway title the student has completed. The visitors will recommend approval for this pathway title – BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Infection Science)

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 professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered the following programmes: BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Cellular Science), BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science), and BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Blood Science). 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. A separate report produced by the professional body, outlines their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Bill Gilmore (Biomedical scientist) Robert Keeble (Biomedical scientist)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	30 (across all pathways)
Proposed start date of programme approval	1 September 2011
Chair	Chris Gale (University of Bradford)
Secretary	Sharon Roscoe (University of Bradford)
Members of the joint panel	Betty Kyle (Institute of Biomedical Science) Sarah Pitt (Institute of Biomedical Science)

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review external examiners' reports from the last two years prior to the visit, there have been no past external examiners' reports as the programme is new.

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"/>

The HPC met with students from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programme, the BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science programme and the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Life Sciences (Genetics Science) programme.

Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for 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 programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 46 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining 11 SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be recommended for 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 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.

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 revise all programme documentation to ensure that references to students' potential employment are current and that they reflect the requirements for statutory regulation.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussions with the students, that graduates for the programme are expected to graduate and work as healthcare science practitioners. In discussions with the programme team, and the placement providers, it was clear that this has been articulated to students in the expectation that this will be a professional role within the NHS by the time these students will graduate. The visitors considered that this could lead to students having unrealistic expectations of a professional role which has not currently been fully defined and utilised by NHS employers. The visitors also noted that students were aware of the requirements of registration with the HPC but were less clear about the process of registration and the use of the protected title biomedical scientist.

In particular the visitors noted instances of incorrect or unclear use of terminology in relation to statutory regulation such as 'The programme is intended to: Provide a Medical Education England Healthcare Science Programme board and IBMS accredited and HPC approved degree which will allow you to gain employment as a Healthcare Scientist Practitioner...' (Programme Specification p4). While correct, this use of terminology could be inferred to mean that HPC is the statutory regulator for healthcare scientists or that the requirements of MEE mirror that of the HPC. The programme documentation also includes such statements as 'Healthcare Scientists and Biomedical Scientists play an essential role in the National Health Service' (Course Handbook p4) which suggest that healthcare scientists are currently employed with the NHS.

The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to reflect the current situation in regards to potential employment and the requirements for statutory regulation. In this way the visitors can be sure that students are aware of their potential future employment situation and are aware of the requirements for professional regulation when they graduate.

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 provide evidence of the information provided to applicants which articulates the routes through the programme and the employment opportunities for successful graduates.

Reason: In discussion with the students the visitors were clear that the routes through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes had been clearly

explained to applicants prior to them taking up a place on the programme. The visitors also noted that the students were aware of possible avenues for employment if they successfully completed the programme. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that no advertising material or written information had been produced for the healthcare science programmes. As this was the case visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. Therefore the visitors require evidence of the information that will be provided to applicants and prospective students about the healthcare science programmes. In particular they require evidence of how applicants will be informed of the differing routes through the programme, the constraints around the availability of placements and what employment opportunities will be open to successful graduates of the programme.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must update the programme rationale and specification to better reflect the provision and the programme's place in the education provider's business plan.

Reason: The visitors noted, in the documentation provided, that the statement headed 'Health Care Scientist Training at the University of Bradford' focused primarily on the genetics route through the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes. The other routes through the programme are described as extensions into other areas of the life sciences. The visitors also noted that in the Course Handbook (p4) and the Programme Specification (p 2-3) that emphasis was placed on Healthcare Science's '...new flexible career structure' and ability to '...enable patients to receive safer care, [and] faster diagnosis'. In discussion with the senior team and the programme team it was made clear to the visitors that the BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science programmes would be delivered alongside existing biomedical science programmes and in many cases share teaching. This model of provision has been designed to make the new programmes more efficient and ensure that they remain viable in the future. It was also made clear that it was the intention of the programme team to continue to produce graduates who would be eligible to become biomedical scientists. The visitors highlighted that this was not reflected in the programme rationale which heavily emphasised the new healthcare science programmes, particularly the genetics pathway. The visitors therefore require the programme team to revise the programme documentation to more accurately reflect the programmes' place within the education provider's business plan. The documentation should also ensure that the aim of producing graduates who will work as biomedical scientists should also be articulated.

3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.

Condition: The education provider must provide details of the arrangements in place which articulate how the education provider will move from the provision of applied biomedical sciences programmes to the healthcare science programmes.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not determine how students who are following the current applied biomedical science programmes will either complete their studies or transfer onto one of the new healthcare science programmes. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted that this was being done in a phased way and that it would affect students at different stages of the programmes in different ways. It was anticipated that this transfer between the previous programmes and the new could take up to six years to be fully realised. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the transfer of provision, and students, from the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes to the new healthcare science programmes is anticipated to work. In this way the visitors can determine how the education provider is continuing to ensure that all students will be able to successfully complete a full programme of study and become eligible to apply to the Register.

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 programme team must provide further detail of how they monitor student attendance at the relevant learning and teaching activities on the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors noted that there were clear statements which identify where student attendance is mandatory on the programme. The visitors also noted that there were mechanisms in place for which monitoring student attendance at practical and clinical teaching sessions. However, in discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware that, due to education provider policies, similar mechanisms were not in place to monitor student attendance at taught elements of the programme. This was a result of having large numbers of students, from several different programmes, attend some of the modules associated with this programme which made the use of a register unfeasible. As a result of this the visitors were unclear how the programme team ensures that students can meet all of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) associated with the taught elements of the programme. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team monitor students' attendance at taught elements of the programme and what action is taken if students consistently fail to attend.

3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.

Condition: The education provider must provide further detail of the formal procedure in place to deal with any concerns about students' profession related conduct and how it may be implemented.

Reason: In discussion with the students and with the programme team it was made clear that there are processes in place which deal with concerns about students' profession-related conduct. However, the visitors could find only limited information in the programme documentation about the formal procedure for dealing with any issues around professionalism. The visitors were subsequently unclear about how the criteria for the referral of any issue to a disciplinary committee were applied and how students were informed of this. They were also

unclear about how an issue may progress to a disciplinary committee if the Head of School deemed it necessary. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the formal process in place to deal with any issues around students' profession-related conduct. This evidence should also highlight how students are made aware of this process and what criteria may be used to determine if the formal process is implemented.

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 of the criteria used to approve and monitor practice placements and in what circumstances a placement would not be used.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team the visitors were made aware of the processes involved in approving and monitoring practice placements. This involved initial visits prior to students attending the placement and subsequent visits during student's time on placement. This is complimented by monitoring processes which gather information from the placements, and the attendant students, each year. However, from the documentation provided, the visitors could not determine what criteria are used by the education provider to approve and monitor practice placements. The visitors could also not determine under what circumstances the programme team would not utilise the offer of a practice placement or what action would be taken if a placement was deemed unsuitable. Therefore the visitors require further evidence of the criteria used by the programme team to ensure that a practice placement site can provide students with suitable placement experiences. The visitors also require an indication of the action that would be taken if serious concerns were raised about a placement and what circumstances would mean that a placement site would not be used. In this way the visitors can be sure that the programme team maintain thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.

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 education provider must identify how students are made aware of their employment status when on placement and what limits are imposed on their time in placement to ensure that they obtain the required experience.

Reason: In the documentation provided the visitors noted that 'Students on placements will be subject to the same terms and conditions as trainee staff in the laboratory' (Course Handbook p7). In discussion with the practice placement providers it was highlighted that this was the intention as this is what happens for students on the BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science programmes. The

visitors also noted, in discussion with the programme team, that students, while eligible for the same terms and conditions of employment as trainee staff, would not be able to take pro-rata holiday entitlements. This is because any holiday taken while on placement may impair students' ability to meet the required learning outcomes. However, the visitors could not identify how students and practice placement providers were informed that the terms and conditions which students may be able to receive should not be applicable where they negatively impact on the placement experience. The visitors were also unclear as to how any entitlements students may receive were made available to all students in order to provide equality of experience. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the programme team ensure that students and practice placement providers are fully aware of the requirements regarding any potential employment benefits. This evidence should also include how the programme team will manage any disparities between employment benefits to ensure all students get a similar placement experience. In this way the visitors can be sure that this standard is met.

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 education provider must clarify further the role and responsibilities of practice placement educators, particularly in stage 3 of the programme, and highlight how they are prepared to undertake this role.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation, and in discussion with the programme team, that external expertise will be used to teach some of the content, particularly that which is specific to the different routes through the programme. This involvement of external staff increases in stage 3 of the programme and extends to supervision of students' research projects while they are undertaking practice placements. The visitors were made aware that the practice placement providers were aware of this requirement and that they felt that the practice placement educators would be able to fulfil these roles. However, the visitors could not determine what these roles would be and what specific teaching and learning responsibilities would be taken on by staff external to the programme, particularly in stage 3. The visitors were also unclear about how the programme team were going to prepare practice placement providers and educators to fulfil these roles and quality assure any teaching and learning delivered externally. The visitors therefore require further evidence of the specific roles and responsibilities that will be taken on by any external staff and what preparation for these roles will be provided by the programme team. In particular the visitors require further evidence of what the requirements will be for those practice placement educators supervising stage 3 research projects and how they will be prepared to undertake this role.

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 education provider must provide further detail of the expected placement experience at each stage of the programme and how this information is provided to fully prepare practice placement educators and student for placements.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that by the end of the programme student would have to have undertaken a series of placement experiences and demonstrated a defined set of competencies. For each placement a placement agreement is signed by the placement educator, student and member of the programme team which details what competencies need to be demonstrated by the student during that placement. However, the visitors were unclear about how the demonstration of the ability to meet the competencies demonstrated a clear progression through the programme and how this progression was communicated to students and practice placement educators. The visitors could also not determine what broad set of competencies each student would be expected to have met after each placement block to enable them to progress to the next stage of the programme. The visitors therefore require further information about the broad set of competencies the programme team would expect a student to have met after each placement block. This evidence should also include information about how students and practice placement educators are informed of these requirements to prepare them for placement. This is to ensure that students and practice placement educators are aware of the requirements for successful completion of each placement block and that this standard is met.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students while on placement will be implemented in to ensure successful students meet all of the relevant standards of proficiency.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation

provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy will ensure that a student who successfully graduates from the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the use of both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment tools for students’ placement experience will work in practice.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment strategy provides a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external frameworks can be measured.

6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of how the different tools used to assess students will ensure that professional aspects of practice are integral to students’ successful completion of practice placements.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if

a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how this assessment procedure ensures that professional aspects of practice are integral to the successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide further clarification of the requirements for progression of students through the programme, particularly if student’s fail to complete the placement aspects of the programme successfully.

Reason: The visitors noted in discussion with the programme team that students will have to complete both the Medical Education England (MEE) and the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) assessment portfolios while on placement. The MEE assessment is online while the IBMS assessment is paper based and both require evidence to demonstrate how students have met certain competencies while undertaking practical experience. However, the visitors were unclear about how the assessment tools would work in relation to one another if a student failed one assessment but passed the other. From the documentation provided the visitors were clear that the MEE online tool ‘...broadly uses the generic Health Professions Council Standards of Proficiency...’ (Programme Specification p11) while the IBMS portfolio requires each HPC SOP for biomedical scientists to be evidenced. The visitors therefore require further evidence of how the assessments work together and what the implications would be if a student fails one assessment and passes the other. In particular the evidence should detail how students are made aware of the requirements for achievement and successful completion of the practice placement elements of the programme. The visitors can thereby be sure that students are aware of the requirements for achievement within the programme and that this standard can be met.

6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence of where in the programme documentation it is clearly articulated that an aegrotat award will not provide eligibility for admission to the Register.

Reason: From the documentation provided the visitors could not identify where it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. The visitors were also unclear as to how this information is clearly communicated to students. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the programme documentation it is clearly stated that aegrotat awards do not provide eligibility to apply to the Register. In this way the visitors can be sure that this information is available to students and that this standard is met.

Recommendations

4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the mechanisms designed to ensure that students understand what evidence based practice is.

Reason: From a review of the documentation provided the visitors noted that evidence based practice is embedded in the learning outcomes of several modules. Therefore the visitors are satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the students the visitors were aware that while the students described the process of using evidence to inform practice they were unclear that this could be termed 'evidence based practice'. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team review the current mechanisms by which evidence based practice is encouraged and taught to reinforce what evidence based practice is and where students will be using it in the programme. In this way the programme team may be able to further embed the term within the teaching and learning activities of the programme.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should consider exploring and highlighting the interprofessional nature of the programme further.

Reason: The visitors noted a statement in the documentation provided (SETs mapping document) that students on this programme do not undertake any specific inter-professional learning. The visitors were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. However, in discussion with the programme team it was clear that students will share taught modules with students from the biomedical science programmes and also other programmes within the university. It is also the case that the students on this programme will be working with biomedical scientists and healthcare scientists from several different specialisms. The visitors recommend that the programme team considers what the term interprofessional learning may cover and how the positive aspects of this can be emphasised in this programme. In this way the programme team may be able to enhance students understanding of the benefit of the acquisition of skills pertinent to autonomous practitioner, to aid future work in a multi-professional environment.

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.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider keeping the timetabling of placements under review to ensure that students on the programme can meet all of the relevant learning outcomes required in the time available.

Reason: In reviewing the programme documentation the visitors were made aware of the number, duration and range of practice placements that students were required to undertake in order for them to achieve the required learning outcomes. They were therefore satisfied that this standard has been met. However, from this review they also noted that the majority of the placement experience will be taking place in time allocated for holiday in the education provider's academic calendar. In discussion with the programme team, and with students, the visitors clarified that any additional time required in placement would also have to be taken in these periods. The visitors noted that there were several weeks either side of the of the 'block' of time allocated for practice placement during which any additional experience on placement could be timetabled. The visitors recommend that this timetable is kept under review by the programme team to ensure that students who may require additional time in placement can complete this in the time allocated for the programme. In this way the programme team can ensure that all students have the opportunity to meet the learning outcomes associated with practice placement experience in the time available.

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