

Visitors' report

Name of education provider	Queen Margaret University
Programme name	PgDip Diagnostic Radiography (pre-registration)
Mode of delivery	Full time
Relevant part of HPC Register	Radiographer
Relevant modality / domain	Diagnostic radiography
Date of visit	6 – 7 September 2011

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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 'Radiographer' or 'Diagnostic radiographer' must be registered with us. The HPC keep a register of health professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. The education provider has until 18 October 2011 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 6 December 2011. 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 visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 6 December 2011. At the Committee meeting on 6 December 2011, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the condition(s) outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

Introduction

The 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 part of a joint event. The education provider validated the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The visit also considered an MSc Diagnostic Radiography (pre-registration). The education provider, the professional body and the HPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of all the programmes and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HPC's recommendations on this programme only. A separate report exists for the other programme. 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 and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programmes' status.

Visit details

Name of HPC visitors and profession	Linda Mutema (Diagnostic radiographer) Martin Benwell (Diagnostic radiographer)
HPC executive officer (in attendance)	Benjamin Potter
Proposed student numbers	12
Proposed start date of programme approval	January 2012
Chair	Claire Seaman (Queen Margaret University)
Secretary	Sheila Adamson (Queen Margaret University)
Members of the joint panel	Stella Howden (Internal Panel Member) Tom Carline (Internal Panel Member) Caroline Jarvis (Internal Panel Member) Stephen Boynes (Society and College of Radiographers) Marcus Walker (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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HPC did not review the external examiners' reports from the last two years 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 PgDip Radiotherapy and Oncology programme as well as the BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography 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 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 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

3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must submit any revised programme documentation if changes are made as a result of this internal validation event.

Reason: The student handbook and other programme documentation submitted prior to the visit supported the learning and teaching activities of the programme. However, in discussions throughout the visit it was clear amendments may be made to these documents as a result of the internal validation process. Visitors' decisions regarding whether or not the SETs are met must be made with the documentation that will be used in the operation of the programme. The visitors will need to review any changes that are made to the programme documentation in order to determine if the SETs are met. Therefore, the HPC visiting panel will need to see any amended or 'final' versions of the documentation before they can make their final recommendation on the approval of the programme.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence to demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the programme allow students to meet the following standard of proficiency (SOP);

3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- be able to use basic life support techniques and be able to deal safely with clinical emergencies

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not identify how the learning outcomes ensure students are able to meet SOP 3a.3 upon completion of the programme. In particular they were unclear as to where students were taught how to use basic life support techniques and to deal safely with clinical emergencies. Through discussion with the programme team it was clarified that these skills would be covered in a module taught jointly with students from other programmes. However, these elements of learning and teaching were not included in the learning outcomes of this module. The visitors therefore require further evidence to demonstrate where in the module learning outcomes, students will be taught to use basic life support techniques and to deal with clinical emergencies safely. In this way the visitors can be sure that the students who successfully complete the programme can meet SOP 3a.3.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of a formal mechanism in place to demonstrate how the programme team approves practice placements and monitors them regularly.

Reason: From the documents submitted prior to the visit, the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team ensures the quality of practice placements for students on the programme. In discussion with the programme team, the visitors were made aware of mechanisms in place to monitor the quality of practice placements and of the programme team's visits to practice placements prior to students starting the placement. The visitors noted these approval mechanisms were not thoroughly documented and may rely on informal communication between the programme team and the practice placement providers. Because there was no formal process in place to approve practice placements, the visitors did not have enough evidence to ensure the education provider has thorough and effective systems in place for the initial approval and ongoing monitoring of practice placements. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate there are clear and consistent procedures in place around the approval and monitoring of practice placements to ensure that this standard is met.

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

Condition: The education provider must provide evidence of how they ensure practice placements have equality and diversity policies in place and how they are applied to students.

Reason: In discussion with the programme team, the visitors were made aware of how the programme team monitors the quality of practice placements. The visitors had insufficient evidence to determine how the programme team ensures that practice placements have equality and diversity policies in place and how the policies are implemented and monitored. The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide evidence of how they ensure equality and diversity policies are in place and how these policies are implemented and monitored within practice placement settings.

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 evidence to demonstrate how the assessment strategy of the programme ensures that students who successfully complete the programme meet the following standard of proficiency;

3a.3 understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

- **be able to use basic life support techniques and be able to deal safely with clinical emergencies**

Reason: In the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors could not identify how the assessment strategy ensures students are able to meet SOP 3a.3 upon completion of the programme. In particular, they were unclear as to where students were assessed on basic life support techniques and how to safely deal with clinical emergencies. Through discussion with the programme

team, it was clarified that assessment of these skills would be conducted as part of a module taught jointly with students from other programmes. However, as it was unclear in the assessment strategy where these skills would be assessed, the visitors require further evidence to ensure that this standard is met. The visitors therefore require further evidence that demonstrates where, in the assessment strategy, the students will be assessed on basic life support techniques and how to safely deal with clinical emergencies. In this way the visitors can be sure that the students who successfully complete the programme can meet SOP 3a.3 and that this standard is met.

Recommendations

2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider including the requirement for students to inform the programme team of any changes in their criminal convictions status in the student handbook.

Reason: The visitors noted in the programme documentation and in discussion with the programme team that the admission procedures for the programme apply criminal convictions checks. They were therefore satisfied that this standard is met. The visitors noted students are made aware of the requirement to inform the programme team of any changes in their criminal convictions status only on the 'statement of consent'. The visitors therefore recommend that this requirement is included within the student handbook, in addition to the statement of consent. In this way the programme team may increase awareness of this requirement amongst students and mitigate any problems which may arise as a result of this requirement.

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

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider monitoring the staffing provision for the programme to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of staff in place to deliver the programme.

Reason: Through discussions at the visit the visitors noted that the programme team did have an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver the programme effectively. Therefore they were satisfied that this standard was met. However, the visitors feel that the education provider should consider keeping the number of staff delivering the contributing to the programme under review. This is to ensure that as the programme grows, in line with the education provider's projections, there continues to be an adequate number of staff in place to deliver the programme. The visitors also stated that the education provider should inform the HPC, through the Major Change process, if there is any reduction in the level of staffing.

3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider including details of the student complaints process in the student handbook.

Reason: From documentation provided, the visitors were satisfied there is a student complaints process in place and so the programme meets this standard. In discussion with the students they indicated they were not aware of the complaints process as they, or no-one they knew had had cause to utilise it. The visitors could find no information about the complaints process within the student handbook. The visitors recommend the programme team consider including details of the complaints process, or where to find the complaints process, in the student handbook. In this way the team may enhance students' ability to access the process, should they have cause to use it.

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

Recommendation: The education provider may wish to consider resuming the bi-annual Radiography Advisory Committee meetings.

Reason: Through scrutiny of the programme documentation and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were satisfied there is regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement providers. Therefore they were satisfied the programme meets this standard. In particular the visitors noted the practice placement providers and programme team were very positive about the Radiography Advisory Committee meetings between the providers and programme team. However, the visitors noted the group had not met since 2010 and the placement providers indicated they would like to resume the twice yearly meetings which had happened prior to 2010. In discussion with the programme team it was highlighted the only reason for the lack of meetings currently was due to participants' availability. The visitors therefore recommend that the programme team considers re-convening the Radiography Advisory Committee bi-annually. In this way the programme team will have a formal forum in which to address any issues which may arise and can supplement the current good relationship between the programme team and practice placement providers.

Martin Benwell
Linda Mutema