

## Visitors' report

<b>Name of education provider</b>	University of Northampton
<b>Programme name</b>	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
<b>Mode of delivery</b>	Full time Part time
<b>Relevant part of the HCPC Register</b>	Paramedic
<b>Date of visit</b>	22 – 23 July 2014

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## Executive summary

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) approve educational programmes in the UK which health and care professionals must complete before they can apply to be registered with us. We are a statutory regulator and our main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 16 professions. All of these professions have at least one professional title which is protected by law. This means that anyone using the title 'paramedic' or must be registered with us. The HCPC keep a register of health and care professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

The visitors' report which follows outlines the recommended outcome made by the visitors on the approval of the programme. This recommended outcome was accepted by the Education and Training Committee (Committee) on 4 December 2014. At the Committee meeting on 4 December 2014, the programme was approved. This means that the education provider has met the conditions outlined in this report and that the programme meets our standards of education and training (SETs) and ensures that those who complete it meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register. The programme is now granted open ended approval, subject to satisfactory monitoring.

## Introduction

The HCPC visited the programme at the education provider as it was a new programme which was seeking HCPC approval for the first time. This visit assessed the programme against the standards of education and training (SETs) and considered whether those who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register.

This visit was part of a joint event. The validating body reviewed the programme and the professional body considered their accreditation of the programme. The validating body, the professional body and the HCPC formed a joint panel, with an independent chair and secretary, supplied by the education provider. Whilst the joint panel participated in collaborative scrutiny of the programme and dialogue throughout the visit; this report covers the HCPC's recommendations on the programme only. As an independent regulatory body, the HCPC's recommended outcome is independent and impartial and based solely on the HCPC's standards. Separate reports, produced by the validating body and the professional body, outline their decisions on the programme's status.

## Visit details

Name of HCPC visitors and profession	Vince Clarke (Paramedic) Glyn Harding (Paramedic)
HCPC executive officer (in attendance)	Amal Hussein
Proposed student numbers	30 per year full time 30 per year part time
Proposed start date of programme approval	September 2015
Chair	Jayne Bingham (University of Northampton)
Secretary	Vivien Houghton (University of Northampton)
Members of the joint panel	John Fox (Internal Panel Member) Tristan Henderson (External Panel Member) Andrew Freeman-May (External Panel Member) Mark Gough (External Panel Member) Bob Fellows (College of Paramedics) Paul Townsend (College of Paramedic)

## Sources of evidence

Prior to the visit the HCPC reviewed the documentation detailed below, sent by the education provider:

	Yes	No	N/A
Programme specification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Descriptions of the modules	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SETs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mapping document providing evidence of how the education provider has met the SOPs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice placement handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student handbook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
External examiners' reports from the last two years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

During the visit the HCPC saw the following groups or facilities:

	Yes	No	N/A
Senior managers of the education provider with responsibility for resources for the programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programme team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Placements providers and educators / mentors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist teaching accommodation (eg specialist laboratories and teaching rooms)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The HCPC met with students from the FDS Sc Paramedic Science as the programme seeking approval currently does not have any students enrolled on it.

## Recommended outcome

To recommend a programme for approval, the visitors must be satisfied that the programme meets all of the standards of education and training (SETs) and that those who complete the programme meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for the relevant part of the Register.

The visitors agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that a number of conditions are set on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme can be approved.

The visitors agreed that 50 of the SETs have been met and that conditions should be set on the remaining seven SETs.

Conditions are requirements that the education provider must meet before the programme can be approved. Conditions are set when certain standards of education and training have not been met or there is insufficient evidence of the standard being met.

The visitors did not 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 can be approved. Recommendations are made to encourage further enhancements to the programme, normally when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level.

## Conditions

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

**Condition:** The education provider must revisit all programme documentation, including advertising material and website, to ensure that potential applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

**Reason:** From the information provided, the visitors were unclear as to how the education provider ensures that applicants to the programme have all of the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme. The visitors could not determine where applicants were informed about the following;

- possible location of placement;
- all costs associated with travel in regards to placement; and
- costs of the ambulance driving course and the C1 practical.

The visitors consider this to be essential information for applicants and therefore, require the education provider to review the programme advertising materials and documentation, to ensure potential applicants are informed of the above information. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme can meet this standard by ensuring that applicants have all the information they require in order to make an informed choice about taking up a place on the programme.

### **2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.**

**Condition:** The education provider must clarify the admissions procedures for regarding the 'Fitness test' requirements.

**Reason:** The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit. The entry requirements for the programme specify that students must complete a 'Fitness test'. At the visit, the visitors enquired the 'Fitness test' and the processes in place for managing the 'Fitness test'. From the documentation, the visitors were unable determine whether the 'Fitness test' was a mandatory admission requirement and if so, how this was communicated to potential applicants of the programme. During discussions with the programme team, the team decided that the 'Fitness test' was no longer an entry requirement to the programme. However, from the evidence provided and discussions, the visitors were not sure whether the programme team were certain that the 'Fitness test' was not a mandatory admission requirement. They therefore require further clarification as to whether the 'Fitness test' is a mandatory admission requirement and if it is, what processes are in place to manage the 'Fitness test' and how this will be communicated to potential applicants. If the programme team decides that the 'Fitness test' is not a requirement, then the visitors require the documentation to reflect this. In this way the visitors can determine how the programme meets this standard.

### **3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.**

**Condition:** The education provider must provide evidence of the memorandums of understanding and/or the service level agreement between them as the education provider and the ambulance trust.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted and through discussions at the visit, the visitors identified how the programme is managed. The education provider collaborates with the ambulance trust, the ambulance trust provide placement for their students. The visitors heard the ambulance service is required to provide a student with the appropriate learning opportunities to allow them to complete the placement elements of the programme. From the evidence provided the visitors were unable to determine how collaborative arrangements were agreed and maintained. The visitors were concerned that there was no agreement, such as a contract or memorandum of understanding that the education provider and the ambulance service would sign and be held accountable to. The visitors judged it to be important that such an agreement be in place to clearly identify the expectations of the education provider, the expectations of the ambulance service, the programme requirements, the student requirements and the resource requirements. The visitors therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence to demonstrate how collaborative arrangements between ambulance trust and the education provider are agreed.

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

**Condition:** The education provider must review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, to ensure the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflective of the language associated with statutory regulation and the HCPC.

**Reason:** The documentation submitted by the education provider contained several instances of incorrect terminology. For example, the 'Educational Audit of Learning Environment for Health and Social Care Programmes' states "The Health Professional Council (HPC)...require audit of the learning environment for all students on clinical placement every two years". There is reference to 'HPC'. All reference such as these must be updated to the 'HCPC' or 'Health and Care Professions Council'. Also, the "Rationale and Development Approval Form" states "Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)...propose the need for registration threshold to be at a degree level in the future". Currently, the level of qualification for entry to the Register for Paramedic is under consultation, and as it stands HCPC does not require degree level for entry to the Register. The visitors noted other instances such as these throughout the documentation submitted. Incorrect and inconsistent statements have the potential to mislead potential applicants and students. Therefore the visitors require the education provider to review the programme documentation, including advertising materials, and ensure that the terminology used is accurate, consistent and reflects the language associated with statutory regulation

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

**Condition:** The programme team must provide further clarification on the Facilitating Learning and Mentorship (FLAM) course and how this training will ensure that placement educator will be fully prepared when they come to work with students.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the FLAM course and what the content of the course entailed. It was also unclear how the FLAM course prepared practice placement educator to take on students. Discussion with the practice educators revealed that not all practice placement educators took the FLAM course. The visitors were therefore, unsure if all practice placement educators did not take the FLAM course how the education provider can be certain that practice placement educator have taken appropriate practice placement educator training to fully prepare them to work with students. Discussion with the programme team did not provide further details about the nature of the FLAM course. The visitors received no information regarding the specific content and learning outcomes of the FLAM course. It was not clear whether the FLAM course was a compulsory requirement of a practice educator before students were allocated. From this, the visitors were unclear as to how the programme team would ensure practice placement educators are appropriately prepared for the requirements of the programme if the FLAM course is not mandatory for practice placement educator. The visitors require further clarification on the content and learning outcomes of the FLAM course and whether it is mandatory requirement of all practice placement educators. If however, the FLAM course is not a requirement; the programme team will need to clarify what other measures are in place to ensure practice placement educators are appropriately trained to take on students from this programme.

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

**Condition:** The programme team must provide further evidence as to their processes to ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training.

**Reason:** From the documentation provided, the visitors were made aware that the 'Educational Audit of the Learning Environment for Health and Social Programme' framework was used in approving and monitoring placements. However, the documentation did not provide information around this process and its implementation in how they ensure that practice educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. The SETs mapping sited 'Practice placement audit' as evidence to meet this standard, however, the visitors were unable to see the information as to the process in place that ensure that practice placement educators have undertaken the appropriate placement educator training. In discussions at the visit, the placement providers emphasised how supportive the programme team were in terms of providing training for practice educators. The visitors acknowledged the 'FLAM' course but were unable to see how each placement educator's training is monitored, or how the requirements for training feed into partnership agreements with the providers. The visitors were also unclear about the steps taken to ensure that suitably trained placement educators were in place for students. To ensure that this standard is met, the visitors require the education provider to articulate clearly the training requirements for



placement educators and the processes in place for ensuring these requirements are met and monitored in practice.

#### **6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.**

**Condition:** The education provider must submit skills book year one and year three and provide further clarification on the progression and development from level four to level six.

**Reason:** The visitors reviewed the programme documentation prior to the visit. The visitors noted that the skill book year one and year three were not included in the submission; instead the visitors were only given skill book year two as evidence. From the information presented in skill book year two, the visitors were unable to determine the progression and development from level four to level six, they were also unable to determine what assessment methods were employed at level four and at level six that measure the learning outcomes as they were not presented with skill book year one and year three. The visitors were also unsure from discussions with the students and practice placement educators, how information regarding skills level at each stage will be communicated to students and understood by practice placement educators taking on students from this programme. The visitors therefore require the programme team to submit the skill book year one and year three and provide further clarification on the development and progression at each stage. The visitors also require the programme team to clarify how information regarding skill level required at each stage is communicated to students and practice placement educators.

#### **6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.**

**Condition:** The education provider must include a clear statement in the programme documentation that at least one external examiner for the programme will be from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.

**Reason:** In the documentation submitted by the education provider there was insufficient detail about the external examiner recruitment policy. It was not evident that there was an explicit requirement for at least one of the external examiners to be from the relevant part of the HCPC Register unless other arrangements are agreed. The visitors were satisfied with the current external examiner for the programme. However, the visitors need to see evidence that HCPC requirements regarding the external examiner on the programme have been included in the documentation to demonstrate that this standard is met.

Vince Clarke  
Glyn Harding