HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Coventry University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Full time Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice, Full time BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Work based learning
Approval visit date	26-27 February 2019
Case reference	CAS-13408-Q1W8T3

Contents

Executive Summary

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Through undertaking this process, we have noted areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes in section 6 of this report.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards
We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Programmes are normally approved on an open-ended basis, subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed on our website.

How we make our decisions
We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint partner visitors to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view on our website.

HCPC panel
We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Sophie Gamwell	Lay
David Bevan	Operating department practitioner
Tony Scripps	Operating department practitioner
Ismini Tsikaderi	HCPC executive
Lawrence Martin	HCPC executive (observer)

Other groups involved in the approval visit
There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Beverley Steventon	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Coventry University- Academic Dean
Leigh Ashby	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Coventry University- Quality and Accreditation Coordinator

| Lloyd Howell | Panel member | College of Operating Department Practitioners |

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01976

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	WBL (Work based learning)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 September 2019
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20[1]
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02024

We undertook assessment of new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programmes met our standards for the first time. Through this report, we have referred to the work based learning programme as the 'degree apprenticeship'.

Programme name	Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Operating department practitioner
First intake	01 September 2003
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 25
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP01977

We also considered whether the Diploma of Higher Education programme continues to meet our standards. We decided to assess the programme via the approval process to consider the impact of the introduction of the new BSc routes on this programme.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further

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[1] Pending confirmation. Please see condition for SET 3.1.

supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Programme specification	Yes
Module descriptor(s)	Yes
Handbook for learners	Yes
Handbook for practice based learning	Yes
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Completed proficiency standards mapping document	Yes
Curriculum vitae for relevant staff	Yes
External examiners' reports for the last two years, if applicable	Yes

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

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	We met with learners currently on the Diploma of Higher Education Operating Department Practice programme.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice education providers	Yes	
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors
In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions
Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 12 April 2019.

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

Condition: The education provider must ensure that the required information about the programmes is available to potential applicants, so that they can make an informed decision about whether to take up a place on a programme.

Reason: In a review of the documentation, the visitors considered the course specification for all programmes, and the information on the webpage for the Dip HE. The visitors noted that website information available to applicants in relation to the BSc programme and the degree apprenticeship route were not provided. The visitors were unable to determine whether applicants have all the information they require to make an informed choice about taking up or making an offer of a place on the BSc and degree apprenticeship programmes. Therefore the visitors require further evidence on the information for the BSc and degree apprenticeship programmes which ensures that relevant information relating the programme are available to applicant, which gives them the information they need to make an informed choice about taking up the offer of a place on the programme.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Condition: For the degree apprenticeship programme, the education provider must demonstrate how their admissions process appropriately and effectively assesses applicants' prior learning.

Reason: In a review of the documentation, the education provider has shown the AP(E)L guidance the faculty has in place. From discussions with the programme team the visitors noted that the education provider is currently developing the way AP(E)L will be applied on the degree apprenticeship route. The education provider mentioned that apprentices will undertake preparation prior to recruitment because of the nature of the degree apprenticeship programme. However, the visitors were unclear how any policy would be applied to applicants on the degree apprenticeship programme or how this policy would be made available to applicants and the staff who would apply it. Therefore, the education provider must provide further information which demonstrates the process for assessing applicants' prior learning in relation to the degree apprenticeship route.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the programmes will be sustainable, considering their planned total learner numbers, and how these will be broken down across all three programmes.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the education provider has shown that there is a practice education agreement with local healthcare trusts which are already established for the DipHE programme. To evidence this standard the education provider has shown there is capacity in practice-based learning to run the three programmes. Through discussions at the visit, the visitors noted that learner numbers are 25 for the DipHE and 15 for the BSc. From discussions, the visitors noted that the education provider intends to run the degree apprenticeship programme when there is interest in

this programme running, but that currently the education provider is unaware of any interest in this programme from applicants. The visitors noted that the total learner numbers in regards to the Diploma of higher education and the BSc programmes are currently 40 per year, excluding the integrated degree apprenticeship route where apprentice numbers are not yet calculated. Thus, the visitors were unable to determine whether the development of the integrated degree apprenticeship route will impact on the total learner numbers. Therefore, the visitors require further clarity around the planned total learner numbers and how these will be broken down across all three programmes. The education provider must demonstrate how all three programmes will be sustainable and fit for purpose within their plans.

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

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they have an effective process in place for identifying suitable persons for the role of the programme leader.

Reason: From a review of the documentation, the education provider has shown the role description and the selection checklist of potential applicants for the programme leader role. From discussion with the programme team at the visit, the visitors noted that the education provider has potential replacements from members within the academic team to take on the role. However, the visitors noted that there are not many potential replacements for the programme leader role since it is a small team. The visitors were unable to determine whether the process is appropriate to ensure that the education provider will continue to appoint a suitable replacement, if it becomes necessary. Therefore, the visitors require further evidence which demonstrates an effective process for ensuring that the person with overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.

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

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider that they ensure assessors' adequacy and appropriate capacity in practice-based learning.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as all the appropriate information to evidence this was documented and discussed at the practice educators meeting. However, the visitors considered that if the education provider recruits any new assessors in practice-based learning they will need to ensure that these individuals are appropriate for the role. In particular, the role requires high level of engagement which makes it challenging for the education provider to find appropriate people to recruit. The visitors considered that if the education provider replaces assessors they should ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified

and experienced assessors with who can support safe and effective learning. Therefore, the education provider should monitor assessors' adequacy and each individual's capacity to take on the assessor's role in practice-based learning on an on-going basis should any staff changes occur.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as all the appropriate information to evidence this was documented and discussed at the practice educators meeting. However, the visitors considered that if the education provider recruits any new assessors in practice-based learning they will need to ensure that these individuals are appropriate for the role. In particular, the role assessor's requires high level of engagement which makes it challenging for the education provider to find appropriate people to recruit. Thus if the education provider replaces assessors they should ensure assessors have relevant knowledge, skills and experience and who can support safe and effective learning. Therefore, the education provider should monitor any changes to the assessor's role in practice-based learning on an on-going basis should any staff changes occur.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the standard was met at threshold, as all the appropriate information to evidence this was documented and discussed at the practice educators meeting. However, the visitors considered that if the education provider recruits any new assessors in practice-based learning they will need to ensure these individuals undertake appropriate training for the role. Although the education provider has the capacity to deliver appropriate training for new assessors, the role requires high level of engagement which makes it challenging for the education provider to find appropriate people to recruit. The visitors considered that if the education provider replaces assessors they should ensure assessors undertake training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme. Therefore, the education provider should monitor any changes to the assessor's role in practice-based learning on an on-going basis should any staff changes occur.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 22 May 2019 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

Section 6: Future considerations for the programme(s)

We include this section to note areas that may need to be considered as part of future HCPC assessment processes. Education providers do not need to respond to this section at this time, but should consider whether to engage with the HCPC around these areas in the future.

At the visit, the education provider noted that they intend to recruit 40 learners in total for the DipHE and BSc (Hons) programmes. The visitors noted that there are no apprentices lined up for the degree apprenticeship route. The senior and programme team said that they would recruit apprentices if anyone shows interest before the proposed first intake in September 2019. The visitors noted that in case of an increase in the total learner numbers this may affect the way the three programmes meet our standards. This will mean that the programmes will meet several of the standards in SET 3 in a different way than proposed through this process, and therefore would constitute a change to the way the programmes will run. If the education provider increases total learner numbers once the degree apprenticeship route goes ahead, they should engage with the major change process.