

HCPC major change process report

Education provider	University of Chester
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics, Full time Pg Dip Nutrition and Dietetics, Full time MSc Nutrition and Dietetics, Full time
Date submission received	09 December 2020
Case reference	CAS-16812-J7V7H5

Contents

Section 1: Our regulatory approach	2
Section 2: Programme details.....	2
Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment	3
Section 4: Outcome from first review	3
Section 5: Visitors' recommendation.....	5

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

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

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

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

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC).

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process report. 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:

Julie Leaper	Dietitian
Sarah Illingworth	Dietitian
John Archibald	HCPC executive

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Dietitian
First intake	01 September 2005
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 22
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04799

Programme name	Pg Dip Nutrition and Dietetics
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Dietitian
First intake	01 August 2018

Maximum learner cohort	Up to 16
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04800

Programme name	MSc Nutrition and Dietetics
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Dietitian
First intake	01 August 2018
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 16
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04802

We undertook this assessment to consider whether the programme continues to meet our standards, following changes reported to us via the major change process. The following is an overview of the changes from the information received via this process.

The education provider has informed us they have made changes to their staffing in 2019/20, so the number of academic staff has decreased from 4.8 FTE to 3 FTE. The education provider intends to appoint an individual to undertake a placement expansion project. It is anticipated that this person will support wider teaching activity. Also, the education provider has requested an additional 1.0 FTE member of staff. The education provider confirmed by email that learner numbers on the BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics programme have increased by an additional 10 learners, taking the cohort numbers from 22 to 32. The programme leader for the BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Dietetics programme has left and has been replaced on an interim basis by the programme leader for the MSc and Pg Dip Nutrition and Dietetics programmes. The education provider has also made changes to who is providing personal and academic support to learners, with this workload being redistributed among academic staff.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we require certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Required documentation	Submitted
Major change notification form	Yes
Completed major change standards mapping	Yes

Section 4: Outcome from first review

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission, the visitors were not satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that our standards continued to be met at this time, and therefore require further evidence as noted below.

Further evidence required

In order to determine whether the standards continue to be met, the visitors require further evidence for the following standards for the reasons noted below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programme(s), and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the standards.

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

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

Reason: The education provider indicated that there has been a reduction in staff, from 4.8 WTE to 2.0 WTE. The education provider also said they were interviewing for a 1.0 WTE dietetics staff member, and had approval to recruit a further 2.0 WTE. There has been the redistribution of workload in the department to ensure appropriate staff deliver across the programme.

The visitors noted the increase in student numbers and information about learner: staff ratios with additional teaching facilitated by visiting lecturers. The education provider provided the curriculum vitae of academic staff as well as example lecture timetables to include visiting lecturers. However, the visitors were unsure from the evidence provided how much time, as well as delivering the lecture, the visiting lecturer provides within the planning for assessment and support of academic staff to fill the staffing gaps.

Therefore, the visitors were unclear whether the resources provided for the programme allow for an appropriate number of staff who are able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively, and whether educators have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver their parts of the programme effectively.

Suggested evidence: The education provider should provide further information about the process to determine that they need to employ a visiting lecturer to make sure the programme is delivered effectively and the role visiting lecturers undertake. The education provider needs to provide evidence, for example curriculum vitae, of how they ensure visiting lecturers have the relevant knowledge and experience to deliver the subjects they are teaching, or that the person who is teaching has the relevant skills to research and deliver education in a specific area.

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

Reason: The education provider indicated there has been no change to the way the programme meets this standard. The visitors noted there has been an increase in learner numbers and were unclear from the evidence provided whether there is adequate resources to support learning in all settings to include eg IT, VLE, rooms and facilities, equipment. The visitors were unsure whether the resources to support learning are adequate to meet the needs of the increase in learner numbers. The visitors therefore need further evidence that programme resources are readily available

to learners and educators to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme effectively.

Suggested evidence: The education provider must provide further evidence about how they assess their systems for accessibility and effectiveness for the increased numbers of learners. The education provider needs to provide information about they have planned for the increase in learners so there is effective access to IT, support, teaching and study spaces, and library resources.

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

Reason: The education provider informed the visitors they had been successful with their bid for funding from Health Education England North West's Clinical Placement Expansion programme to achieve additional placements. The visitors noted there has been an increase in learner numbers. The visitors could not see from the evidence if there is enough support for learners to take part in safe and effective practice-based learning. The visitors require further information about how the education provider justifies what you consider a suitable number of staff for the number of learners and the level of support specific learners need. The visitors also require information about how they make sure that the qualifications and experience of staff are appropriate to the specific aspects of practice-based learning they are involved in, and that they are able to support learning and assessment effectively.

Suggested evidence: The education provider needs to provide further information about how they justify what they consider a suitable number of staff for the number of learners and the level of support specific learners need. The education provider also needs to provide information about how they make sure that the qualifications and experience of staff are appropriate to the specific aspects of practice-based learning they are involved in, and that they are able to support learning and assessment effectively.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the request for further evidence set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence that the standards continue to be met and recommend that the programme(s) remain approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 16 March 2021 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).