



Foundation Degree Paramedic Science

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose:

Course management, monitoring and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose:

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer:

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Programme Specification

1. Named Awards

Foundation Degree Paramedic Science

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

Course Code: C1883F

UCAS Code: B780

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

Health and Care Professions Council

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

Paramedic Science

7. Document Control Information

May 2015

Version 2 2016

8. Effective Session

2016-2017

9. Author

Ken Street

10. Faculty

Science

11. Department

School of Health Sciences and Social Work

12. Educational Aims

1. Provide a learning environment which ensures that students have every opportunity to reach their academic potential.
2. Develop a learning approach which strongly links knowledge and theory with accountable professional practice.
3. Equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills in order to enable them to contribute to an evidence based approach to practice from a contemporary knowledge base.
4. Promote the value of teamwork by enabling students to work effectively within teams.
5. Enable students to reflect on evidence-based practice through the development of clinical reasoning skills, practice evaluation and appraisal of research.

6. Enable students to recognise needs for continuing professional development and to develop as independent, self-directed learners.
7. Develop students' intellectual capacity, imaginative and analytical powers and skills, through a rigorous course of study specifically related to paramedic practice.
8. Develop the students' knowledge, understanding and skills so as to enable them to apply for registration as a paramedic.
9. Develop practitioners with a reflective and an evaluative approach to clinical practice.

All units of study are compulsory in order to meet professional outcomes and to allow students to meet the requirements for application for entry on to the statutory register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

13. Reference Points

- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework Document (2014)
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education (2010)
- QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ, 2008)
- National Qualifications Framework
- University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-Based and Placement Learning (2015)
- Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (QAA 2004)
- Subject Benchmark Statements for Paramedics (QAA 2004).
- Joint Royal Colleges Ambulance Liaison Committee Clinical Practice Guidelines (2016).
- Sector Skills Councils' Foundation Degree framework (SFH 2005).
- HCPC Standards of Education and Training 2014
- HCPC Standards of Proficiency - Paramedics 2014
- Requirements of Professional Body – College of Paramedics Curriculum document 2015 v.3 revised
- HCPC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics 2016
- HCPC Guidance on conduct and ethics for students 2016

14. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A1. The bioscientific principles of acute and unscheduled healthcare
- A2. The application of psychological and sociological studies to paramedic practice
- A3. Professional issues underpinning paramedic practice
- A4. The wider context in which pre-hospital care operates and is managed
- A5. The developing role of the Emergency Care Assistant, technician and paramedic
- A6. The basis of patient assessment and therapeutic intervention
- A7. Evidence-based health care
- A8. The integration of theory and practice

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Whole group/small group, individual tutorials, discussions, lectures, role-play, practical work, placement learning (A1-A8). Clinical specialists and peers working in practice provide additional support. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to undertake independent study both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learnt and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject (A3).

Assessment

Testing of knowledge and understanding is through a combination of course assessments (A1-A8), in the form of laboratory reports (A1), essay assignments, achievement of clinical competencies within practice portfolios (A5, A6), project reports and Observed Structured Clinical Examinations

(A1-A8).

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B1. Communicate effectively in a range of settings (A1, A2, A3)
- B2. Recognise and contribute to solving patient care problems in a variety of settings (A1)
- B3. Assess, prioritise and plan care required by patients in the pre-hospital care environment (A3, A6)
- B4. Appraise the role of other members of the care team (A1, A2, A3, A5)
- B5. Apply evidence-based approaches to decision making (A7, A8)

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Cognitive skills are developed through large and small group work, discussions, reflective journals/logs, tutorial support, clinical placements and by providing relevant feedback on assessed work (B1-B5). Students are expected to require substantial support in developing these skills, which will be reflected in the organisation of the personal tutorial support system within the University and in practice. Throughout, the learner is encouraged to further develop intellectual skills by independent study.

Assessment

Intellectual skills are assessed by problem-solving through in-class tests, laboratory reports, coursework related to in course exercises, Observed Structured Clinical Examinations and achievement of clinical competencies within practice portfolios (B1-B5).

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C1. Utilise information from a range of sources
- C2. Demonstrate practice, professional and subject specific skills at threshold level for registration as a Paramedic (A1, A2, A3)
- C3. Provide appropriate care for patients in the pre-hospital care environment (A1, A2, A3)
- C4. Respond effectively to patients changing needs within their scope of practice (A3)
- C5. Support families and significant others in the pre-hospital setting and reflect on practice (A3, A8)
- C6. Support colleagues and other health care professionals in their clinical practice (A2, A3, A5)

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Students develop their practical skills throughout the programme by applying their academic learning through part-task training and simulation consolidated in a range of clinical placements. These placements include the local Ambulance Services as well as NHS trusts, where specialist placements are provided. Suitably experienced practitioners undertake supervision of student paramedics during placements. Students are able to demonstrate profession-specific and subject-related skills (C1-C6) and obtain both formal and informal feedback from academic and clinical supervisors.

Assessment

Most practical skills are developed in workshops and in clinical simulation, before being observed then practiced in clinical placements. Specific core skills are assessed at University in clinical suites / simulation labs. Other profession-specific skills are assessed primarily through the development of practice portfolios incorporating evidence of clinical competencies, reflective accounts, and OSCEs (C1-C6). Assessment of research and evidence-based practice (C1, C2) is also assessed within a unit of study.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills:

Students will have opportunities for identifying evidence for:

- D1. IT and application of number
- D2. Problem solving
- D3. Enhancing own learning and performance
- D4. Communication
- D5. Working effectively with others
- D6. Teamwork

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Transferable skills are developed through the programme in group work, class discussions, course work and assessments in clinical practice. The students are supported to gain core study skills which incorporate transferable skills (D1-D6). In addition the students undertake an interprofessional common learning unit in the second year of their programme together with pre-registration students from the University of Southampton.

Assessment

Learning outcomes D1-D6 are assessed through coursework, reports, oral presentations, OSCEs, in-class tests and clinical competences within practice portfolios.

15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

The course is offered in a full time study mode.

Year two will consist of 120 credits at level 5. One credit is equivalent to 10 hours of study and units are offered as 20 credits (200 hours of study) with one 40 credit unit (400 hours of study) in year two.

Students are expected to complete all units (240 credits for a Foundation Degree), which are mandatory due to the professional award outcome. Standard University rules apply. The regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

- Students may enter the programme with a varied level of academic skills. These will be assessed individually to allow appropriate support with study skills. In year one study skills will be incorporated throughout the units of study and via a tutorial programme. Additional support is available via Academic Skills Unit and Maths Café and the Faculty Learning Support Tutor. Practice placements are compulsory and an integral part of the assessment strategy
- Student paramedics will have access to a range of pre-hospital care experience via well-established Placement Provider links with South Central Ambulance Service and Isle of Wight Ambulance Service. Both services work with the course team to enhance this aspect of the curriculum.
- Improving Health Services, Developing Professional Practice and Introduction to Evidence Based Practice units are jointly provided with Operating Department Practice and Speech, Language and Communication Science students. This will enable the students to work collaboratively with other professional groups.
- Preparation for employment is an integral part of year two in conjunction with practice placement partners and embedded within the professional practice units.
- An exit award of Cert HE Pre-hospital Care is available if 120 credits at level 4 are achieved.

16. Employability Statement

- This is a pre-registration programme designed specifically to meet the requirements for registration as a Paramedic.
- All part-time students are currently employed by one of the local Ambulance Services. However they do undertake personal development planning to support employability skills. In addition, the curriculum includes self-managed opportunities such as professional portfolio, CPD planning and learning contracts, which will assist students in demonstrating their ability to maintain their professional registration.
- Career management skills are embedded in the curriculum and full-time students will be supported to apply for posts in the final year of their programme. The opportunity is provided for the local Ambulance Services to facilitate a recruitment workshop, where students are informed

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

of the recruitment process and job opportunities.

- Employment prospects are excellent, particularly in the South Central region.
- Personal Development Planning includes the identification and review of skills at all levels of study and the method of delivery. This is through the Personal Tutor system, centrally produced materials, personal learning plans and professional portfolios. Students are prepared to apply for registration, supported to develop CV's and have interview preparation with the support of NHS colleagues and Purple Door Recruitment.

17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- Faculty Learning Support Tutor.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all undergraduate awards
- Laboratory and Simulation of Practice Teaching and assessment facilities
- Student preparation prior to and mentoring during clinical placements (work based mentor assigned to each student)
- Dedicated learning environment lead for South Central Ambulance Service to manage student placements and mentor allocation
- Clinical link tutors from the course team
- Guidance for admission for mature students is available from course tutors
- Timetabled tutorial system
- Mentor hotline (dedicated phone line for mentors available 365 days with voicemail between midnight – 0600 hrs direct to one of the course team)

18. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

UCAS points: 220 from one or a combination of the following:

- At least 80 points from an A level in a single science subject (biology, human biology, chemistry, applied science, sports science, PE).
- BTEC National Certificate or National Diploma in a relevant subject (distinction/merit)
- Pass (50 per cent) in Access to Higher Education (18 credits) in a relevant subject: we welcome applicants returning to study.
- Professional qualifications and experience: we welcome applicants with work experience in relevant subject areas in addition to appropriate academic qualifications.

Physical fitness is an important aspect. Training and assessment in manual handling is an integral part of the programme prior to commencing practice placements. However, in making a choice about this course, students need to be aware of the highly physical nature of the role both as a student and in future employment as a paramedic.

In order to satisfy the requirements of clinical practice/future employment students must:

- have a full (UK) category B, (car) driving licence, with no more than 3 points, without restrictions (**NB:** Driving *per se* is not a requirement of this course or registration with the HCPC, however it is currently a requirement for employment as a paramedic).

Candidates must have satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance and Occupational Health status.

All applicants must be aged 18 or over at the start of the course and will be interviewed jointly with an academic member of staff and representatives from one of the local Ambulance Services.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

However, students must be able to:

- Undertake the physical role of working in the pre-hospital environment which includes moving and handling of patients and responding to emergency situations.
- Undertake activities in a timely manner when it is a situation that is time critical.
- Meet the occupational health requirements for working in pre-hospital environment and will be subject to physical examination in accordance with the University's occupational health recommendations.

19. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review 17.02.11.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.
- School Education Committee
- Clinical Liaison Group
- Education Partnership Forum
- Clinical Placement evaluations
- Commissioners Annual Review
- HCPC Approval 27 & 28 January 2009
- HCPC Approval for realignment May 2011
- HCPC Annual Monitoring April 2016

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.

- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.
- SHSSW Placement committee
- Faculty Placement Office
- Practice Learning Group
- Paramedic Science Clinical Liaison Group

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS)
- Individual student feedback via tutorial system
- Reflective accounts of placement
- Placement evaluation questionnaires
- Paramedic Science Clinical Liaison Group

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.
- Specific development in relation to Professional and Regulatory requirements.

20. Assessment Strategy

Assessment Level 4

All units are assessed at level 4. The assessment methods for level 4 are designed to introduce and test understanding of key underpinning concepts through use of essays, laboratory reports, small group presentations, written examinations, OSCE, portfolios of evidence and practice outcomes. These methods of assessment facilitate a multi-faceted approach that covers level four curriculum requirements. Essays, written examinations and laboratory reports will allow the student to demonstrate theoretical knowledge of the first year curriculum; OSCE and clinical competencies within practice outcomes will allow knowledge and demonstration of psychomotor skills to be developed and assessed in order to identify fit for purpose and practice at this level. Opportunities for feedback on progress will be provided by formative activities. Formative presentation work will encourage a team working approach to solving problems and allow the students to develop communication skills. Although similar assessment methods are appropriate at higher levels, the assessment for year one has been mapped to the University academic regulations.

Assessment Level 5

The assessment methods for level five are similar to level four in structure although they aim to further develop the students' understanding and ability to perform more critically and autonomously (within accepted limitations). Assessment types include case studies, reports, OSCE, written examinations, poster presentations, practice outcomes, essays and formative online VLE collaborations. Essays will allow the student to rationalise between published evidence, accepted standards and experiential practice. OSCE and simulation will allow testing of clinical skills in a safe and controlled manner, ensuring the student can perform safely in the given clinical scenarios. Written examinations and laboratory reports will ensure the student demonstrates the required knowledge that underpins theoretically the role of the paramedic practitioner and practice outcomes ensure that demonstrated theory has been applied to practice in real time situations. Finally, the students will undertake formative assessment using electronic voting systems that will test knowledge and offer immediate feedback as well as undertaking a synchronous online collaborative ethical discussion.

21. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

The following exemptions assessment regulations apply:

- Students are limited to a maximum of one second attempt assessment at each unit, if they are eligible following the first sitting and one subsequent repeat attempt in the following academic year.
- Compensation is not allowed. Where a course has an exemption that limits or prohibits compensation and an exemption that limits the number of attempts to pass a unit, then on the final attempt allowed in that unit, the student will be allowed to submit an extenuating circumstances form. If the extenuating circumstances are found to be valid, then the Unit Assessment Board may allow a further attempt in this unit in accordance with the regulations. Students will be forewarned by their department or school when they reach a final attempt in a unit.
- No modern foreign languages at Level 5.
- Second attempt practice assessment to be undertaken at earliest opportunity, which may be before Unit Assessment Board has confirmed the failed attempt.
- A non-standard year will apply.

22. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve unit assessment strategy;
- sample assessment artefacts;
- present report to Unit Assessment Boards.

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards;
- scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment;
- ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation / Recognition

Health and Care Professions Council - 2016 (Annual Monitoring)

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

February 2011

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015\[1\]](#)*).

[1] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

D. Others

None.

24. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document.
- Student Handbook.
- University of Portsmouth CurriculaumFramework.
- University of Portsmouth Undergraduate Prospectus.
- Assessment Regulations.
- University of Portsmouth (<http://www.port.ac.uk/>) and School of Health Studies & Social Work (www.port.ac.uk/shssw).
- Practice assessment handbook
- Mentors handbook
- SHSSW Staff handbook for Placement Learning