

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University College Birmingham
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship), Work based learning
Approval visit date	04 March 2020
Case reference	CAS-14931-S3D9N3

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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.

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:

Roseann Connolly	Lay
Kathryn Campbell	Physiotherapist
Valerie Maehle	Physiotherapist
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

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.

Alex Lofthouse	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University College Birmingham – Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Helen Sharma	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) panel member	CSP – Professional Body
Gill Rawlinson	CSP panel member	CSP – Professional Body
Helen Frank	CSP panel member	CSP – Professional Body

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02142

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	WBL (Work based learning)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP02143

We undertook this assessment of two 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 meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for 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.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	

Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

We also usually ask to meet the following groups at approval visits, although there may be some circumstances where meeting certain groups is not needed. In the table below, we have noted which groups we met, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the programme has not run yet, the panel met learners from Sports Fitness, Sports Therapy, Health and Social Care and Youth Community Studies.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	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 15 May 2020.

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 demonstrate how they will ensure that applicants have all the information they require about the costs and application process for each programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit, the education provider submitted links to the website for potential applicants, the open day presentation and an overview of the admissions process. The visitors were unable to see information about the relative additional costs for each programme from this information. In discussions around admissions in the programme team meeting the visitors were told information about the admission process that was different to the information provided prior to the visit. Firstly, in the open day presentation it suggests that applicants for both programmes apply directly to the university. However, the visitors were told in the programme team meeting that this is not the case. Secondly, the visitors were told of a group task for applicants as part of the invitation for interview. This was not included in the information provided prior to the visit. The education provider also indicated that there would be potential for additional costs to be accrued for learners when on the programmes. Therefore, information available for applicants is currently inaccurate and does not provide the correct information for them to make an informed decision about whether to take up a position on the programmes. The education provider must provide finalised, accurate information about the admissions process so that potential applicants can make an informed decision about whether to take up a place on either programme. The education provider must also ensure that the information is clear and explicit in stating the unique admissions processes for each of the programmes.

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 show how they will ensure that applicants are aware of how they will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason: In their documentary submission the education provider submitted an overview of the entry criteria and the process for admission onto the programmes. The visitors noted in the entry criteria the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level of 6.5. The visitors noted that this is below the required level of 7.0, with no element below 6.5, for entry onto the HCPC Register, as required by SOP 8.2. The visitors also noted that learners must meet SOP 8.2 on completion of the programme. In the programme team meeting, the education provider indicated that academic development through the programmes would ensure that learners would reach the appropriate level of English. However, the visitors considered this approach to be informal and without measuring learner's progress they could not be certain that learners would leave the programme meeting the required standard. The visitors could also not see how applicants were made aware that they must meet the required level by the completion of the programme. The education provider must show how applicants, with English proficiency lower than required for registration with the HCPC, will be informed of the requirements for completion of the programme. They must also show how applicants are informed of how the education provider will support them to meet this SOP by the end of the programme.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure the regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers for the purpose of improving and developing the programmes

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider stated in the documentation that a meeting with practice partners will happen three times a year and the practice educators will be invited to practice education training every year. The education provider also indicated that lecturers will visit practice partners when learners are undertaking them. The visitors were able to see from the service level agreement (SLA) draft how the collaboration would work on an operational logistical level. However, this standard is intended to ensure that the partnership is working to influence the way the programme as a whole is designed and delivered. Although some information was provided which indicated the groups involved would regularly meet, visitors were not provided with information about the nature of these meetings, or particular information about how else the education provider and practice education providers would work collaboratively for the purposes on improving and developing the programme on an ongoing basis. This means that they could not confirm how the practice education providers would effectively contribute to the ongoing improvement and development of the programmes, and require further evidence to show that the standard is met.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider submitted minutes from meetings with providers, letters of availability from two providers and the visitors were able to see a draft service level agreement. From these documents the visitors noted that the education provider has secured placement opportunities with the relevant practice education providers and were able to see a discussion around relevant subject areas for practice-based learning. However, the visitors were unable to see formal confirmation of the capacity of appropriately quality assured and audited practice-based learning. The visitors questioned the progress of finalising the capacity of practice-based learning with the providers and the education provider stated that they are progressing but have not finalised the capacity. The visitors considered that the relationships with the partner organisations are apparent, but currently the confirmation of capacity for practice-based learning for all learners is informal and not finalised. The education provider must show that there is a formal commitment from partner organisations to ensure the availability and capacity of appropriate practice-based learning for all learners on both programmes.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

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

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education provider must show there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: Following the approval visit the education provider has indicated change to the teaching staff by email. The original member of the teaching staff will no longer be a part of the teaching team. They have also indicated the education provider has recruited four new physiotherapists to take on the teaching responsibilities. Prior to the visit the education provider indicated they intend to have two full time staff or part equivalent to manage both the apprenticeship and direct entry programme. However, the visitors were only able to see the curriculum vitae (CV) of one physiotherapy member of staff (the member we have now been told is leaving). The visitors were unable to see the qualifications or experience of other members of staff or how the education provider has ensured the new members of staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. As the visitors were not given details around the new members of the teaching staff they could not judge there were an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. Considering this, and as the education provider has changed their approach, the education provider will need to clarify how they will ensure there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver an effective programme. They must clarify the roles of the new members of staff and how they equate to full time members of staff, as well as highlighting how they are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver the programmes effectively. This relates to the theoretical delivery of the programme and management of the programme. The education provider must show how there will be appropriate staffing in place to highlight how they are committing appropriate resources to deliver the programme, and ensure the delivery of the programme is sustainable for the future.

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

Condition: The education provider must show that subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Reason: Following the approval visit the education provider has indicated change to the teaching staff by email. The original physiotherapy member of the teaching staff will no longer be a part of the teaching team. They have also indicated the education provider has recruited four new physiotherapists to take on the teaching responsibilities. Prior to the visit the education provider indicated they intend to have two full time staff or part equivalent to manage both the apprenticeship and direct entry programme. However, the visitors were only able to see the curriculum vitae (CV) of one physiotherapy member of staff (the member we have now been told is leaving). The visitors were unable to see the qualifications or experience of these members of staff or how the education provider has ensured the new members of staff had relevant specialist knowledge or expertise. As the visitors were not given details around the new members of the teaching staff they could not judge that subject areas would be delivered by educators with relevant knowledge and expertise. As the education provider has not stated which educators are delivering the programme, the visitors are not able to judge this standard is met. The education provider has changed their approach they will need

to clarify how they will ensure the subject areas are being delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must show how staff are given sufficient time to allow them to undertake continuing professional and academic development activities, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit the education provider submitted an overview of the institutional policies in regards to staff development. At the visit the visitors acknowledged that the education provider had policies and procedures in place for staff to continue their professional and academic development. However, they could not see how time was resourced for staff to carry out the relevant development activities. The senior team confirmed that staff would be granted the time but did not detail the mechanism for this alongside the effective running of both programmes. The visitors also noted that the programme structures will mean that learners are either involved in practice-based learning or theoretical teaching during all months of the year. The education provider must show how they will ensure the appropriate time is granted for staff to complete their professional and academic development, appropriate to their role in the programme, alongside the effective delivery of the programme.

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.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that documentation for learners is updated to include accurate information around HCPC requirements and include relevant reading lists.

Reason: In the documentary submission the visitors were able to view the student handbook and a document that gave an overview of the programmes. In the student handbook it was stated that it is necessary to complete 1000 hours in practice to be able to register with the HCPC. Furthermore in the overview document it is stated that completion of BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy will enable you to register with the HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) under the title 'Physiotherapist'. These statements are inaccurate to HCPC procedure, as such the visitors considered the resources to not be appropriate to the delivery of the programme as it displayed inaccurate information. The education provider must ensure that all documents used in the programme ensure that learners' are appropriately informed about HCPC policies and requirements. It is not limited to the two examples provided above, and as such the education provider must ensure all programme documentation reflects the appropriate information.

Additionally, the visitors noted in the documentary submission that reading lists had not been completed for the module content. During the facilities and resources meeting it was confirmed to the visitors that the reading lists had not been completed. The visitors considered the reading lists to be important in supporting required learning and teaching activities of the programmes so cannot confirm the standard is met in this area. The education provider must ensure the relevant reading lists are in place and available for

learners to support their required learning. They must also show that learners will have adequate access to the items that are detailed in the reading lists.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason: In their documentary submission the education provider submitted an overview of the entry criteria and the process for admission onto the programmes. The visitors noted in the entry criteria the required The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level of 6.5. The visitors noted that this is below the required level of 7.0, with no element below 6.5, for entry onto the HCPC Register, as required by SOP 8.2. The visitors also noted that learners must meet SOP 8.2 on completion of the programme. If the education provider is enrolling learners with English proficiency that is lower than that set out in the SOPs they must show how they will ensure that these learners will have met the required level by the end of the programme. In the programme team meeting, the education provider indicated that academic development through the programmes would ensure that learners would reach the appropriate level of English. However, the visitors considered this approach to be informal and without measuring learner's progress they could not be certain that learners would leave the programme meeting the required standard. The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will be able to achieve the HCPC required level of English proficiency by the time they complete the programme.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must show that the teaching and learning methods used are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted the institution approach to teaching and provided the programme specification. The programme specification mapped the learning outcomes to teaching methods that would be used to deliver them. From this information, the visitors were able to see:

- the module descriptors that outlined the theoretical content, contact hours and learning outcomes; and
- the various learning and teaching methods used in delivering the programme.

However, although the visitors could see the content and methods for each module, they could not see how the methods delivered the content and consequently how this would support learners to achieve the learning outcomes. At the visit the education provider indicated they had not finalised how the content of both programmes would be

delivered so the visitors could not confirm that this standard was met. The education provider must show how the teaching methods will be used to deliver the programmes and show how they are appropriate for the delivery of the learning outcomes.

4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.

Condition: The education provider must show that the modular content and learning objectives that are in place to support and develop evidence-based practice are effectively delivered to achieve this aim.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission, the education provider highlighted the module descriptor for physiotherapy placement 3, the research for physiotherapists module, and the relevant standards of proficiency (SOPs) that are mapped to learning outcomes. The visitors were able to see from these documents that the relevant learning outcomes were placed and mapped to the relevant SOPs. However, it was not made clear in the documentation how the modular content that underpins these learning outcomes would be delivered. As the visitors were unable to see how the programmes are being delivered, they are unable to confirm that it would support learners to meet the relevant learning objectives related to evidence-based practice. The education provider must show how they will ensure that the modular content and learning outcomes are delivered to support and develop evidence-based practice.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must show how learners will have the opportunity to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider indicated that interprofessional education (IPE) would take place in the practice-education setting, provided an IPE guidance document and indicated they would be inviting guest lecturers to deliver teaching. The education provider did not specify how they would ensure that learners would undertake IPE in the practice setting. The visitors could not see who the guest lecturers would be or what part of the programmes they would be delivering. The IPE guidance document highlighted the aim to implement a culture of IPE within the institution and suggested possible ways to collaborate across professions but did not highlight where in the physiotherapy programmes that IPE would occur and the activities that would be undertaken. At the visit, the programme team indicated that intended to run some practical sessions with the nursing programme for learners. However, these sessions had not yet been finalised and confirmed in the modular content. The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will have the opportunity to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions. They will also need to explain how they have made decisions about how they define relevant professions for physiotherapy learners.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must ensure there is an effective process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider provided a consent form for learners who will be participating in teaching activities. They also highlighted the teaching of conduct and ethics for learners and provided a service user collaborative terms of reference document. The visitors considered the arrangements for obtaining learner consent is appropriate. However, the terms of reference for service users did not confirm how the education provider would obtain consent from service users involved in the teaching aspects of the programme. In the programme team meeting it was confirmed to the visitors that there was not an equivalent process to that for obtaining consent from learners. Therefore the education provider must show there is an effective process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will communicate to learners that attendance at the 'graduate advantage' teaching is mandatory.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were made aware of timetabled teaching called graduate advantage. This is time to develop learners' skills, particularly around employment and supporting learning and practice, and is used across all programmes at the education provider. The visitors were also able to see that some of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) were being delivered in the sessions from the SOPs mapping document. In the meeting with learners the visitors were told that these teaching sessions are not mandatory to attend. The visitors followed this up with the programme team and were told that the graduate advantage sessions for both programmes would include important teaching content and would be mandatory to attend. The documentation does not state that these sessions are mandatory and the programme specification indicated these sessions are not credit bearing. The visitors could not confirm that the education provider would communicate this to learners, and that all stakeholders would understand that attendance at these sessions is mandatory. The education provider must ensure that learners are made aware of all parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory to ensure they meet the SOPs.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning of appropriate structure, duration and range to support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: In the documentary submission the visitors were able to see that the education provider had discussed the range of practice-based learning with practice education providers. The visitors were able to see that the education provider would ensure that providers could provide a suitable range of practice based learning. However, they were not shown at what times of the year these differing areas of practice-based learning would be available, or how they would be allocated so all learners have access to the appropriate range of placement experience for an appropriate duration. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they had not finished the timetabling of practice-based learning so that all learners would have exposure to the appropriate range of practice-based learning. The education provider must show how they will ensure that all learners have access to an appropriate range

and duration of practice-based learning that support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning before any learners are due to attend.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider submitted learner and practice educator evaluation forms, patient feedback forms and stated that all practice-based learning sites would be subject to an audit. The education provider also indicated that all practice-based learning environments will be audited using their placement provider audit tool, unless an audit has been carried out by a neighbouring institution. The visitors noted two potential issues with the education provider's approach to meeting this standard:

- The visitors understood that common documentation would be efficient and useful for practice education providers. However, they could not see how the education provider would ensure that audits already carried out by neighbouring institutions would be used by the education provider to be satisfied with placements for this programme specifically. The education provider must show how they ensure the quality of practice-based learning for their programme when a different organisation has completed the audit.
- The education provider stated that if a site was found to be unsuitable, their service level agreement (SLA) will be terminated with the education provider. This information was also provided by the programme team when the visitors queried how the education provider has approved the quality of practice-based learning. The visitors noted that providers could have a SLA signed and agreed between the education provider and practice education provider before the education provider has determined that the quality of the practice-based learning is suitable.

This standard is intended to ensure that learners are taking part in practice-based learning that is of an appropriate quality to meet their learning needs. The education provider has indicated that they have not confirmed the quality of practice-based learning for all sites and have indicated that they will do this at a later date, potentially after agreements have been made. The visitors considered that this could lead to learners taking part in practice-based learning that has not been approved, or the education providers having to cancel practice-based learning if it is to be found inappropriate. Therefore, the education provider must clarify how it will ensure that all learners will take part in practice-based learning that is of appropriate quality. They must ensure that all practice-based learning is audited and quality-assured before learners are due to take part.

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

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff are involved in practice-based learning.

Reason: The education provider has indicated in the documentary submission that they will ensure there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning, through the service level agreement (SLA) and placement audit form that is completed by practice-education providers. The education provider submitted a draft SLA in which it was stated that the practice-education provider must ensure they make appropriate and sufficient staff available. From this, the education provider has shown that they will ask providers to ensure an appropriate number of staff to be involved in practice-based learning, and stated in the programme team meeting that they would not take on providers that cannot meet this. However, the documentation or discussions did not give specifics for how the education provider defined what they mean by 'appropriate' and 'sufficient'. Therefore, the education provider must show how they will ensure there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

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.

Condition: The education provider must show that all practice educators will have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The education provider has indicated in the documentary submission that they will ensure there will be practice educators with relevant knowledge, skills and experience in practice-based learning, through the service level agreement (SLA) and placement audit form that is completed by practice-education providers. The education provider submitted a draft SLA in which it was stated that the practice-education provider must ensure they make appropriate and sufficient staff available. From this, the education provider has shown that they will ask providers to ensure an appropriate number of staff to be involved in practice-based learning, and stated in the programme team meeting that they would not take on providers that cannot meet this. However, the documentation or discussions did not give specifics for how the education provider defined what they mean by 'appropriate' and 'sufficient'. Therefore, the education provider must show how they will ensure that practice educators will have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register

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.

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

Recommendation: The education provider should review its approach to assessment of applicant's prior learning and experience for the degree apprenticeship programme to enhance its widening participation approach.

Reason: In the documentary submission the education provider indicated that due to the structure of practice-based learning in the programme they would not accept assessment of applicant's prior learning and expertise. This approach meets the standard at threshold and is very clear. However, as the degree apprenticeship intends to widen participation for more non-traditional learners the visitors recommend that the education provider review their position in this area.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should formalise their approach for ensuring the curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

Reason: The visitors were unclear of the approach in this area from the documentary submission. However, at the visit they were assured that this standard was met by the answers given in the practice educators and programme team meeting. In these meetings it was confirmed to the visitors that clinicians would be involved in delivering some teaching sessions to ensure current practice is appropriately involved in the programme. The visitors recommend making this approach and input from current practitioners more formal and regular occurring to ensure it is carried out through the lifetime of the programme.

Section 5: Outcome from second review

Second response to conditions required

The education provider responded to the conditions set out in section 4. Following their consideration of this response, the visitors were satisfied that the conditions for several of the standards were met. However, they were not satisfied that the following conditions were met, for the reasons detailed below. Therefore, in order for the visitors to be satisfied that the following conditions are met, they require further evidence.

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 demonstrate how they will ensure that applicants have all the information they require about the costs and application process for each programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to the condition set the education provider submitted a narrative of the admissions process. The narrative does not discern between the direct entry programme and the degree apprenticeship (DAP) programme. In the narrative they have stated that applicants must and can only apply through UCAS and this advertised on the website. The narrative then discussed that once approved learners would be selected for an interview and would receive further information about the interview stages.

Upon review of the website the visitors noted that the direct entry programme notes UCAS as the process for application but this is not reflected in the information for the degree apprenticeship. The visitors could see that the information on the website for the direct entry programme made reference to the interview and what this would entail but this information was not provided for the DAP programme. They also stated that

information around additional costs would be provided at the interview stage but did not detail what this information would be. The visitors noted on the website for the direct entry programme that the information for open days stated that learners could be made an offer on the day. This information appears to be contradictory to the narrative submitted.

The education provider's narrative for the admissions process is not reflected in the information provided for the DAP programme. Furthermore, as the DAP programme is inherently collaborative with employers it was not clear how they are involved in the admissions process. As such the visitors did not consider the standard to be met. As the information for each programme was different the education provider must provide differing information for the standard to be met, as follows:

- For the degree apprenticeship programme – The education provider must clarify the admissions process for this programme specifically and show how they will inform learners around this. This includes information around the application, selection and interview process. They must also clarify how the education provider will collaborate with employers throughout these processes.
- For the direct entry programme – The education provider must clarify that offers will be made on the learner open day and what costs learners will be made aware of at the interview stage.

Suggested documentation: Documentation that clarifies the admissions process for the DAP programme and how this is relayed to learners. Clarification about offers being made on open days and what additional costs learners will be made of at the interview for the direct entry programme.

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 show how they will ensure that applicants are aware of how they will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition the education provider submitted a narrative that they would be changing the English language requirements to meet those set out in the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for entry onto the register. Upon review of the website information available for applicants this information was updated for the direct entry programme but not the degree apprenticeship (DAP). The education provider must clarify if this change is related to both programmes and ensure that the information provided for potential applicants is reflective of this. Alternatively, if the requirements are lower for the DAP programme they must show how applicants are aware of the requirements for completion of the programme, to meet the English requirements set out in the SOPs.

Suggested documentation: Documentation to show how applicants, with English proficiency lower than required for registration with the HCPC, will be informed of the requirements for completion of the DAP programme. They must also show how applicants are informed of how the education provider will support them to meet this SOP by the end of the programme.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

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

Condition: The education provider must show there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to the condition the education provider submitted 4 curriculum vitae (CVs) for the newly recruited physiotherapy teaching members of staff. The visitors were able to see they are appropriately qualified and experienced but could not see when they would start in their roles with the education provider. To ensure the programme is appropriately staffed in time for the start date of the programme the education provider must clarify when these members of staff will be in post. Furthermore, the provider indicated that the programme will be supported by members of the nursing and allied health professionals team. These extra members of staff included a senior curriculum lead and year 1 manager. The visitors were not provided with CVs and could not determine that these members of staff would be appropriate to these roles within the programme. The education provider must clarify how these members of staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to ensure the effective delivery of the programme.

Suggested documentation:

- Confirmed start dates of the physiotherapy teaching staff
- Documentation that demonstrates that supporting staff involved in teaching in the programme are appropriately qualified and experienced.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition the education provider submitted a narrative that they would be changing the English language requirements to meet those set out in the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for entry onto the register. Upon review of the website information available for applicants this information was updated for the direct entry programme but not the degree apprenticeship (DAP). The education provider must clarify if this change is related to both programmes and ensure that the information provided for potential applicants is reflective of this. Alternatively, if the requirements are lower for the DAP programme they must show how applicants are aware of the requirements for completion of the programme, to meet the English requirements set out in the SOPs.

Suggested documentation: Documentation to show how applicants, with English proficiency lower than required for registration with the HCPC, will be informed of the requirements for completion of the DAP programme. They must also show how applicants are informed of how the education provider will support them to meet this SOP by the end of the programme.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must show that the teaching and learning methods used are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition the education provider submitted a narrative that outlined the programme would employ a range of learning and teaching methods. They also submitted a plan for the first year of the programme that showed the teaching methods for the modules, alongside a delivery plan for the four years of the degree apprenticeship (DAP) programme. The visitors could see the teaching methods that would be employed to deliver the teaching in the first year of the programme. The narrative did not relate specifically to either programme but generally to both. The education provider stated in an email alongside the condition response that the apprenticeship (DAP) would have a similar delivery to that of the direct entry programme. The education provider must clarify if there are differences in the delivery of the programme for the DAP programme. Furthermore, they must show how this first year plan will relate to both programme delivery plans. If there are differences in the delivery they must clarify how the differences in delivery ensure the programmes use teaching methods appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Suggested documentation: Clarification around the delivery of the degree apprenticeship programme and how it differs from the delivery of the direct entry programme.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must show how learners will have the opportunity to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to this condition the education provider submitted a narrative and linked it to module specifications. They stated the professions that they considered related to physiotherapy practice. They then indicated some modules in which examples of interprofessional working with these professions could be seen. In the modules Health across the lifespan and Musculoskeletal studies the visitors could see that guest lecturers and clinicians would be involved in the teaching. They could also see that practice educators would be invited to share the importance of CPD in practice with learners. The visitors were satisfied that learners would have the opportunity to learn with and from professionals in other relevant professions. However, this standard requires that learners are able to learn with and from both professionals and other learners from other relevant professions. From the evidence provided, the visitors could not see that learners will have the opportunity to learn with and from other learners. The education provider must show how learners will have the opportunity to learn with and from learners in other relevant professions.

Suggested documentation: Evidence to show learners will have the opportunity to learn with and from learners in other relevant professions.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning of appropriate structure, duration and range to support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason condition not met at this time: In response to the condition the education provider stated that practice based learning would be managed by the ARC management system to ensure that learners have access to the appropriate range of practice based learning. The education provider also highlighted the delivery plan that showed how the modules and practice-based learning would be timetabled through the programmes. However, the education provider only submitted the delivery plan for the degree apprenticeship (DAP) programme. The education provider did not provide the delivery plan for the direct entry programme. The delivery plan for the DAP programme showed when practice-based learning teaching blocks would take place. The education provider has not detailed how practice based learning is timetabled within the direct entry programme. The education provider must show the structure of practice based learning has been finalised for the direct entry programme, to ensure learners have access to an appropriate range of practice-based learning.

Suggested documentation: How the direct entry had been timetabled to ensure that learners will have access to an appropriate range of practice-based learning. For instance, the education provider may wish to submit delivery plans for both programmes to show how they are structured and align with each other.

Section 6: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, and the request for further evidence set out in section 5, 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 20 August 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).