
Performance review process report

University of Huddersfield, 2018 - 2021

Executive summary

This report covers our performance review of the programmes offered by the University of Huddersfield. During this review there were two referrals made to their next performance review. These are to focus their planned approaches to interprofessional education initiatives and to monitor the sustainability of the growth of their apprenticeship provision. The visitors also noted some areas of good practice demonstrated by the provider regarding their approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion and their solutions to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The visitors have recommended a review period of three years. This is due to the education provider's performance indicating a low risk to the quality of their programmes and the education provider has appropriate and well-planned strategies moving forward. The visitors agreed three years gives sufficient time for them to implement strategies and actions relating to the referrals and have sufficient data to reflect on the outcomes. This report will be considered by our Education and Training Panel.

Previous consideration	<p>This is the first time this education provider is going through the current performance review process; however, they have previously been through the legacy processes. Their last annual monitoring 2018-2019.</p> <p>There was a revisit May 2020 for the paramedic degree apprenticeship, during which conditions were set by the visitors and met by the education provider for approval.</p> <p>The education provider had an approval visit in October 2018 for HCPC Annotation of existing Podiatrists practising Podiatric Surgery. This programme is currently going through the programme closure process as all learners are expected to have completed the one-year programme.</p> <p>They had approval events for the paramedic master's level programme in March 2019 and speech and language therapist programme in January 2021</p>
Decision	<p>The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be

Next steps

Outline next steps / future case work with the provider:

- Subject to the Panel's decision, the education provider's next performance review will be in the 2024-25 academic year.
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Included within this report.

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

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.

This is a report on the performance review process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the institution and practice areas(s) detailed in this report continue to meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the institution and programme(s) ongoing approval.

Our standards

We approve education providers and programmes that meet our education standards. Individuals who complete approved programmes will meet proficiency standards, which 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.

Our regulatory approach

We are flexible, intelligent and data-led in our quality assurance of programme clusters and programmes. Through our processes, we:

- enable bespoke, proportionate and effective regulatory engagement with education providers.
- use data and intelligence to enable effective risk-based decision making; and
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards.

Providers and programmes are [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to ongoing monitoring. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

The performance review process

Once a programme institution is approved, we will take assurance it continues to meet standards through:

- regular assessment of key data points, supplied by the education provider and external organisations; and
- assessment of a self-reflective portfolio and evidence, supplied on a cyclical basis.

Through monitoring, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess how an education provider is performing based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. We take this assurance at the provider level wherever possible and will delve into programme / profession level detail where we need to.

This report focuses on the assessment of the self-reflective portfolio and evidence.

Thematic areas reviewed.

We normally focus on the following areas:

- Institution self-reflection, including resourcing, partnerships, quality, the input of others, and equality and diversity
- Thematic reflection, focusing on timely developments within the education sector
- Provider reflection on the assessment of other sector bodies, including professional bodies and systems regulators
- Provider reflection on developments linked to specific professions
- Stakeholder feedback and actions

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 design quality assurance assessments and assess evidence and information relevant to the assessment. Visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make the 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 takes decisions through different levels depending on the routines and impact of the decision, and where appropriate meets in public. Their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

The assessment panel for this review

We appointed the following panel members to support a review of this education provider:

Hazel Anderson	Lead visitor, Prosthetist / Orthotist
Matthew Catterall	Lead visitor, Paramedic
Ann Johnson	Service User Expert Advisor
Temilolu Odunaike	Education Quality Officer
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 16 HCPC-approved programmes across 6 professions and including 2 Prescribing programmes. It is a Higher Education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1992.

They have made teaching quality a particular focus of their activities, winning the inaugural Higher Education Academy Global Teaching Excellence Award, and achieving a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Gold Award, both in 2017. In 2020 it was ranked joint first in England for the proportion of its staff with a teaching qualification.

There are a number of HCPC approved education providers in the region, and HCPC have commonly seen a shortage in placements across multiple professions in recent submissions. Although there is not specific data to suggest this is an issue for this provider, the provider has identified it as a challenge.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

The provider is approved to deliver training in the following professional areas. A detailed list of approved programme awards can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Chiropodist/ Podiatrist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1993
	Occupational Therapy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2005
	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2013
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2020
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1997
	Speech and Language Therapy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2014
	Podiatric surgery			2020

Institution performance data

Data is embedded into how we understand performance and risk. We capture data points in relation to provider performance, from a range of sources. We compare provider data points to benchmarks and use this information to inform our risk-based decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of institutions and programmes.

Data Point	Bench mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	681	537	2022	The education provider outlines how they are increasing their provision in line with appropriate resources and sector needs. They have demonstrated programme stability through their submission and therefore the visitors were satisfied with the number of learners.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	6%	2019-2020	This data point is collated from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, via Jisc data consultancy. The education provider is performing above the benchmark for this data point. They have addressed this in their submission, outlining how many of their learners are from more deprived areas. They have a plan to address this to improve learner continuation. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers reflections on this result.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	96%	2019-2020	This data point is collated from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, via Jisc data consultancy. The education provider is performing above the benchmark, suggesting good performance in relation to learners continuing into employment/ further study.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Gold	June 2017	This data is collated from the Office for Students (OfS). Gold reflects ‘the student experience and outcomes are typically outstanding’. The visitors were satisfied with this result.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	73.6%	75.0%	2021	This data is collated from the Office for Students (OfS). The education provider is performing above the benchmark here, demonstrating good learner satisfaction. All programmes are achieving good learner satisfaction

				apart from one, which the education provider is addressing. The visitors were satisfied with this outcome and their reflections.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	TBC	2018-21	The visitors have recommended a monitoring period of three years, appropriate to low risk and sufficient time for the education provider to implement strategies and plans in response to the visitors concerns. This will be confirmed by the Education and Training Panel (ETP).

Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

The education provider was asked to provide a self-reflective portfolio submission covering the broad topics referenced in the [thematic areas reviewed](#) section of this report.

The education provider's self-reflection was focused on challenges, developments, and successes related to each thematic area. They also supplied data, supporting evidence and information.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their portfolio. Based on our understanding, we defined and undertook the following quality assurance activities linked to the quality themes referenced below. This allowed us to consider whether the education provider was performing well against our standards.

We sought out clarification on each quality theme via email communication to allow the education provider to elaborate on previous information they had sent or send further evidence documents to answer the queries.

We have reported on how the education provider is performing on all areas, including the areas below, through the [Summary of findings section](#).

Quality theme 1 – Ensuring the sustainability of practice placements

Area for further exploration: The education provider reflected on multiple partnerships through their submission. They have identified there are placement capacity issues resulting from increased demand for allied healthcare professionals (AHPs) and increasing cohort numbers. The education provider, provided more reflection regarding some of their programmes than others. Therefore, it was unclear if there have been any changes or challenges to placement capacity on their paramedic or ODP programmes. The visitors requested further reflections from the

education provider to include all HCPC-approved programmes to consider how placement capacity is appropriate, particularly post-pandemic. It is important the education provider is considering placement capacity for all programmes and identifying areas that need addressing to ensure suitable support for learners is in place.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider acknowledged growth of learner numbers is dependent on placement capacity. Programme teams and a newly appointed Head of Practice Education are strengthening their partnerships with placement providers. They are working collaboratively to use the AHP placement sustainability framework to support a sustainable workforce pipeline. The education provider states this also provides infrastructure to support the sourcing, allocation and auditing of placements.

The education provider has acknowledged placement capacity for paramedics and ODPs is a national issue. They are working with Health Education England (HEE) to explore alternative placement options such as simulation. There is an action plan in place which includes regular meetings with stakeholders, additional training sessions, increasing placement partners outside of current geographical location and planning with HEE. The education provider stated paramedic placements are being managed within the allocated hours. Moreover, they outlined how placement hours which were missed due to the pandemic have been recovered. They will have a simulance (an ambulance simulation) on campus from January onwards, which will ensure learners can complete placement competencies and provide support for future placement capacity issues. Also from January, learners will form part of a pilot placement 'primary care bundles' which is a HEE initiative. This will be a multi-professional placement, where learners work with student nurses, midwives, occupational therapists etc. The visitors were satisfied the education provider adequately reassured them regarding their concerns. They agreed there is appropriate innovation in place to ensure placement sustainability for paramedic learners.

Quality theme 2 – Exploring developments for interprofessional education across programmes

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined a range of interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities on some of their programmes. It was unclear what opportunities are available for learners on their paramedic programmes. The education provider also mentioned a need for a revalidation process of their interprofessional module on programmes. It was unclear the rationale for this and what changes are planned. The visitors explored what opportunities and developments there have been related to IPE for paramedic learners. They also requested further reflections on the changes, rationale and plans for revalidation of the interprofessional module. It is important the education provider can reflect upon opportunities across all provisions they offer. It is important they have structured and justified plans for the revalidation of modules to ensure quality and support for learners.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider stated how IPE opportunities for learners on the paramedic programmes are being explored and developed on an

ongoing basis. They outlined an annual event with the Yorkshire Ambulance Service and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue received good learner feedback. They plan to develop this to have days involving teaching from each blue light service, and integration of policing, fire and ambulance colleagues. They outlined how learners have opportunities to engage with external services and they are integrating IPE teaching sessions into modules. This will include a mixture of lectures, seminars and practical sessions.

The education provider outlined how they have identified the current IPE module has opportunities for further development. There is a working group representing the professions involved who are exploring how to enhance the design of the modules to strengthen IPE to support future collaborative team-working. They plan to develop the use of case-based simulations and increased public participation group involvement. There is also a longer-term plan to introduce an IPE project to consider developing shared resources for teaching research methods across the programmes. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has addressed their concerns, showing IPE across the paramedic programmes and plans to develop the IPE module. They agreed there is ongoing development shown for all programmes but noted this is an area that should be reviewed for progress in the next performance review.

Quality theme 3 – Clarity on how the provider is addressing ‘sector-wide’ issues which are impacting on programmes

Area for further exploration: The education provider stated how “awareness of sector-wide issues is essential but can be challenging to achieve across all key areas”. It is unclear what sector-wide issues they are referring to and how these impact on programme delivery. The visitors requested further clarity and reflections on these issues and how the education provider is addressing these. It is important the education provider can respond appropriately to challenges and changes in the sector to continue to support learners and provide quality programmes.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined some of the sector-wide issues and their response. They stated how they work strategically with their partners and have representation on the Council of Governors in several key partner organisations. This engagement enables partnership working and allows them to identify key issues and developments. They identified the cost-of-living crisis and its impact on learners’ mobility and access to academic studies and placements. They responded by reviewing timetables to minimise unnecessary travel whilst maximising student engagement. They also worked with the Student’s Union to provide information and support to learners to manage the issues they may be encountering.

The education provider recognised the impact of the pandemic and move to use of technology. Whilst highlighting this was positive for increasing flexibility for learners, they strived to ensure staff were suitably supported. They developed a digital literacy learning package which ensured staff were appropriately skilled to deliver distance learning provision. The education provider was in the early stages of exploring ways to address the challenges with staff retention across all health disciplines. The visitors were satisfied with the clarification provided and ensured the education provider is working to minimise impact on programme delivery wherever possible.

Quality theme 4 – Ensuring growth of apprenticeship provision is sustainable

Area for further exploration: The education provider stated their apprenticeship provision is growing at a rate of 20% per year, in terms of learner cohorts. It was unclear how the education provider plans to ensure the sustainability of this, or if there is a maximum cohort size they are aiming for. The visitors explored the education providers plan for ensuring sustainability of the growing provision and how long they intend this to be sustainable for. It is important the education provider is considering the impact and resources needed for a fast-growing provision to ensure they can continue to deliver a quality programme to all learners.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined how they have undertaken considerable revision of processes and policies. This has ensured staff can provide an effective admissions and enrolment experience for all learners and their employers. They stated their growth plans are sustainable and supported by their institutional apprenticeship strategy. They have improved processes on the apprenticeship programmes to ensure suitable engagement of learners and employers leading to timely completion of the programme. The education provider has also invested in appointing more staff, including business development and employer engagement roles, who will contribute to their growth strategy. They are in the process of investing in a management system for learners which will automate many of their processes. This will contribute towards growth. The visitors were satisfied the apprenticeship model appears to be an important focus for the education provider. This is shown through policies, process and investment noted, included in future plans. The visitors noted there was no clear outline of how long the 20% growth is expected to continue for, therefore suggested this be reviewed again in the next performance review.

Quality theme 5 – Addressing the lower learner satisfaction on physiotherapy programmes

Area for further exploration: The education provider supplied information indicating National Student Survey (NSS) learner satisfaction outcomes are overall good, but the visitors noted a distinct disparity regarding the physiotherapy programmes. There was limited reflection on the reasons for lower learner satisfaction on the physiotherapy programmes compared to others, and the education provider's intentions to address this. The visitors explored what justifications the education provider has for the disparity between programmes, and if there is a plan to address this. It is important for the education provider to ensure they are responding to learner feedback and addressing areas of concern or low learner satisfaction to improve the learner experience.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined how they evaluated the qualitative feedback from NSS and developed an action plan to address this. This focused on communication with learners about the course, contact with tutors and having an ability for learners to come forward and ask questions. They also focused on the feedback around consistency in teaching provision, assessment feedback and ensuring feedback was constructive. They have reviewed and adjusted the assessment timelines to prevent delays and bottlenecks for learners work and

deadlines. The education provider highlighted how the 2021-22 NSS scores have significantly improved from the previous year at 87% and they are continuing to work on areas highlighted by feedback. The visitors agreed the education provider gave a good explanation into the issues revealed and how they are addressing them. They are satisfied they are already addressing them, and this has proved effective as evidenced by the improvement in learner satisfaction.

Quality theme 6 – Addressing learner retention concerns

Area for further exploration: The education provider acknowledged their non-continuation rates are slightly higher than the benchmark, highlighting some challenges for the provision in some areas. It was unclear how they intend to identify and address the areas causing this difference, particularly for the programmes with smaller learner cohorts. The visitors agreed the education provider has a good understanding of their learner demographic and have support systems in place. The visitors explored if the education provider had further reflections on the implications of higher-than-expected non-continuation rates of learners, and how they intend to address this. It is important the education provider is continually striving to improve performance and ensure continuation of learners on their programmes.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider responded with information demonstrating they are aware of the potential issues causing lower learner retention. They acknowledged their operating department practitioner (ODP) learners are required to gain experience in operating theatres. However, this can be difficult due to the high-pressured nature of these placements, in unfavourable conditions (stood all day, large-scale procedures, limited exposure) which can lead to learner drop-out. This is an ongoing action for the education provider. They are ensuring the nature of these placements is transparent and signposted to learners during open days, applicant visit days and interviews.

Their other smaller programme, speech and language therapy, had its first intake in 2021, and they are monitoring learner retention for any patterns relating to discontinuation. The education provider acknowledged due to smaller cohort numbers, the loss of learners from the programmes has a larger statistical effect. Both learners who left the programme did so because of differing expectations of the programme demands. The education provider identified the need to develop marketing materials which provide potential learners with clear expectations of the programme. The visitors agreed the response from the education provider to their concern indicates there is an increased need for clarity in the admission process for the smaller programmes. They note this is an ongoing development being actioned appropriately by the education provider, and therefore suggest this is reviewed in their next performance review.

Quality theme 7 – Exploring the involvement of service users and carers in the admissions process

Area for further exploration: The education provider has involvement from over 70 service users and carers (SU&Cs) across their programmes, referred to as the Public Partnership Group (PPG). Whilst they showed good involvement of SU&C across the programmes, it was unclear how SU&Cs are involved in the admission

process. The visitors explored how SU&Cs are involved in programme admissions by requesting further narrative. It is important for the education provider to reflect on all aspects of SU&C involvement.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined how involvement of the PPG group is embedded into each programme. This includes input with admissions, teaching, assessment as well as representation in programme committees and programme development opportunities. They state involvement is determined by the programme teams as appropriate to support the teaching, learning and assessment strategies for learners. The education provider supplied newsletter and PPG report examples which further demonstrate SU&C involvement. The visitors were satisfied there is SU&C involvement across the programmes in an appropriate capacity.

Section 4: Summary of findings

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings for each portfolio area, focusing on the approach or approaches taken, developments, what this means for performance, and why. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability:**
 - The education provider's School of Human and Health Sciences consists of four departments and the AHP provision sits within one department 'The department of AHP's, sports and exercise'. They state there are 253 Academic and Research staff and 139 Professional Services staff supporting this school.
 - The education provider has demonstrated financial security through the review period, shown by their investments in new HCPC provision and investing in new posts to support this. They have developed new programmes in response to workforce needs and workforce diversity. These were informed by regular strategic partnership meetings with Health Education England (HEE), ongoing engagement with the School's Business Development Manager, and bimonthly executive meetings with main partner organisations locally.
 - They have responded to challenges relating to offering timely responses to workforce needs by being as responsive as possible within internal quality assurance and external regulatory frameworks. They state how they operate on a devolved revenue financial model, which contributes to institutional financial targets and maintains an appropriate staffing base to support learner numbers.
 - They have identified the limiting **factor** to learner number growth is placement capacity. They state how investment in the post of Head of Practice Education in early 2022 is a strategic investment to support growth and diversity of placements across the programmes. The

visitors were satisfied there is a robust validation process for programmes which analyses resources. They agreed their strategic approach is ambitious, responsive, and stable and have balanced workforce demands with staffing challenging with models that appear successful and innovative.

- **Partnerships with other organisations:**

- The education provider reflected on how their key partnerships are with the NHS, Social Care and Private and Voluntary sector, professional bodies as well as Health Education England. They have identified the challenges with establishing regular strategic meetings with partners to understand local and wider workforce needs to inform development. To overcome this, they invested in new staff posts to manage horizon scanning, opportunities, and growth which enhances a proactive approach and opportunity to build relationships.
- Their reflections assured the visitors there is a robust model of strategic and operational management in their partnership model. The visitors were satisfied key stakeholders are integrated in the programmes in a variety of forms and here are a wide variety of partnerships evidenced throughout the submission.

- **Academic and placement quality:**

- The education provider uses institutional wide quality assurance processes to ensure academic quality. There are several mechanisms to monitor quality including module evaluations, learner feedback and committee meetings. There is a strategy for the academic year 22/23 to increase contact with programme leaders and presence in development meetings. This is to ensure timely approval by the School Accreditation and Validation Panel (SAVP).
- The education provider has recognised a need for more staff who support academic colleagues in quality activity and has therefore invested in the development of a quality team. They also employed a Head of Practice Education to manage the quality and expansion of placement capacity for their provision. There is a new framework (HEE's Quality Strategy (2021)) which sets out the expectations for quality within all practice placements promoting collaboration with key stakeholders. They state all practice-learning providers have signed up to the legally binding practice partnership agreement.
- The education provider monitors placement quality at programme level, and issues are addressed at institutional level. They have recognised as the healthcare professional portfolio of programmes continues to develop in complexity and size the management and resourcing of practice education is increasingly challenging. They are overcoming this by appointing more Head of Practice Education roles to manage this provision, lead the direction of practice education, and ensure capacity, resilience, and innovation. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is continually ensuring their performance ensures quality in teaching and placements.

- **Interprofessional education:**

- The education provider outlines how interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities are tailored for each programme due to the varying needs and challenges of professions. In developing their IPE strategy, they have considered the recommendations in the recent report commissioned by HEE on the future of Allied Health Professional Education. They have highlighted several examples of IPE across their programmes, which the visitors explored further in [quality theme 2](#).
 - The education provider reflected upon the challenges to maintain IPE experiences during the pandemic, and how they adapted to accommodate this. They used smaller, specialist interest groups for online learning to make the opportunities more accessible for learners. They are also working with programme staff, placement providers and learner's timetables to respond to challenges with the IPE modules regarding learners from different professional groups having different placement timetables. They are redeveloping the IPE module to account for these challenges and support all learners.
 - The visitors were satisfied learners experience a range of IPE opportunities matched to their stage of development, and the education provider is actively addressing challenges moving forward.
- **Service users and carers:**
 - The education provider has invested in a specialist team to support the involvement of service users and carers (SU&C) across their programmes. This team supports daily operations, overall promotion, development, and maintenance of over 70 SU&Cs which they refer to as the Public Partnership Group (PPG). The PPG group are involved in the programmes in several ways, including curriculum planning, admissions, learner inductions and feedback.
 - The education provider has acknowledged the disruption to SU&C involvement during the pandemic, limiting meetings and contributions from SU&Cs. This was explored in [quality theme 8](#). Their previous SU&C involvement strategy expired during the pandemic; however, they have carried over their aims, workstreams and recommendations to a Public Involvement Development Action Plan. To ensure the timely implementation of this action plan, the education provider stated a new Strategy Steering Group will be formed in June 2022. This will further embed SU&C involvement, including by identifying mechanisms for ensuring meaningful monitoring and evaluation across programmes.
 - The visitors agreed all programmes have SU&C involvement throughout their design, teaching, and research, and are responding appropriately to challenges faced.
- **Equality and diversity:**
 - The education provider has an institutional-wide University Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Enhancement Committee (UEDIEC), established in 2019. It provides strategic governance and oversight of all aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) related activity. There is also an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Framework 2020-2025 which outlines the vision, objectives and strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion. They have provided examples of initiatives

introduced over the review period. A demonstration of some examples includes:

- staff EDI training and embedding EDI into curriculum through resources and materials.
 - in 2018 they launched 'Broaden My Bookshelf' to address the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic attainment gap.
 - in 2021 they renewed the University Athena Swan Bronze Award and are working towards their next application.
 - each School/Service has a Diversity Champion, and these have been in place since 2019.
 - an EDI manager who provides strategic oversight of all aspects of EDI related work
- The visitors agreed there are very good central policies and programme specific policies. They were satisfied there is a wide range of activities with external benchmarking and engagement of stakeholders.
- **Horizon scanning:**
 - The education provider reflected on how the Senior Leadership Team ensure colleagues actively are kept abreast of sector-wide developments. They have identified the challenge is to ensure information is disseminated and discussed as widely as possible amongst all academic staff. In response to this, they ensure dissemination of pertinent information and developments is targeted through divisional and heads of department meetings and working groups.
 - They work closely with HEE to ensure awareness and timely responses to workforce development needs. The education provider also identified several sector-wide issues which were explored in [quality theme 3](#). They reassured the visitors they are appropriately responding to issues such as the cost-of-living crisis, revalidation events and staff retention.
 - The visitors were satisfied the senior leadership team is effectively engaged with appropriate networks to ensure they can plan for the future. They were satisfied the education provider is working appropriately to minimise the impact of sector-wide issues on the programme delivery and quality.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: The visitors noted there are good policies and procedures in places to address EDI issues, both at institutional and programme level.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Impact of COVID-19:**

- The education provider has reflected on how their new practices as a result of the pandemic have been, new ways of staff working and how they support each other and learners. As their programmes progress through internal curriculum review, they are anticipating reflections from the pandemic to influence changes to the structure and design of programmes.
 - They state the pandemic resulted in a reduction of placement capacity across all professions because of redeployment of services and staff. Learners were supported to catchup on placement hours by extending their planned placements or completing additional placements. Technology enhanced placements were used to address social distancing requirements by reducing the amount of face-to-face placement learning required across the provision. They state how technology also enhanced the flexibility to offer learners support and guidance.
 - The visitors were satisfied the education provider adapted well and demonstrated good support for learners. They agreed innovative solutions were developed during the pandemic and a number of positive responses were identified within the submission and have been integrated into the review/ongoing delivery.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods:**
 - The education provider responded to learner feedback and moved to a more effective institutional online learning platform (Brightspace). In the above section, they have highlighted some of the challenges with moving online due the pandemic. They recognised the need to continue to deliver high quality teaching and learning activities for learners and invested in staff training. This training has remained in place post pandemic to allow staff to develop their skills in online delivery.
 - The visitors requested further information on the education provider's intentions for developing quality through sharing their uses and approaches to the use of technology across programmes. The provider outlined how there is a team of learning technology advisors who support the academic teams with the virtual learning environments. There is also training offered to academic staff which provide opportunities to learn about new applications. There are opportunities for academics to share experiences, successes and receive guidance as needed through training, forums, meetings and annual monitoring reports. They state there is an institutional level learning platform steering group. This group develops and reviews strategy. Within this steering group new technology and developments are considered and disseminated to programmes. They highlight that the sharing of good practice is encouraged through these mechanics and platforms.
 - They outlined how each programme has incorporated the uses of technology into teaching. There are several mechanisms for these approaches to be shared across programmes after the visitors explored this through [quality theme 5](#). The visitors were satisfied there is various, appropriate technologies used across the education

provider's programmes. They agreed initiatives have been effectively developed and innovative technological approaches have been delivered.

- **Apprenticeships:**

- The education provider has identified the introduction of apprenticeship provision has been challenging. This is due to many of their processes, policies and guidance documents needing to be recreated to meet funding and eligibility requirements. To address this, the education provider has established quality improvement plans which are constantly improving based on updated apprenticeship requirements from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted. They state feedback from learners and employers is compiled and used to improve their provision.
- The education provider state how their apprenticeships have been designed to meet the skills needs of our employer partners in the region. They plan to continue to grow at a rate of 20% per year, and the sustainability of this was explored in [quality theme 4](#). They have invested in business development and employer engagement roles who are managing this growth, as well as having processes in place with employers. The visitors were satisfied their apprenticeship provision is a growing area of delivery with successful monitoring and assessment undertaken relating to Ofsted. They agreed the apprenticeship provision appears to be an important focus for the provider, with policies, processes and investment noted.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: The education provider outlines how they are anticipating annual growth of their apprenticeship provision by 20%. It was unclear how long this growth is expected to continue, and therefore this is something which the visitors suggest is reviewed in the next performance review.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: The visitors noted the education provider has demonstrated innovative solutions to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education:**
 - The education provider is assessed against the UK Quality Code (UKQC) for Higher Education and has been recognised as gold standard. They map their practice against the UKQC, and the last exercise was undertaken in 2020 following the publication of the revised UKQC and associated advice and guidance. The visitors were satisfied with their performance here.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies:**

- The education provider scrutinises and monitors the outcomes from Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted reports. They investigate Practice Assessment Record and Evaluation scores below 70% to address concerns. They state how all placements graded as 'good' or 'outstanding' progress to an audit. Those graded as 'requires improvement' are considered if the areas that require improvement do not directly affect the safe environment for learners or patients or indicate poor patient care.
- Their new Head of Practice Education post ensures assessment of practice education for all allied health learners can be more effectively and strategically managed. During the review period, they have undergone an Ofsted inspection. The outcome demonstrated a well-managed and high-quality apprenticeship provision. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is ensuring placement providers are regularly assessed and they are including external body feedback in the development of their programmes.
- **National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes:**
 - The education provider reflected on excellent NSS scores across most of their HCPC-approved programmes, showing how they have successfully supported learners during the review period. They state how they have responded to feedback from previous years to develop the programme and improve the experience for learners, with measurable positive results. At programme level, analysis of the NSS forms part of the annual monitoring process. The data is triangulated with other learner engagement/ feedback and team reflections on teaching, learning and assessment along with module evaluations. An action plan was created following analysis for each programme.
 - They identify a disparity in NSS results for their physiotherapy programmes and this was explored in [quality theme 5](#). They identified the concerns from learners regarding communication, support and learner-staff contact points. There was also feedback regarding consistency in teaching provision and assessment feedback. The education provider has created an action plan to address the points referenced, and the visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately addressing the issues. Through the quality activity, it was also recognised the actions are already proving effective as evidenced by a significant improvement to a score of 87% in 2021-22.
- **Office for Students (OfS) monitoring:**
 - The education provider has a data analyst who works with their Director of Teaching and Learning and the central Planning team. This enables them to understand the OfS indicators as they appear within the programmes, allowing monitoring and corrective actions to be taken. External data is managed at institutional level, and then programme teams will be asked to address issues or action things where appropriate.
 - The visitors agreed the education provider appears to have a good understanding of their learner demographic and explored the implications on learner retention for their smaller programmes in [quality](#)

[activity 6](#). The education provider identified a requirement for clarity on programme requirements and expectation for learners. They are addressing this through a revision of the admissions process. This is an ongoing development. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is suitably responding to OfS monitoring and changes and responding to issues identified.

- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies:**
 - The education provider states all programmes have relationships with their relevant professional bodies. Their occupational therapist programme went through review in line with the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) learning and development standards in 2019. The prescribing modules went through a successful review with Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and HCPC in 2019. The module was updated to reflect the updated Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) standards and guidance.
 - The education provider's speech and language programmes went through approval with HCPC and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in January 2021. They have reflected this is the first year delivering this programme, and they will continue to be responsive to and engage with regulatory and professional bodies as appropriate. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidence of implementing feedback and guidance from appropriate professional bodies.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development:**
 - The education provider has identified the allied health professions are working in a dynamic, changing environment. During the pandemic, they had to make significant changes to the delivery of their programmes which required staff and learners to adapt to new teaching methods. Through review of the programmes, some essential aspects of face-to-face were maintained but most were moved online.
 - They state how programme developing is ongoing and based on the needs of the provision. They keep up to date with professional body guidance, which is evidenced throughout their submission. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is regularly and appropriately revalidating all programmes and have evidenced responses to changes in guidance and standards.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance:**
 - The education provider evidences awareness of changing guidance and standards from relevant professional bodies. This includes HCPC standards, RCSLT and Royal College of Occupational Therapy

(RCOT) guidance, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) amended core pillars of practice and NMC changes.

- They reflect on upcoming accreditation visits such as one upcoming from the Royal College of Podiatry (RCOP) and how they are engaging with the professional body in preparation for this. The visitors were satisfied all programmes are responding to professional body guidance and are aware of and preparing for upcoming changes and reviews.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning:**
 - The education provider has acknowledged ongoing issues with placement capacity as the demand and cohort sizes for programmes increases. They state how all programmes are reviewing their placement timings and structure to ensure maximum placement utilisation.
 - They have a practice placement unit within the School of Human and Health Sciences which is the department responsible for the organisation and allocation of placements alongside a programme placement tutor. This department monitors capacity of practice placements and quality assures them. They have demonstrated suitable placement capacity for each area of provision, and plan to continue to seek opportunities to strengthen the range and diversity of placements. The visitors explored this in more detail in [quality theme 1](#), where the provider outlined how they are ensuring placement capacity for all programmes moving forward. This included the use of simulations and alternative placements to ensure learners were supported to complete the appropriate placement hours.
 - The education provider outlines how the blended learning placement model will increase placement capacity by 50% in some areas. The development of a telehealth interprofessional placement has facilitated 85 learner placements and enhanced learners' transferable skills confidence in communication skills, technology based healthcare and organisational skills.
 - The visitors were satisfied the education provider evidenced placement capacity management for their programmes. They agreed the education provider is putting good mechanisms in place. This includes the use of technology and alternative learning experiences whilst they seek to build further placement capacity across programmes.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learners:**
 - The education provider states learners are encouraged to give feedback and there are several mechanisms for this to be collected. These include (but are not limited to) module evaluations, de-brief sessions, focus groups and tutor meetings. The learners elect

representatives from each cohort. The learner representatives attend learner panels, course committees and validation events as requested, collectively and professionally representing cohort views. Programme teams consider the feedback and where there are issues appropriate actions are taken.

- They education provider outlines how complaints are managed by the Student Support Team, and they work in line with the University regulations and Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) good practice framework. They have described the breakdown of complaints received and identified potential themes of concern including resourcing. In response, they have allocated additional resources to address this concern.
 - The visitors were satisfied there are varied and numerous opportunities for learners to give feedback and be involved in the programmes. They agreed there is a robust complaints procedure, which has identified themes to be explored at programme and institutional level.
- **Practice placement educators:**
 - The education provider outlined how they support practice placement educators (PPE) through several mechanisms. This includes an introductory PPE course, refresher course, assessment documentation training, bespoke team-based training and individual support where needed. They have identified how the recruitment of the post of Head of Practice Education has provided increased opportunity to develop relationships with PPEs and helped develop appropriate support for them. Feedback is gained from PPEs in line with their institutional processes. They collected this formally through the education provider's PARE audit system, informally through tutors or via ongoing meetings between PPEs and programme staff. This feedback is then utilised in reviews of programmes.
 - They have identified challenges highlighted by PPEs, including unrealistic expectations from learners and limited capacity to support learners due to the busy nature of the practice environment. The education provider has responded by developing and enhancing practice sessions to prepare learners for the environment. They have also developed additional support for PPEs including training. The visitors were satisfied there are effective and appropriate mechanisms for gaining and addressing PPE feedback, and their management and support is suitable.
- **External examiners:**
 - External Examiner (EE) reports are reviewed by the Dean of the School of Human and Health Sciences and the Director of Teaching and Learning to inform the senior leadership team of any specific areas of good practice or concern. In response to this, each programme produces an action plan to address any areas of concern and this forms part of the annual evaluation process.
 - Overall, the EE feedback received showed good performance of the education provider and highlighted good learner support in place. An ongoing challenge identified refers to assessment submissions, which

is an area the education provider is actively working on to ensure assessment schedules are supportive and appropriate for learners. The visitors were satisfied with the overall positive feedback from EE reports and agreed the education provider is appropriately responding to the constructive feedback given.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: The visitors noted the education provider has received largely complimentary feedback regarding their programmes from external examiners.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Aggregation of percentage of learners not continuing:**
 - The education provider noted the data provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency HESA is limited to UK-domiciled, undergraduate, new entrants and therefore does not encompass learners across all programmes. They have acknowledged their results are in majority below benchmark value. However, they have stated this result has been improving each year, showing a performance is moving in a positive direction. They highlight how the values can be misrepresentative, especially for cohorts of learners on smaller programmes where one learner will have a larger impact on the percentage.
 - They outline how a higher number of learners come from the most deprived backgrounds, increasing the challenges faced by their learners. Other reasons identified for non-continuation include wrong career choice, financial issues, change in personal circumstances or academic/ practice failure. To address some of these issues, the education provider is ensuring the expectations and demands of their programmes are made clearer at the stage of learner recruitment. They are improving learner support and the accessibility of this.
 - They have invested in a position to support the Director of Teaching and Learning which is the learner experience lead. This is an experienced senior lecturer who will further analyse and lead on enhancements to the learner journey. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is aware of the challenges faces and appropriately addressing them.

- **Aggregation of percentage of those who complete programmes in employment / further study:**
 - The education provider is achieving above the benchmark here, showing good performance. They have highlighted it is important this positive outcome is maintained, and they constantly strive for 100% graduate outcomes. They showed good knowledge of the employment locations their learners end up in after completing their programmes,

predominantly the NHS. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance and reflections on this data point.

- **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award:**
 - The education provider states how success in their TEF Gold result in 2017 was reinforced by the University becoming the first holder of the HEA Global Teaching Excellence Award in the same year. They state how maintaining this level of quality has been a priority moving forward. The main challenge has been doing this during the pandemic, however they put measures in place to support learners during this time, as outline in [Quality theme: Thematic reflection](#). The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance and reflections on this data point.

- **National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27):**
 - The education provider outlines how their overall NSS satisfaction ratings have declined since 2018 but, in general, the HCPC courses have maintained their high satisfaction ratings. Each programme highlights any areas of concern, good practice to be shared and actions required. This was explored further in [quality theme 5](#). The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance and reflections on this data point.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Section 5: Issues identified for further review.

This section summarises any areas which require further follow-up through a separate quality assurance process (the approval or focused review process).

Referrals to next scheduled performance review

Development of interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities

Summary of issue: The education provider outlines how they have identified the current IPE module has opportunities for further development. They plan to develop the use of case-based simulations and increased public participation group involvement. There is also a longer-term plan to introduce an IPE project to consider developing shared resources for teaching research methods across the programmes.

The visitors were satisfied the education provider has addressed their concerns in [quality theme 2](#), showing IPE across the paramedic programmes and plans to develop the IPE module. They agreed there is ongoing development shown for all programmes but noted this is an area that should be reviewed for progress in the next performance review.

Sustainability of growth of apprenticeship provision

Summary of issue: The education provider states their apprenticeship provision is growing at a rate of 20% per year, in terms of learner cohorts. The visitors explored the education providers plan for ensuring sustainability of the growing provision and how long they intend this to be sustainable for in [quality theme 4](#). The education provider states their growth plans are sustainable and supported by their institutional apprenticeship strategy.

The visitors were satisfied the apprenticeship model appears to be an important focus for the education provider. This is shown through policies, process and investment noted, included in future plans. The visitors noted there was no clear outline of how long the 20% growth is expected to continue for, therefore suggested this be reviewed again in the next performance review.

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2024-25 academic year.
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report.

Reason for this recommendation: The visitors have recommended a review period of three years. This is due to the education provider's performance indicating a low risk to the quality of their programmes and the education provider has appropriate and well-planned strategies moving forward. The visitors agreed three years gives sufficient time for them to implement strategies and actions relating to the issues identified in [Section 5](#), and have sufficient data to reflect on the outcomes, whilst ensuring there are processes in place to continue to perform at a high level.

We have come to this recommendation because we consider:

- the education provider is clearly committed to quality assurance.
- the education provider responded positively to the challenges of COVID-19.
- the education provider demonstrates responsiveness to recommendations for external regulators and professional bodies.
- the education provider's self-reflection identifies areas which needed attention and they reflected upon their plans had been put in place to address them.
- programmes have implemented and planned strategies to facilitate and respond to issues, which the visitors would like to be reviewed in three years.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2005
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2013
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (Degree Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2019
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science (Degree apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Paramedic			01/09/2020
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/1997
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Podiatry	FT (Full time)	Chiropodist / podiatrist		POM - Administration; POM - sale / supply (CH)	01/09/1993
BSc (Hons) Podiatry	PT (Part time)	Chiropodist / podiatrist		POM - Administration; POM - sale / supply (CH)	01/09/2003
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2021
Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Master of Podiatric Surgery	PT (Part time)			Podiatric Surgery	01/09/2020
Master of Podiatric Surgery (degree apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)			Podiatric Surgery	01/09/2020
MSc Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/01/2020

Podiatry (Degree) Apprenticeship	WBL (Work based learning)	Chiropodist / podiatrist	POM - Administration; POM - sale / supply (CH)	01/09/2019
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