

HCPC major change process report

Education provider	Anglia Ruskin University
Name of programme(s)	FDS in Hearing Aid Audiology, Distance learning
Date submission received	07 June 2021
Case reference	CAS-16971-D3S6F6

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

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

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

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

How we make our decisions

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

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process report. The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

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

Elizabeth Ross	Hearing aid dispenser
Hugh Crawford	Hearing aid dispenser
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	FdSc in Hearing Aid Audiology (Higher Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	DL (Distance learning)
Profession	Hearing aid dispenser
First intake	01 September 2021
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 92
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	MC04874

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

The education provider is introducing a degree apprenticeship (DA) route to their existing approved FdSc in Hearing Aid Audiology programme. The DA programme would mirror the approved provision in its structure and content with the addition of a module to cover the additional components required for a degree apprenticeship.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

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

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

Section 4: Outcome from first review

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

Further evidence required

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

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

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.

Reason: The visitors saw information that is made available to prospective applicants in the course overview. This included information around costs, academic entry requirement, End Point Assessment (EPA), amongst other areas. The visitors noted that the apprenticeship programme has a fully integrated EPA and that successful completion of the EPA will signify the completion of the apprenticeship. However, there was no information around what would happen should a learner fail the EPA. The visitors saw no information around resit opportunities or implications on the completion of the programme. The visitors were also unable to determine if a learner who fails the EPA would still be awarded the FdSc in Hearing Aid Audiology and if they did, whether the apprenticeship payments would need to be repaid. As a result, the visitors could not determine that applicants have the information they need to help them decide about taking an offer of a place on the programme. Therefore, the visitors require further

information about the EPA, which is provided to potential applicants, before they can determine whether this standard is met.

Suggested evidence: Further information about the EPA, which would be provided to potential applicants so they can make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on the programme.

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

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

Reason: The visitors reviewed several documents including the Job families booklet and the Degree Apprenticeship handbook, among other documents, as evidence for this standard. The visitors saw strategies that the education provider is putting in place to ensure staff who would be teaching the degree apprenticeship learners are supported in their role. The visitors were also made aware of staffing changes including changing the current programme leader. However, it was unclear whether the programme leader would still have a role in the programme delivery or what the current staffing level is. As such, the visitors considered that the education provider needs to provide a list of the staff, who are currently in place to deliver the programme, and their roles, in order to determine whether they will be adequate to deliver the programme effectively.

Additionally, the visitors noted that there was a microsuction element being proposed on the degree apprenticeship programme. However, it was unclear whether this is being delivered externally or by Anglia Ruskin University and it was unclear who would be teaching this element of the programme. Therefore, the visitors request to know how the education provider will ensure that the individual(s) delivering this part of the programme have the necessary knowledge and expertise to do this effectively.

Suggested evidence:

- A list of staff currently in place to deliver the programme. This should also include their roles and the proportion of their time spent working on the programme.
- Evidence of how the education provider will ensure staff delivering the microsuction element of the programme have the necessary knowledge and expertise.

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

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that the existing available physical resources would be sufficient for all learners on the programme as the overall learner numbers are not increasing. However, given the lack of clarity around the delivery of the microsuction element of the programme as noted above, the visitors were unable to determine how and when the microsuction equipment would be purchased. As such, the visitors require that the education provider clarifies who is responsible for the delivery of the microsuction element and how they will ensure the equipment required to deliver this aspect of the programme is available and accessible to both learners and educators.

Suggested evidence: Information that confirms who is responsible for the delivery of the microfunction element of the programme and how the education provider will ensure the necessary equipment for this element is made available to all learners and educators.

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

Reason: The mapping document stated that there are no changes to how the programme meets this standard. However, the visitors noted that practice educators would be required to teach and assess learners on the additional microfunction skill. The visitors noted there was no evidence provided to show how the education provider will ensure practice educators are appropriately prepared so they can support this new area of learning and assess learners effectively in it. Therefore, the visitors request further evidence that demonstrates this standard is met.

Suggested evidence: Evidence of the training available to practice educators to support them in the delivery of the learning outcomes of the microfunction element of the programme.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Reason: The visitors saw from their documentary review that learners on the DA programme would need to complete an End Point Assessment (EPA) and that these are zero rated modules. However, it was unclear how the EPA is tied into the programme. For instance, there was no clear information around reassessment or implications for the completion of the programme in situations where a learner fails the EPA. As the EPA are zero rated modules, it was unclear whether learners could still obtain the correct number of credits to be awarded the FdSc Hearing Aid Audiology if they failed the EPA.

The visitors were unable to determine that learners have clear understanding of what might prevent them from progressing, particularly as regards the EPA, or the available options should they fail or be at risk of not completing the programme. Therefore, the education provider must provide further information around the EPA so learners are clear about the requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Suggested evidence: Further information about requirements for progression and achievement, particularly in situations where a learner fails the EPA.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: The visitors noted from their review of the documents submitted that the microfunction element of the programme would be assessed using verbal assessment and photographic evidence. The visitors were unable to determine how these methods of assessment would appropriately and effectively measure the learning outcomes attached to this skill. The visitors also noted that the education provider is making changes to the clinical logbook. However, as the logbook was not provided the visitors

saw no evidence of the supervision and assessment of the microsuction in practice and so they could not determine how any changes made would still ensure safety in the skill. As such, the visitors request that the education provider submit further evidence of how the assessment methods would appropriately and effectively measure the learning outcomes related to the microsuction element.

Suggested evidence: Additional information showing how the assessment methods chosen are in line with the microsuction element of the programme. Additional evidence to demonstrate how any changes to the clinical logbook would ensure safety within the microsuction skill.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

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

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 28 September 2021 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).