Approval process report

Nottingham Trent University, Occupational Therapy, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve occupational therapy programmes at Nottingham Trent University. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programme(s) against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programme(s) are fit to practice.

We have
- Reviewed the institution against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area
- Reviewed the programme(s) against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programme(s) should be approved
- Decided that all standards are met, and that the programmes are approved

Through this assessment, we have noted:
- The programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This was not referred from another process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: • whether the programme(s) is / are approved
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: • The provider's next performance review will be in the 2027-28 academic year

Included within this report

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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programme(s) detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programme(s) approval / 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 approval process

Institutions and programmes must be approved by us before they can run. The approval process is formed of two stages:
- Stage 1 – we take assurance that institution level standards are met by the institution delivering the proposed programme(s)

- Stage 2 – we assess to be assured that programme level standards are met by each proposed programme

Through the approval process, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess whether providers and programmes meet standards based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. Our standards are split along institution and programme level lines, and we take assurance at the provider level wherever possible.

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

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 this review:

Jennifer Caldwell	Lead visitor, occupational therapy
Julie-Anne Lowe	Lead visitor, occupational therapy
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers four HCPC-approved programmes. Three paramedic programmes and one independent / supplementary prescribing programme. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2020.

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	Paramedic	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2020
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			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.

This data is for existing provision at the institution, and does not include the proposed programme(s).

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	200	245	2024	The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision. We assessed whether the education provider has the resources in place for the proposed programmes and were satisfied with the information

				provided by the education provider.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	3%	2021-22	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider's performance in this area is in line with sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 1%. We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing in line with sector norms.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	87%	2021-22	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 3%. We reviewed learner's experience on programmes and potential for progression and were satisfied with the

				information provided by the education provider.
Learner positivity score	77.2%	74.4%	2023	This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 7.1%. We reviewed the learner experience at the education provider and were satisfied with the information provided by the education provider.

The route through stage 1

Institutions which run HCPC-approved provision have previously demonstrated that they meet institution-level standards. When an existing institution proposes a new programme, we undertake an internal review of whether we need to undertake a full partner-led review against our institution level standards, or whether we can take assurance that the proposed programme(s) aligns with existing provision.

As part of the request to approve the proposed programme(s), the education provider supplied information to show alignment in the following areas.

Admissions

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Information for applicants** –
  - o Information for applicants will be published on the education provider's website and will be checked and updated regularly. An occupational therapy programme page will be developed.
  - o The marketing team check programme information meets competition and marketing regulations. This ensures learners do not receive false or misleading information.

- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health** –
  - o All applicants to HCPC registered programmes are required to complete a self-declaration of criminal convictions disclosures once they receive an offer. On acceptance of an offer and as part of the admissions process learners are required to produce a DBS certificate. This is reviewed by the Principal Lecturer for the programme and discussed with a practice partner. Both parties need to be satisfied the candidate meets the requirements of good character. Consequently, a learner with a conviction may be required to meet with the Trust partner to provide further detail and / or identify learning from the incident. A decision is then made regarding whether they meet the requirements of good character and can progress with an offer. If they do not meet these requirements and both the education provider and Trust is satisfied the offer will be withdrawn.
  - o Learners are not able to fully enrol without confirmed DBS clearance.
  - o Good character will also be assessed initially through the interview process. This will involve a range of stakeholders such as service users. Interviews are rated using criteria and candidates will be required to demonstrate good character in relation to this criterion.
  - o All applicants make a health declaration as part of the onboarding process. These are screened by the occupational health team for assessment of suitability for role. Enrolment on the programme is also dependent on the completion of a health screening. This is assessed by a contracted occupational health service. This process supports the introduction of reasonable adjustments where required. Where there are concerns regarding health conditions and impact on ability to undertake the programme or role, the course lead will review and decide regarding good health based on the Occupational Health review. All offers are made subject to DBS and Health clearance which is made clear on the course website and in admissions criteria.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L)** –
  - o All applicants are entitled to request consideration for credit to be given for prior learning or experience. The Recognition of Prior Learning policy covers the consideration of advanced standing where an applicant wishes to transfer credits gained at a different institution.
  - o There are also departmental policies for recognition of certificated and experiential learning.

- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - o The education provider has a plan of 'Success for All' which refers to learners who come from diverse groups, including BAME, declared disability, mature learners and those from a lower socio-economic background. An annual plan to outline strategies to support learner's success is completed. At a school level this includes monitoring and reporting of outcomes alongside innovative evidence-based interventions such as leadership coaching for BAME learners. At department level the Success for All plan reflects profession specific approaches, including actions to increase diversity in recruitment of paramedic learners.
  - o Metrics are available to all programme and module leads regarding the recruitment, progression, and attainment of learners from Success for All groups. Quality assurance mechanisms require programme leads to report on data and any required actions arising from data trends in course committees, annual course development plans and periodic course reviews. This data is monitored for Occupational Therapy and any profession specific interventions will be incorporated into the Institute for Health and Allied Professions (IHAP) Success for All plan.
  - o Recruitment of staff and learners is governed by EDI policy. All staff complete essential learning on EDI topics including unconscious bias. EDI principals evident in the institutional EDI and respect policy are embedded in job competencies. The School of Social Sciences EDI committee co-ordinates school activities to support an inclusive and supportive culture for staff and learners.
  - o The education provider is committed to an inclusive environment. They work to advance EDI and support engagement. The work they undertake is evidence-based and informed by data. The education provider holds accreditation such as an Athena SWAN bronze award.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

<u>Management and governance</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register[1]** –
    - The education provider is approved for the awarding of undergraduate and postgraduate awards in line with the Quality Handbook. These are supported by the common assessment regulations. All module and programme learning outcomes are mapped to the HCPC standards. The HCPC standards are reflected in the practice assessment document. This is a compulsory assessment within a module. The specific knowledge, skills and behaviours required for registration will be scaffolded throughout the curriculum. Exception from the quality assessment regulations will be built into programme approval to ensure no compensation on module assessments.
    - Teaching, practice-based learning, and assessment throughout the programme ensures learners have met the threshold for professional registration.
    - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
    - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Sustainability of provision** –
    - The Interim Course Review (ICR) and Periodic Course Review (PCR) are the mechanisms by which programme teams reflect on the validity, currency, and the academic quality of the provision.
    - Each programme undertakes an annual ICR. This requires the programme team to review the delivery of the programme over the previous year, considering feedback from learners, module teams, external examiners, inputs from professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies, school learning and teaching managers, school standards and quality managers and professional services staff. The ICR will produce a report and course development plan as part of the continuous quality and improvement activity.
    - To ensure the programmes are sustainable and current, each programme of education is required to undergo a PCR every three years. The requirements for the PCR are laid out in the Quality Handbook.
    - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
    - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

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[1] This is focused on ensuring providers are able to deliver qualifications at or equivalent to the level(s) in SET 1, as required for the profession(s) proposed

- **Effective programme delivery** –
    - To ensure the effective delivery of each programme, the education provider undertakes termly course committees to take feedback from the Student Representatives. These course committees feed into the PCR and ICR. The course committee requirements are laid out in the quality handbook.
    - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
    - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective staff management and development** –
    - All staff members have a defined line manager who they report to and who will undertake their appraisal process each year. At the beginning of each academic year, staff meet with their line manager to agree their work objectives and development opportunities. These are reviewed at the mid-year and end of year to assess progress against them.
    - All academic members of staff are required to hold a formal teaching qualification or undertake one in the first year of employment. It is also a requirement for all staff to hold or be working towards fellowship of Advance HE.
    - Each member of academic staff has access to professional development funding they can access to support their academic or professional development.
    - Academics are also automatic members of the Trent Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT). The core mission of TILT is to develop and sustain a community of practice passionate about making learning better. As members of the TILT, staff can assess a range of opportunities such as funding awarded annually and on a competitive basis to staff.
    - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
    - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level** –
    - There are a several partnerships that are managed at institutional level to support the delivery of the programmes and practice-based learning capacity and management. These partnerships are govened by the policy in the Quality Handbook. These partnerships support the development of education, research, and practice to meet regional workforce needs. They are managed by regular events and jointly agreed workstreams that report at an institutional level. Within the IHAP, there is a multi-layered approach to managing partnerships. The education provider holds strategic meetings involving senior leaders from five local NHS Trusts, such as Nottingham University Hospitals Trust. These support working on regional challenges, including recruitment to healthcare careers. Practice-based learning agreements

are in place across all providers. These will be put in place for any new organisations IHAP works with. Planning and evaluating quality practice-based learning is managed through individual meetings with healthcare providers and the Placement Team or Principal Lecturer for Practice Learning. As practice-based learning providers have diversified, the education provider is planning to introduce a bi-monthly AHP practice assurance committee which brings provider representatives together with the education provider's practice-based learning leads.
- o Institutional partnerships include:
  - ▪ Nottingham Health Care Trust
  - ▪ Nottingham University Hospitals (NHS) Trust
  - ▪ East Midlands Ambulance Service (NHS) Trust.
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Academic quality** –
  - o The education provider has a quality management framework which resides under the authority of the Academic Board. The Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC), Sub-Committees, schools and the education provider's Design Sprint process maintains standards and enhances the quality of taught programmes. Guidance for these processes can be found in the quality handbook.
  - o Academic quality is maintained through several processes such as the Periodic School Review.
  - o All taught programmes must have an external examiner approved on behalf of the Academic Board. The external examiner considers whether the standards set for the programme are appropriate for its awards, award elements or subjects.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments** –
  - o The education provider employs a Principal Lecturer for practice-based learning. They head the Placement Team, who lead on all matters relating to practice based learning.

- o They oversee quality assurance for practice-based learning. There are contractual agreements with practice-based learning providers regarding expectations for quality, safe and effective learning environments. The quality of the practice-based learning environments is monitored by learner evaluation, an audit system, and a bi-monthly committee with practice-based learning leads from partner organisations.
  - o The occupational therapy Placement Handbook will reflect the process for ensuring quality across practice-based learning, including the training and development for occupational therapy practice educators. It will also outline the Placement Audit System for ensuring ongoing quality of practice-based learning.
  - o All practice-based learning areas are audited to ensure quality and capacity. The education provider is in partnership agreement with several other regional education providers to share practice-based learning data via the NHS England Practice Assessment, Record & Evaluation (PARE) system.
  - o Practice education handbooks are produced for both learners and Practice Educators to understand what is expected from each.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learner involvement** –
  - o Learners elect a programme representative to speak on their behalf. The education provider undertakes termly Course Committees to take feedback from the representative about the delivery of the programme. These Course Committees feed into the periodic and interim course reviews.
  - o Module and programme feedback from learners is promoted through the online MySays evaluation system.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Service user and carer involvement** –
  - o The education provider engages with service users to enhance and add value to education. Members of the public are involved in co-production, by bringing their lived experience to healthcare learners. The education provider aims to create a diverse group of people, with equal and inclusive involvement.
  - o The IHAP Involvement Group is an established group of people with lived experience. This is co-lead by two Senior Lecturers in the department. The group have been supporting admissions as well as teaching and learning. They have been involved in discussing their lived experience of conditions as well as being part of the recruitment

process. The group produced an involvement strategy, alongside developing a process for module leads and teaching staff to book the input of experts by experience in the classroom, assessment, recruitment and / or curriculum development.
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

<u>Learners</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Support** –
    - o The education provider provides support to learners via the programme teams, support services, Students' Union, and the Student Hub.
    - o Learners can find out information related to support, academic advisors, appeals and complaints in the Programme Handbook.
    - o Academic skills support is available via the library team who offer a wide range of support in relation to, for example finding and evaluating information.
    - o Learners experiencing difficulties with assessment can also receive support via tutorial support from the academic module team or personal tutor.
    - o The education provider ensures its assessment regulations are fully and fairly implemented, and no learner gains an advantage over others. If academic irregularity is suspected in an assessment, it will be dealt with in line with the University Academic irregularity policy detailed in the Quality Handbook.
    - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
    - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Ongoing suitability** –
    - o There are several systems in place to ensure learners remain suitable for study and practice. Engagement with academic study is recorded and academic staff are alerted if this falls below a specific level. Staff then engage with the learner via the Student and Staff Engagement strategy. This is considered in conjunction with the department policy on attendance for professional registration learners.
    - o Staff can make referral to the occupational health department if they consider a learner can no longer meet the health requirements for the programme. Consideration is given to helping learners remain on the programme with reasonable adjustments if possible.

- o Concerns about a learner's conduct and fitness to practice are handled via the fitness to practice policy. This policy allows recommend sanctions to be applied to a learner, including removal from the programme.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E)** –
  - o Learning with, from and about other professionals is one of the principles of curriculum design. IPL will take place in some of the modules. Ongoing discussions are taking place with staff from other programmes, such as paramedicine, adult nursing, and mental health nursing. The education provider also has education and social work programmes where IPL could take place. Learners will have the opportunity to join supervision and study groups with learners from other professions during practice-based learning.
  - o There is no IPL/E strategy at the current time. IHAP programmes include a range of interprofessional learning experiences and interdisciplinary learning with colleagues in social work and journalism.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - o The education provider is committed to a fair, equal and diverse learning environment. The education provider has expectations around how all members of its community treat, and are treated by, others. These expectations are in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the Dignity and Respect Policy and the Trans Equality Policy Statement.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Objectivity** –
  - o To ensure objectivity in assessment, all assessments are required to be valid, reliable, rigorous, equitable, inclusive, and clearly communicated. Assessment tasks and any amendments to them are

reviewed by the quality team and external examiner prior to implementation.
- o To ensure objectivity of marking, where practicable, programmes use anonymous marking.
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Progression and achievement** –
  - o Assessments are marked and moderated internally and externally for quality assurance. Learners will normally be entitled to two attempts at each assessment. They will receive their marks using Grade Based Marking Descriptors.
  - o Learners' marks are considered at an Exam Board. They can consider offering learners who have failed their second attempt at a particular assessment an Exceptional Third Attempt before a learner fails. The details for this process are detailed in the Quality Handbook.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Appeals** –
  - o The system of appeals does not allow for appeals against academic judgment, but irregularities in process not being fairly applied by academic staff. Staff and learners can find the policy around academic appeals in the Quality Handbook.
  - o Learners are encouraged to raise any concerns immediately so they can be discussed at an early stage and prevent matters from becoming more complex.
  - o The education provider aims to deal with complaints in a timely and consistent way to ensure learners are not disadvantaged because of raising concerns. The education provider provides peer support for learners in bringing concerns to attention and ensure learners are not disadvantaged or treated less favourably by any member of staff than if they had not raised the complaint.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Outcomes from stage 1

We decided to progress to stage 2 of the process without further review through stage 1, due to the clear alignment of the new provision within existing institutional structures, as noted through the previous section.

Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:

- The education provider has several staff in place who will support the delivery and management of the programme. Two occupational therapy posts are built into the budget for the first year the cohort will run. There will therefore be two further occupational therapy lecturers / senior lecturers in place before the programme starts. Further posts are built into the following year's budget for the start of the undergraduate programme.
- The education provider is undertaking a capital project to construct specialist kitchen space for simulation and activities of daily living experiential learning. They are also purchasing specialist equipment to support skills teaching for occupational therapists. Learners will be based in the Health and Allied Professions Centre, a purpose-built facility for the education of healthcare learners. This includes flexible learning spaces, simulation rooms reflecting hospital, home and primary care settings alongside a virtual reality suite.
- Capital project has a budget deadline and will be completed by July 2024. Clinical skills equipment will be purchased by then and will be in place prior to the programme start date.
- Many resources are in place. Additional staffing resource to support the programmes will be appointed to start in the new financial year from August 2024.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational Therapist	30 learners, 1 cohort per year	15/09/2025

MSc Occupational Therapy Pre Registration	FT (Full time)	Occupational Therapist	15 learners, 1 cohort per year	20/01/2025

Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

The education provider was asked to demonstrate how they meet programme level standards for each programme. They supplied information about how each standard was met, including a rationale and links to supporting information via a mapping document.

Data / intelligence considered

We also considered intelligence from others (eg prof bodies, sector bodies that provided support) as follows:

- NHS England (Midlands) – we received information considering current pressures regarding practice-based learning for physiotherapy in the Midlands. The information was reviewed but we considered it would not impact on this assessment.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided, and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their submission. 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 met our standards.

We have reported on how the provider meets standards, including the areas below, through the [Findings section](#).

Quality theme 1 – the use of visiting lecturers

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the education provider planned to use visiting lecturers and contributors from programme areas outside of occupational therapy, the profession of the programme under review. They were unsure how the education provider will determine how to use them, how they will ensure they have the appropriate professional knowledge and how they will be recruited. The visitors were therefore unsure whether visiting lecturers will be effective, and whether they will be appropriately qualified. We therefore sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by requesting an email response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider submitted an updated Staffing Plan to reflect the addition of 1.6 Full Time Equivalent occupational therapy Senior Lecturers. They explained these members of staff bring knowledge to the team around wider clinical expertise and research. They outlined the key teaching themes where the education provider will draw on wider staff such as visiting lecturers.

The education provider explained they are supported by a pool of Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs). They added they are an important resource when there are short-term staffing pressures. They also enable the education provider to work flexibly to ensure a range of specialist expertise is available where this is not represented in the core academic team. The visitors were informed the education provider currently employ one occupational therapy HPL and will be recruiting more in Autumn 2024. HPLs undertake an induction event and are supported to undertake essential learning run by the education provider. The programme offers additional training and support as required for HPLs. This can include training in marking and assessment.

The programme team will be complemented by academics across the department who can provide expert input as appropriate. For example, lecturers in health biosciences who may teach anatomy or physiology. The education provider's guest lecturer process supports occupational therapy practitioners to teach guest lectures on the programmes. They also have an active service user involvement group, which enables people with lived experience to recruit, teach and contribute to the assessment of learners.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated how education provider will determine how to use visiting lecturers, how they will ensure they have the appropriate professional knowledge and how they will be recruited. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 2 – the resources for the programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the education provider had supplied information about the physical and classroom-based resources available for both learners and staff, and the use of technology to support learning. However, they could not find information about library resources and services available. For example, texts and ebooks, and support for learners. The visitors therefore were unsure whether the resources for the programme are readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively. We therefore sought more information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by requesting an email response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained the programme has submitted a list of book requests. This had been sent to the subject librarian who

was in the process of ordering them. They also outlined the indicative reading lists for each module. The visitors were informed the education provider's library subscribes to a number of online databases to support healthcare programmes. For example, Scopus. Scopus is a database of abstracts and citations for academic content in Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Health Sciences, and Social Sciences and Humanities. The education provider stated they buy library-licensed ebooks where possible. Print copies are purchased where a library-licensed ebook is not available.

The Academic Engagement Team is a part of the library services, and they provide academic skills support for all learners. The team includes Learning & Teaching Consultants, Academic Skills Tutors and Maths and Statistics Tutors. Learners can book one to one appointments or workshops with team members, either in person or via Microsoft Teams. The team also deliver teaching across a range of academic skills. For example, referencing and academic writing. We were also informed learners have access to four campus libraries. All libraries have silent study zones, quiet study zones and group study zones.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence of the library resources and services available demonstrated the resources for the programme are readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Section 4: Findings

This section details the visitors' findings from their review through stage 2, including any requirements set, and a summary of their overall findings.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before providers or programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is an issue with the education provider's approach to meeting a standard. This may mean that we have evidence that standards are not met at this time, or the education provider's planned approach is not suitable.

The visitors were satisfied that no conditions were required to satisfy them that all standards are met. The visitors' findings, including why no conditions were required, are presented below.

Overall findings on how standards are met

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings against the programme-level standards. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment
- **SET 2: Programme admissions** –
    - The Programme Specifications outline the admissions criteria including academic and professional entry standards.
    - The entry requirements for the undergraduate programme include 112 UCAS Tariff points from up to four qualifications, and GCSE English and Mathematics at grade C / four. Applicants whose first language is not English are required to have an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score of seven or with no element below 6.5.
    - The entry requirements for the postgraduate programme include an undergraduate degree at 2:2 or above, and GCSE English and Mathematics.
    - All applicants need to complete a personal statement with evidence of understanding of the occupational therapy role, transferable skills, and consideration of professional values such as trustworthiness.
    - All learners have an occupational health screening when they start the programme. Learners with a disability or health needs are also encouraged to see the Disability and Inclusion Team. The team also review at access statements that recommend reasonable adjustments and appropriate support, so learning is not disadvantaged.
    - Learners who have reasonable adjustments are encouraged to meet a member of the Occupational Therapy programme team to discuss a Placement Support Plan. This will enable reasonable adjustments to be made in practice education. Learners have responsibility for sharing their support plan with the practice educator.
    - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
    - The education provider has a variety of mechanism to collaborate with practice educators. For example, a Practice Assurance Committee was set up. This committee is a meeting between the education provider and practice education partners to communicate and monitor quality processes in practice education. The education provider also runs meetings between the programme lead and coordinators from practice education providers. The education provider is a member of the Derbyshire Practice Learning Group. This group meets regularly and shares practice education information and requests.
    - The education provider has received letters of support from organisations who are willing to support practice education. For example, Derbyshire Community Services. They consider they will receive more due to the number of different organisations who have attended meetings and given their support.

- o As discussed in [quality theme 1](#), the education provider planned to use visiting lecturers and contributors from programme areas outside of occupational therapy. The education provider supplied curriculum vitae of the programme team. Members of the programme team will attend meetings and forum to keep up to date with profession specific information. The programme staff have wide professional experience and knowledge.
  - o The programme has simulation rooms which allow experiential learning and assessment. A new therapeutic kitchen is ready to use. Learners have access to Pebblepad, which will be used for practice education. There is a Digital Curriculum Strategy which outlines opportunities for learners, such as increased support for learners. The programme team identified the equipment needed for teaching and this has been purchased. As discussed in [quality theme 2](#), the subject librarian who was in the process of ordering books. The library subscribes to several online databases to support healthcare programmes. They buy library-licensed ebooks where possible. The Academic Engagement Team provide academic skills support for all learners. Learners have access to four campus libraries. All libraries have silent study zones, quiet study zones and group study zones.
  - o The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET are met.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery** –
  - o The education provider had mapped how they meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) and provided evidence for each programme from module descriptors. There are several assessed learning outcomes in each SOP. The education provider submitted a curriculum map to demonstrate each learning outcome is being assessed across the modules. Some learning modules are assessed in more than one module. These recommendations can also be applied to assessments as well teaching and learning approaches and support.
  - o The programme includes teaching about professional behaviour including the standards of conduct of performance and ethics. Modules descriptors contain links to teaching of the standards, so we can see where in the programmes they are taught. For example, for the postgraduate programme in the module Professional and Scholarly Skills. The modules outline which learning outcomes reflect teaching of the standards. For instance, in the undergraduate module Professional Skills and Knowledge, learning outcomes five and six ask learners to explain what is meant by safe, ethical and legal boundaries and apply knowledge of appropriate HCPC and professional body standards.
  - o The programmes make sure they remain current regarding the philosophy, core values, knowledge and skills of a profession. The programme follows the Royal College of Occupational Therapy (RCOT) Learning and development standards for pre-registration education (2019), RCOT Professional standards for occupational therapy practice, conduct and Ethics (2021), and the World Federation of Occupational Therapists Minimum Standards for the Education of

Occupational Therapists (2016). Both programmes are working towards professional body accreditation.

- o The education provider has mechanisms to ensure the curriculum remains current. For example, there are meetings they attend such as Practice Assurance Committee, Nottingham Occupational Therapy Coordinator meetings, Nottingham Integrated Care System Allied Health Professions Faculty meeting, and the Derbyshire Placement Faculty meeting.
- o The programme planner documents show the integration of theory and practice. This document demonstrates the teaching learners will be experiencing, alongside the times when they will be in practice education.
- o Learners are encouraged to collaborate, share ideas, and be creative and resourceful. The programmes are built with a range of teaching methods such as collaborative learning, enquiry, team- and problem-based learning philosophies to underpin the teaching, learning and assessment. The programmes use a variety of teaching methods to develop learners' abilities. For example, lectures, seminars, and small group learning. Case-based scenarios are used to facilitate the development of professional reasoning skills and the inclusion of service users and carers. Directed study and research informed lectures are supplemented with group tutorials and practical sessions to facilitate an active and collaborative approach to learning. Learners are supported to develop their digital technology skills.
- o Autonomous and reflective thinking is integrated throughout the programme. It is taught and assessed in the programme, as evidenced by the leaning outcomes. For example, for the undergraduate programme it is taught and assessed in the module Professional Skills and Knowledge. Learners also reflect following each practice education, to develop and plan for the following practice education. The postgraduate programme builds autonomous thinking through a self-directed approach to learning.
- o The undergraduate programme introduces evidence-based practice in the first year to support learners to build their skills at an early stage, and to demonstrate the importance of the topic in occupational therapy. The programme has a further two modules linked to evidence-based practice. The postgraduate programme features evidence-based practice features early and is integrated into the module Professional and Scholarly Skills.
- o The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET are met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning** –
  - o The Programme Specification documents outline how the practice education modules sit amongst theory-based modules. The Practice Based Learning Supporting document provides detailed information for learners, practice educators and coordinators. Both programmes carry detailed information about practice education within the induction. For the postgraduate programme, the module Professional and Scholarly

Skills in Occupational Therapy Practice, and for the undergraduate programme the module Professional Skills and Knowledge in Occupational Therapy, have teaching and learning related to being prepared for practice education. This is so learners will be aware of the focus in practice education and their responsibilities. There are four practice education modules in both programmes, which total 1164 of hours. Practice education occurs at different stages of the programmes. For example, learners on the undergraduate programme undertake one practice education in the first year. Learners also have the potential for one period of practice education to be in a role emerging setting. The education provider has a Placement Team who deal with the allocation and administration of practice education. Learners are aware of the importance of practice education on the programme initially through the recruitment process. For example, the interview in the selection process includes a question related to practice education.

- There are four modules of practice education in both programmes. The evidence shows when learners undertake practice education modules and how long they are. The programmes provide a range of practice education, as per RCOT Learning and Development Standards. The SOPs mapping highlights the practice education module learning outcomes enables learners to meet the SOPs. Practice education documentation demonstrates how the learning outcomes are then assessed.

- All learners are allocated a practice educator for the entirety of the practice education. The learner will at times spend time with other staff, including other occupational therapists and other professionals. As practice education progresses, they will spend time more independently. This depends on the setting and the aptitude of the learner. However, there will always be a named person for them to contact during that time if it is not their educator. Some learners may be allocated two practice educators, and some may have the same practice educator as two or three other learners. Learners will receive individual supervision for at least an hour a week. For role emerging practice education, there will not be an occupational therapist on site. However, there will be an onsite supervisor and an occupational therapist will provide long arm supervision.

- Practice educators undertake training whether new to the role of existing. Different practice education providers have mandatory requirements regarding the training their practice educators have completed. The programme team and Placement Team will ascertain the mandatory requirements of each organisation in terms of this. The programme team maintain responsibility for providing training opportunities. They also collect data on what training has been completed by each practice educator. The education provider will provide training opportunities for new practice educators through the new educator training initiative with Universities of Derby and Lincoln,

and Sheffield Hallam University. This is an eLearning package with an in-person half day training called Practice Educator and Assessor Preparation programme. The education provider will also provide practice education updates and refresher training throughout the year via Teams or in-person.
  - o The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET are met.
- **SET 6: Assessment** –
  - o The SOPs mapping shows how the programmes' learning outcomes and modules map to the standards. Module descriptors show how learning outcomes are reached through assessment. The assessment strategy shows the variation of the assessments across the programme.
  - o The modules outline how learning outcomes are assessed. The programmes have a learning outcome related to professional behaviour. The curriculum map for both programmes demonstrates where professional behaviour is summatively assessed throughout the programme.
  - o Learning outcomes are met through completing the modules of the programmes. The SOPs have been mapped to demonstrate they are met through meeting the learning outcomes of the programmes. Each module specification contains details of the assessments and how they assess each learning outcome. For example, in the undergraduate programme, the learning outcome of 'Demonstrate understanding of the principles of risk assessment alongside engaging with risk to overcome barriers within community focused Occupational Therapy' in module Promotion of Occupation for Wellbeing and Health, is assessed by an oral presentation.
  - o The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET are met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Section 5: Referrals

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process.

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. They do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the programmes should be approved subject to the conditions being met.

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:
- All standards are met, and therefore the programmes should be approved

Education and Training Committee decision

Education and Training Committee considered the assessment panel's recommendations and the findings which support these. The education provider was also provided with the opportunity to submit any observation they had on the conclusions reached.

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:
- The programmes are approved
- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year

Reason for this decision: The Panel accepted the visitor's recommendation that the programme should receive approval.

Appendix 1 – summary report

If the education provider does not provide observations, only this summary report (rather than the whole report) will be provided to the Education and Training Committee (Panel) to enable their decision on approval. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation, and the nature, quality and facilities of the provision.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
Nottingham Trent University	CAS-01507-W4H4K1	Jennifer Caldwell and Julie-Anne Lowe	Through this assessment, we have noted the programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.	Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities: The education provider has staff in place who will support the delivery and management of the programme. Two occupational therapy posts are built into the budget for the first year the cohort runs, and they will be in place before the programme starts. Further posts are built into the following year's budget for the start of the undergraduate programme. The education provider is undertaking a project to construct specialist kitchen space for simulation and activities of daily living experiential learning. They are also purchasing specialist equipment to support skills

| | | | | teaching for occupational therapists. Learners will be based in the Health and Allied Professions Centre, a purpose-built facility for the education of healthcare learners. This includes flexible learning spaces, simulation rooms reflecting hospital, home and primary care settings and a virtual reality suite.

Capital project has a budget deadline and will be completed by July 2024. Clinical skills equipment will be purchased and will be in place prior to the programme start date.

Many resources are in place. Additional staffing resource to support the programmes will be appointed to start in the new financial year from August 2024. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Programmes** | | | | |
| **Programme name** | | | **Mode of study** | **Nature of provision** |
| BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy | | | FT (Full time) | Taught (HEI) |
| MSc Occupational Therapy Pre Registration | | | FT (Full time) | Taught (HEI) |

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2020
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	WBL (Work based learning)	Paramedic			01/09/2020
MSc Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/01/2020
Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Non-medical Prescribers	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	29/03/2023