
Approval process report

University of Warwick, Independent and Supplementary Prescribing 2020-21

Executive Summary

This report covers our review of the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing 2020-21 at the University of Warwick. We are satisfied the provider has demonstrated how they meet all the Standards for Prescribing through the narrative and evidence we reviewed.

Through our review, we did not set any conditions on approving the programme. We had queries with regards to standards across several areas and sought further information and evidence through the quality activity process. The provider submitted the required information and evidence to satisfactorily address our concerns.

We note the provider have engaged positively during the quality activity process and provided the information requested in a timely manner. We identified two areas of good practice with regards to the provider's approach to programme alignment and engagement with service users.

Previous consideration Not applicable, as this provider is new to delivering HCPC approved programmes.

Decision The Education and Training Committee (Panel) decided:

- the institution and programme are approved, and
- the provider's first engagement with the performance review process will be four years.

Next steps Outline next steps / future case work with the provider:

- The provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 academic year.
- Subject to the Panel's decision, the module was approved on the 30th April and will be delivered by the provider from June 2023

Included within this report.

About us	2
Our standards	3
Our regulatory approach.....	3
The approval processes.	3
How we make our decisions.....	4
The assessment panel for this review.....	4
Section 2: Institution-level assessment.....	4
The education provider context.....	4
Institution performance data	4
The route through stage 1	6
Stage 1 assessment – provider submission	6
Quality themes identified for further exploration.	6
Quality theme 1 – Suitability of the individual responsible for the module	6
Quality theme 2 – Ensuring learners are aware of the requirements to enter the Register.	6
Quality theme 3 – Involvement of service users	7
Quality theme 4 – Ensuring professional and academic development of educators.....	7
Quality theme 5 – Ensuring the quality of placements.....	8
Quality theme 6 – Supporting the wellbeing and learning needs of learners.....	8
Quality theme 7 – Consenting process for service users and learners.....	9
Quality theme 8 – Ensuring an appropriate marking process.	9
Outcomes from stage 1	10
Findings of the assessment panel:.....	10
Section 3: Programme-level assessment.....	12
Programmes considered through this assessment.	12
Stage 2 assessment – provider submission	12
Quality themes identified for further exploration.	12
Quality theme 1 – Clarity on roles of placement educators	13
Quality theme 2 – Ensuring suitability of placements.	13
Quality theme 3 – Ensuring the suitability of external examiners.....	14
Section 4: Findings	14
Conditions	14
Overall findings on how standards are met.....	14
Section 5: Referrals.....	17
Recommendations.....	17
Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes	17
Assessment panel recommendation	17
Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution.....	19

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 institution and programme(s) detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the institution and 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 processes.

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:

Jim Pickard	Lead visitor, Chiropodist/ Podiatrist
Janek Dubowski	Lead visitor, Arts Therapist
Jenny McKibben	Service User Expert Advisor
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer
Temilolu Odunaike	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider is a higher education institute and a new HCPC provider. There are no current open programmes at this institution except the provider delivers a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (D.Clin.Psy) in conjunction with Coventry University which has been running since 1998.

All applicants for the proposed programme are already enrolled on the Warwick Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) Master's degree for which professional registration will have been checked and confirmed as a core premise of ACP entry. The Prescribing Module is to be part of the Warwick ACP master's degree that operates in conjunction with the apprenticeship programme in close association with our Practice Learning Partner institutions, which are substantial NHS hospital Trusts.

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	0	10	2022	The programme run in conjunction with Coventry University has 10 proposed learners per cohort.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	2%	2%	2019-2020	This is a Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) data point that shows the percentage of learners not continuing at the provider is more than the benchmark. The provider shows they have learner retention rates equivalent to the benchmark, suggesting overall good performance.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	95%	2018-2019	This is a HESA data point that shows the percentage in employment or further study at the provider is less than the benchmark. The provider shows they have a higher percentage of learners going into employment/ further study than the benchmark. This indicates good performance.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Silver	2018	This award defines the provider “consistently exceeds rigorous national quality requirements for UK higher education” and achieves “excellent outcomes for its learners...with an institutional culture that facilitates, recognises and rewards excellent teaching”. We acknowledge this score was attained over five years ago, so this award is not current. This is because TEF are in the process of reviewing their existing award and have not completed a review of the provider since 2018.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	76.8%	76.7%	2022	This data relates to HCPC-related subjects at the provider. The provider show they have learner satisfaction rates equivalent to the benchmark, suggesting overall satisfactory performance.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	N/A	TBC	The visitors have recommended a review period of four years. They agreed this is an appropriate time for the provider to run the proposed module for several cohorts

				of learners, which will provide valuable data on learner experience and performance evaluation from the provider.
--	--	--	--	---

The route through stage 1

This institution is new to the HCPC, and therefore we needed to make a judgement that they met all institution-level standards by directly assessing them through a visitor-led review.

Stage 1 assessment – provider submission

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration.

The visitors reviewed the information provided, and we worked with the education provider on our understanding of their submission. We defined and undertook the following quality assurance activities linked to the quality themes referenced below.

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

Quality theme 1 – Suitability of the individual responsible for the module

Area for further exploration: The provider stated the overall expected level of qualification to be held by the programme team, however there was a lack of detail of individuals and their specific roles. It was unclear how the provider will ensure the suitability of the module leader who is responsible for the delivery and running of the module. The visitors explored what processes are in place to ensure the individual responsible for the management of the HCPC-approved provision and modules leaders will be suitably qualified. It is important that the staff leading the delivery and development of the module are appropriately qualified and experienced.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider identified the leading teaching staff for the module, outlining their qualifications, experience and links to their statutory regulators. This demonstrated the appropriateness and suitability of the staff responsible for the module. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 2 – Ensuring learners are aware of the requirements to enter the Register.

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined the various resources they have in place to inform learners of their module award, including information and guidance. It was unclear how the provider will ensure the learners are aware eligibility for an annotation on their record on the HCPC Professionals Register. The

annotation identifies they have completed an approved education module in prescribing, and achieving it is dependent on completion of an approved module. The visitors sought clarification on how the provider makes this clear to learners and identifies the links to their university programme and the completion of this module. It is important learners are aware of the requirements of completion of an approved module in order to be also awarded the annotation on completion of the module.

Outcomes of exploration: Although the module forms part of an Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) Master's degree and apprenticeship, only successful completion of this module will infer the learners' eligibility for annotation on the professional register. This principle is to be emphasised within the forthcoming Module Guide, whether as part of the Master's degree in ACP or a separate Postgraduate Award (PGA). The visitors were satisfied the assurances provided in this response regarding the forthcoming modules guide will clarify the standing of the award in respect to the entry on the Register. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 3 – Involvement of service users

Area for further exploration: The provider states the module team will explore ways to facilitate the involvement of service users in the module, however there is a lack of detail about how this will be done, or the current engagements with service users. It was unclear how the provider intends to involve service users in the module, and how these interactions will be made clear in the module specification. The visitors explored how the provider will ensure there is appropriate service user and carer involvement throughout the module. This is important to ensure learners have appropriate experience working with those who will be utilising their services.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined how the module will incorporate learning sessions involving selected service users and carers in direct conversation with learners. Notably in relation to areas of prescribing & pharmacology such as self-management of chronic conditions (for example diabetes), in addition to negotiated prescriptions. The provider stated they have cultivated strong links with patient & carer groups via their Clinical Trials Unit (CTU). They are collaborating with service users & carers via individuals who have served as Personal and Public Involvement representatives in different university run projects. They have a service user who is advising on module content. The visitors were satisfied the information provided ensures there is appropriate involvement of service users in the module. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 4 – Ensuring professional and academic development of educators.

Area for further exploration: The provider outlines the resources available for new and existing staff, in relation to working with learners such as suicide awareness training, social media policy. However, it was unclear if there are processes and requirements in place for staff to continually undergo professional development. The visitors explored if there are policies in place for this, and how they are implemented at programme and module level. It is important to ensure educators are up to date with current training relating to their academic and professional development.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlines how they uphold an active faculty development programme including annual academic review plus peer observation and appraisal as a requirement for all teaching staff. This applied to the module leads, ACP programme leaders and teachers on the Independent Non-Medical Prescribing (IP) Module. All clinical supervisors involved in the IP Module undergo annual appraisal via their health service employment and clinical teachers involved in the IP module need to demonstrate prescriber education as part of the three-year revalidation process with their respective professional body. The visitors were satisfied the provider is ensuring their educators engage with appropriate professional and academic development, relevant to their roles. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 5 – Ensuring the quality of placements.

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined how regular quality assurance visits for placements are not undertaken, but there is a dedicated module team who will work with placement partners. They stated the module steering group will develop a quality assurance checklist to ensure Practice Learning Partners (PLPs) are appropriate. It was unclear how the provider intends to ensure the ongoing quality of placements and practice educators within these settings. The visitors explored what processes are in place to first assess placements and prescribing mentors for approval and ensure their quality throughout. It is important there are processes in place to ensure placements are safe and appropriate for learners and service users.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined the recruitment, approval and evaluation of placement and practice-based mentors is well established for the Masters degree at Warwick Medical School (WMS). Learners will already be enrolled on the WMS Advanced Clinical Practice Masters programme and conducting the practice learning within their clinical working environments. The same process and rigour will be applied to the postgraduate IP Modules.

The safe and supporting environment for learners and service users in relation to prescribing is exemplified by the governance laid out by one of the provider's key Practice Learning Partners; the University Hospitals Birmingham (UHB) Foundation Trust. The procedures for Non-Medical Prescribing outline dedication to service user/patient safety and a focussed training protocols for learners will apply following the Prescribing Module. The provider also provides training and development programmes on mentorship to all its academic staff. There is an Education Quality Team (EQT) who engages in quality monitoring and learner feedback for all programmes running in the Medical School. Based on the details provided together with the University of Warwick Honorary appointment statements the visitors are satisfied the provider has adequate processes in place to monitor the quality of placements and mentors. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 6 – Supporting the wellbeing and learning needs of learners.

Area for further exploration: The provider outlines the resources they have to signpost learners too, including the learner handbook, pastoral support tutors and wellbeing support services. It was clear there are mechanisms in place to support learners in the academic setting, however, it was unclear how the provider intends to

support learners in practice-based learning environments or the workplace. Further to this, what processes are in place to allow learners to report concerns and manage conflicts of interest. It is important for the provider to support their learners in all environments across the modules and have suitable processes in place for learners to highlight concerns, conflicts and complaints.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider has identified learners enrolling onto the module will already be employees of their respective National Health Service (NHS) Trusts. They are provided with support in areas of potential conflict, monitoring and reporting by the work practices and safeguarding policies of the Trusts. In addition to these, there are University-based Wellbeing Services available to all learners. For the ACP programme, the Programme Leader is the postgraduate studies Safeguarding Lead, and the postgraduate Senior Tutor is the contact point for pastoral care and advice for all postgraduate learners enrolled at WMS. The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate processes in place to support learners in all environments. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 7 – Consenting process for service users and learners

Area for further exploration: Regarding SET C.9, it was unclear if there are appropriate consenting processes in place to ensure appropriate consent is obtained from service users and learners. The visitors explored what processes are in place to ensure effective consenting. This is important for the provider to ensure all stakeholders involved in the module are aware of the engagement and satisfied to be engaged with in the required manner.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined the issue of consent, whether in relation to service users or learners, is processed on a case-by-case basis within the University of Warwick and requires approval at the Departmental level. There are consent forms used to ensure this, which they provided with their response. The visitors reviewed this and were reassured the provider has appropriate mechanisms in place to obtain consent from service users and learners. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Quality theme 8 – Ensuring an appropriate marking process.

Area for further exploration: Regarding SET E.3 and E.7, it was unclear how the provider intends to ensure the marking process is appropriate. There was a lack of information about the processes in place to quality assure the marking process, and if the provider will require an external examiner (EE) with prescribing expertise for the proposed approval. The visitors explored the processes in place to ensure assessments are quality assured and done by an appropriately qualified external examiner. It is important assessment provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Outcomes of exploration: The marking process will consist of first marking and moderation. Where queries arise, a panel of markers & moderators, including the Module Leads, will review papers/processes to arrive at a decision. All marks will be subsequently reviewed by an Assessment Group prior to referral to the Exam Board and Academic Progress Groups (APG) for final execution of exam results and decisions on programme progression/awards. All future ACP EE appointees will

have appropriate prescriber status, as individuals with registered prescriber status with experience of prescribing in practice or involvement in other prescriber education activities. The visitors were satisfied the provider is ensuring there are appropriate quality assurance measures in place for the marking process, and suitably qualified EE for the role. The visitors were satisfied this response reassured their concerns regarding the SET.

Outcomes from stage 1

From their review of the documentary submission, and on exploring themes through quality activity, the visitors were satisfied institution-level standards are met, and assessment should continue to stage 2 of the process.

Due to the nature of prosccribing modules only being accessible to learners on an allied health professions (AHP) programme or being a AHP already, the stage 1 SETs used to assess the provider were adjusted to account for this. Some SETs are not appropriate for inclusion in a prescribing module and will be covered during the qualification of an individual on their full AHP programme.

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **SET 2: Programme admissions –**
 - All applicants are already enrolled on the Warwick Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) Masters degree. As a result, their professional registration will have been checked and confirmed as a core premise of ACP entry. There are several webpages and a supporting admissions statement to support learners with information. We further explored this in [quality theme 2](#).
 - The provider has several supporting documents and institution wide policies regarding recognition of prior learning, equality and diversity and other inclusive support documents/ policies for learners.
 - The visitors were satisfied there are suitable policies and supporting documents in place to ensure admissions are fair and inclusive for learners. They were satisfied the provider has appropriately demonstrated how they are meeting this standard.

- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership –**
 - The provider has several institutional wide policies in place to ensure the effective management of the proposed module. These include, but are not limited to, external examiners handbook and feedback, a recruitment and selection policy, faculty development document, and records of programme strategy and reviews.
 - There are suitably qualified staff in place to oversee the academic quality of the MSc pathways which lead to learners undergoing the proposed module. The Postgraduate Learning Teaching & Quality Committee (PGT LTQC) meet bi -Monthly and have the remit for quality assurance of all modules and programmes. Programmes are reviewed annually. We explored who is responsible for the programme in [quality theme 1](#).
 - There are also suitable mechanisms in place to ensure professional and academic development of educators, as explored in [quality theme 4](#).

- The visitors were satisfied the provider has appropriate module governance, management and leadership in place. They were satisfied the provider has appropriately evidenced they are meeting this standard.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The provider has supplied several documents outlining mechanisms for ensuring the quality, monitoring and evaluation of the module. These include programme strategy and approval documentation, annual programme review minutes, learner survey action plan and others covered module development guides.
 - The module will be reviewed annually. They have developed a Course Strategy meeting, which includes relevant members of the team. They have the remit to review module content to ensure current and compliant with national curricula and guidance, feedback, proposals for programme or module changes. This is based on external examiner and learner feedback, review learner registration numbers and programme capacity.
 - They are developing relevant policies in line with the module development regarding learner involvement. We further explored service user involvement in [quality theme 3](#). They have ensured the module will be delivered by qualified, experienced and suitably trained staff, explored in [quality theme 4](#).
 - The visitors were satisfied there are suitable monitoring and development processes in to ensure the module is relevant, appropriate and led by experienced staff. They were satisfied the provider has appropriately evidenced they are meeting this standard.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - Due to this module being part of an MSc pathway for postgraduate learners who are already employed in a variety of healthcare providers the university does not formally arrange placements. The provider is reliant on the NHS Trusts to support learners in areas of potential conflict, monitoring and reporting by the work practices and safeguarding.
 - Staff and learners will be provided with appropriate/required practice guidance for placement learning. The visitors explored how the provider ensures the quality of placements and placement educators in [quality theme 5](#). They also explored how the provider will appropriately support learners in placement settings in [quality theme 6](#).
 - The provider has proposed the development of a placement learning policy, practice supervisor handbook and Module guide.
 - The visitors were satisfied the provider has appropriate processes in place to ensure support for learners, considering learners will already be employed at their placements. They were satisfied the provider has appropriately evidenced they are meeting this standard.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - The provider has supplied external examiner feedback from the last three years. They also have institution wide documents supporting

learner progression and achievement, and appeals guidance and policies.

- The provider has clear guidance for learners and staff relating to Academic appeals.
- The programme on which the proposed module sits has an external examiner who is required to go through a selection process and has appropriate skills and knowledge of the MSc pathway. The visitors were satisfied the provider is ensuring there is an appropriate marking process in place which is quality assured and has suitably qualified examiners, as explored in [quality theme 8](#).
- The visitors were satisfied there are institution wide policies ensuring appropriate assessment of learners, with suitably qualified external examiners and quality assurance processes. They were satisfied the provider has appropriately evidenced they are meeting this standard.

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
Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	FLX (Flexible)		30	June 2023

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.

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.

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

Quality theme 1 – Clarity on roles of placement educators

Area for further exploration: The provider has an employer handbook which demonstrates explains the appropriate collaboration between the provider and practice education providers. However, with regards to prescribing it does not highlight the specific requirements of the employer to supply a prescribing mentor. Given the prescribing module is a core module, the visitors agreed this is a significant omission from section five which outlines mentors' roles in supporting learners. The visitors explored how the provider can ensure there is clarification for employers and placement educators regarding their roles in supporting learners, ensuring the appropriateness and preparedness of these roles is outlined. It is important the employer and placement educators understand their requirements for supporting learners whilst they undertake the module.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider responded to the visitors concerns by revising their Employer Handbook. They included details on employer requirements around supervisor and assessor training and preparation. It also directs placement educators to up-to-date online information and has details of the module steering group. They have outlined the collaboration with employers in the Independent and Supplementary Prescribing (I&SP) Supervisor & Assessor Handbook. There are signposts to the Warwick Medical School Education Quality Team (WMS EQT) for submission of module feedback & evaluation by placement educators. The visitors reviewed these changes to the documentation and were satisfied the provider has suitably clarified the roles of employers and placement educators. They agreed they have put in appropriate measures to support placement educators for their roles.

Quality theme 2 – Ensuring suitability of placements.

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined how learners enrol on the module with placement/ employment in place already. Although this ensures suitable capacity of practiced based learning for all learners, subsequent placement monitoring meetings appear to be centred on learner progress with no reference to ensuring ongoing suitability of the placement. The visitors explored what processes are in place to ensure ongoing audit, suitability, and monitoring of placements, including how concerns or problems are managed. It is important the provider ensures practice placements can appropriately support learners to meet learning objectives for the entirety of the module and there are suitable processes in place to monitor this.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider recognised the importance of ongoing audit and monitoring of placements in their response. For the proposed module, they have introduced a separate I&SP Student Application Form which needs to be completed ahead of learners starting the module. Learners are also required to submit the I&SP Supervisor Nomination Form for approval ahead of the module commencement, which further consolidates placement stability. The provider's I&SP steering group monitor the development of the line managers, mentors and clinical practice supervisors in placements. They state how concerns around placements and supervision arrangements can be raised at the I&SP Module Steering Group for discussion and resolution. There are also opportunities for learners to raise concerns which are also highlighted in the revised I&SP Student Module Guide. The visitors were satisfied the provider has addressed their concerns regarding ensuring the suitability of placements and the support provided for learners.

Quality theme 3 – Ensuring the suitability of external examiners.

Area for further exploration: The provider states external examiners are required to have knowledge of advanced clinical practice programmes. As this is already an existing programme, this role is already filled. It was unclear if the external examiner (EE) for the programme has experience of being a prescriber, to ensure they are suitably qualified to review assessment of this module. The visitors explored how the provider is ensuring the EEs are appropriately experienced and qualified to assess learners on this module. It is important for EEs to be suitably skilled and knowledgeable to review learners work throughout all aspects of the programme, or for the provider to ensure there are processes in place to ensure there are alternative mechanisms in place for this module.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined how they are currently recruited a new EE for the ACP MSc programmes, as the current EE is concluding their term. They have stated if the new EE for the ACP MSc is not a suitably qualified prescriber, then they will recruit I& a separate EE appointment for the I&SP module. They provided reassurances they will ensure the EE for the module is appropriately experienced and qualified. The visitors were satisfied with this response and were reassured the provider is ensuring the suitability of EE for this module.

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 not applicable for the approval of this module as it is a post-registration module. The provider is a new provider proposing the approval of a post-registration module for Independent and

Supplementary Prescribing, for which SET 1 is therefore not mapped against.

- **SET 2: Programme admissions –**
 - All learners undertaking the module must be enrolled on the provider's advanced clinical practice Masters degree. Learner's ability to achieve the entry standards are checked and confirmed as a core premise of registration onto the module, as outlined in their employer handbook and programme approval form.
 - The provider gave clarify on the programme's association to the apprenticeship programme. They outline how there are four ACP Masters programmes currently being offered including two apprenticeships and two standard MSc programmes. All four ACP programmes utilise the same admissions criteria. They acknowledged the I&SP module's completion leads to professional accreditation and therefore needs extra consideration and developed a separate I&SP Student Application Form in order to re-check and ensure learner suitability. This is irrespective of the mode of entry onto the ACP MSc programme.
 - The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate processes in place to ensure appropriate learner admissions onto the module. They were satisfied the provider has evidenced their ability to meet this SET through their submission.

- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership –**
 - The module is overseen by a Module Steering Group who meet monthly to cover academic and pastoral aspects of the module, including module development and learner wellbeing. This is governed by Prescribing Module Steering Group Terms of Reference. The provider ensures capacity of learner placements through ensuring these are in place as a requirement for enrolment onto the module, as explored through [quality theme 1](#). They have several partnerships with other organisations to support learners with placements when needed. They ensure ongoing suitability of placements through ongoing audit and monitoring as explored in [quality theme 2](#).
 - The provider has a substantial faculty of academic staff and practice educators with teaching experience in basic pharmacology and prescribing skills in a range of clinical specialties. There are a range of online platforms which will be readily accessible to learners and staff across all of the learning and teaching environments. This includes seminar timetables, slides and recordings, guidance and training. The visitors were satisfied the provider has evidenced their ability to meet this SET through their submission.

- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The provider clearly outlined the module's learning objectives (LOs) in the module guide and learner clinical practical logbook. These LOs are mapped to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) publication "A Competency Framework for All Prescribers". The LOs also define the criteria for supervisor and assessor recruitment for learner academic support, indicated in the "Prescribing Practice Supervisor and Assessor

Guide". The provider states commitment to high professional standards of behaviour, performance and conduct in prescribing, with consideration for ethics, is central to the proposed prescribing module.

- The module consists of a blend of virtual learning environments and face-to-face learning. This includes taught theory coursework in the form of seminars, tutorials, and quizzes, in addition to self-directed online theory learning resources and practice-based learning. This is all monitored, reviewed, and supported by practice-based supervisors, assessors, and learner logbooks. The visitors agreed the module clearly evidences the inclusion of a range of teaching methods which are focused on efficient and optimal delivery of taught sessions and oversight of the practice-based learning. Module documentation highlights the importance of reflective learning in prescribing training and practice for learners.
 - The provider has acquired licences for HealthVLE and SN@P software which is developed specifically to support prescribing training by higher education institutions. The curriculum will be subject to review as part of the standard University process of teaching quality control and curriculum review, including responding to learner feedback. The visitors were satisfied the provider has evidenced their ability to meet this SET through their submission.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - The provider stated practice-based learning will take place in the learner's workplace as part of their enrolment onto the ACP MSc. The visitors agreed there is clear evidence throughout the programme handbook, module document and prescribing supervisor nomination form that practice based learning is key and fully integrated into the module. Learners complete a Student Clinical Practice Logbook in conjunction with educators in the practice environment and this is submitted as part of the learner portfolio for final academic assessment.
 - There are appropriate processes in place to ensure practice educators are suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the role and support learners. They must be a qualified prescriber, registered with an appropriate professional body and have relevant skills, knowledge and experience to support safe and effective learning. The visitors agreed this was appropriate to ensure their suitability for the role. There are guidance, monitoring and audit documents to support this. The visitors were satisfied the provider has evidenced their ability to meet this SET through their submission.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - The assessment components for the module are described in the Prescribing Module Guide and are aligned to the module learning outcomes. These are mapped in full to reflect the standards set out in the RPS Competency Framework. Practice-based assessment is carried out by qualified practice educators in keeping with the module standards emphasised. The module guide and employer handbook evidence the assessment strategy and the methods of assessment used.

- All assessment is learning outcome driven to ensure safe prescribing is achieved. In addition the strategy employed reflects those used by other providers offering the programme. The provider reassured the visitors they have suitable processes in place to ensure the external examiners are appropriately qualified to mark assessments on the proposed module in [quality theme 3](#). The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate assessment mechanisms in place for the module. The visitors were satisfied the provider has evidenced their ability to meet this SET through their submission.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:

- The visitors agreed using purpose designed software as outlined above offers a 3rd dimension to learning and helps to ensure the curriculum remains current as it is updated on a regular basis to reflect best practice.
- Placement teaching is clearly central to the programme as evidenced in the module documentation, placement log and employer handbook.

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:

- All standards are met, and therefore the University of Warwick's programmes should be approved.
- The provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2026-27 academic year.

Reason for next engagement recommendation: The visitors have recommended a four-year review period for the provider to engage with the performance review process. They agreed this is an appropriate time for the provider to run their new

programme and build insight and reflections to show performance. It will ensure there are several cohorts of learners who have complete the programme which will provide valuable data on learner experience and performance evaluation from the provider.

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 institution and programmes are approved
- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2026-27 academic year

Reason for this decision: The Education and Training Panel agreed with the findings of the visitors. They are satisfied the programme meets all the appropriate standards and responded to quality activities accordingly. They agreed approval of this programme to start in 2023 and for the education provider's next performance review engagement to be in 2026-27.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

No current open programmes at this institution.