
Approval process report

Keele University, Occupational Therapy, 2022-23

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve an occupational therapy programme at Keele 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 practise.

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 programme is 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 assessment was not referred from another process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whether the programme(s) is / are approved
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provider's next performance review is in the 2023-24 academic year. They are due to submit their documents on 8 March 2024.• They are also seeking approval for speech and language therapy provision. The education provider is due to submit their documents by the end of February 2024. The programme is scheduled to start in September 2024.

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

This is a report on the 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:

Patricia McClure	Lead visitor, occupational therapist
Joanne Stead	Lead visitor, occupational therapist
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers nine HCPC-approved programmes across five professions including one prescribing programme. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2009.

The proposed programme sits within the School of Allied Health Professions. The school includes programmes in physiotherapy, diagnostic radiography, rehabilitation and exercise science, prosthetics and orthotics, and occupational therapy.

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	Biomedical scientist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2009
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2018
	Prosthetist / Orthotist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2022
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2017
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing		2014	

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	450	495	2022	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

				<p>proposing through the new provision.</p> <p>We explored whether there are sufficient resources for an effective programme as detailed in quality theme 2, quality theme 4, and quality theme 5. The visitors were satisfied with the evidence provided, which assured them the standards were met and adequately addressed their concerns.</p>
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	1%	2019-2020	<p>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.</p> <p>The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 1%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing above sector norms.</p>
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	97%	2019-2020	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is data delivery – a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests</p>

				<p>the education provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 3%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing above sector norms.</p>
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	74.6%	74.5%	2022	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is broadly equal to the benchmark, which suggests the education provider's performance in this area is in line with sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 7%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing in line with sector norms.</p>

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 –**
 - The education provider's website provides information, including a breakdown of the entry requirements for all programmes, academic grade requirements, criminal records declaration, health check requirements, and the requirement to attend an interview. Programme specification documents are available for all programmes. These provide full information about programmes for a specific year of entry. They include information about fees and additional costs such as membership of professional bodies. Copies of programme specifications are sent to applicants.
 - Applicants are provided with admissions information during open day talks.
 - 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.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
 - The education provider sets English language entry requirements at programme level. Applicants from non-English-speaking countries must have the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score. For undergraduate programmes, applicants must have a GCSE in English. For postgraduate programme, applicants must have either an honours degree from a UK university or the required IELTS grade. Applicants' English language skills are assessed as part of the interview process.
 - The criminal record declaration procedure is set at education provider level. Applicants are required to declare any criminal convictions. The education provider has a policy about disclosure and barring service (DBS) which applicants need to satisfy. Applicants are required to obtain occupational health clearance.
 - 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.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - The education provider has a Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience (RPEL) process which applies to all programmes where RPEL is permitted. Each application is considered individually by the

relevant programme director and school, using the policy to assess suitability of the prior learning.

- 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.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider informed us they are committed to ensuring equality for staff, learners, and applicants. They are a member of the Race Equality Charter, Athena Swan, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and a Disability Confident Employer.
 - All staff involved in interviewing are required to do equality, diversity, and inclusion training. Interviews are undertaken by a minimum of two people which the education provider aims to eliminate the potential for bias from one individual.
 - The education provider's admissions policy ensures interviewers ensure equal opportunities are maintained. This includes seeking further support from learner support resources and making reasonable adjustments if both are necessary.
 - 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Management and governance

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register¹ –**
 - There are academic standards at the education provider level which conform to the Quality Assurance Agency's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications levels and subject benchmark statements where applicable.
 - Programmes are validated through Standing Validation Panels. These confirm the modules and programme are at the correct level to achieve the award.
 - Annual programme reviews take place and external examiners comment on benchmark statements where applicable.
 - 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 –**

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

- Each school within the education provider has a budget which is reviewed regularly by the Faculty Management Accountant.
- All modules and programmes are reviewed regularly using education provider quality assurance processes to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Stakeholders are involved in the development of new provision and are consulted during the revalidation process to ensure the programmes meet the needs of the future workforce for the professions.
- 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 programme delivery –**
 - Education provider governance structures are standard for all programmes. Programme level meetings report into the School Education Committee. This reports to the Faculty Education Committee and ultimately the University Education Committee.
 - Education provider regulations provide the framework for programme management.
 - 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 –**
 - The education provider has a probation procedure for all staff. There is a supportive and developmental probation process for newly-appointed lecturers with less than three years' experience in an academic role as the education provider considers it vital to provide an appropriate level of support and training.
 - Staff Performance Review and Enhancement (SPRE) is mandatory for all staff. SPRE provides a framework for managers and staff to work together. This is to ensure expectations are realistic and relevant to the overall strategic direction of the education provider, and to career-planning and work needs of individual staff.
 - Lecturers are supported by their programme director and governance structures in the schools and education provider, and senior staff.
 - Academic staff can request study leave to support their development.
 - Organisational development offers training and support to all staff. Academic staff are encouraged and supported to become members of the Higher Education Authority. The Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence (KIITE) supports staff development. It does this by offering expertise in areas such as academic development, technology, and employability.
 - 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 –**

- Partnerships are established with a host of NHS providers to support practice education provision for programmes. The education provider has agreements in place with these practice education providers to support learning and the provision of the future workforce.
- 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - Academic Quality is maintained through a cycle of monitoring, review, and evaluation. This includes module evaluation by learners, review of performance on modules, annual programme review and internal quality audits. Programme teams meet to discuss any proposed changes to modules based on all feedback. This process is set at education provider level.
 - External examiners are appointed for all programmes. This is set at education provider level. Feedback from external examiners is received and responded to following examination boards. Programme teams discuss external examiner feedback and how to respond.
 - 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.

- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - There are quality processes for ensuring the quality of practice-based learning. There is a practice-based learning team who carry out quality assurance checks on all practice education providers. They also provide training for new practice educators and refresher training courses for more established practice educators.
 - A staff member meets, face-to-face or online, the learner and their clinical educator for all practice-based learning. During link tutor visits and in practice-based learning debriefs learners are asked about any safeguarding issues, serious untoward incidents, discrimination, and whistleblowing situations. These are documented in the link tutor visit form and practice-based learning debrief form.
 - Learners are provided with practice-based learning handbooks.
 - Non-medical prescribing learners are in their own workplaces during their time on the programme.

- 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.
- **Learner involvement –**
 - Learner representatives are chosen by the cohort. They attend Student Staff Voice Committee (SSVC) meetings to give the views of their cohort. SSVC feedback comes to programme meetings and onto the school education committee. Learner feedback is also used to inform any changes to modules/programmes.
 - Learner group feedback is requested when programmes are going through revalidation or new programmes are being developed.
 - Both the Students' Union and Postgraduate Association are the education provider's learner bodies' organisations and have representation on internal committees.
 - 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.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - Service users and carers are involved in many areas of programmes. They contribute towards programme boards, teaching and learning and recruitment and selection.
 - Service users attend and contribute to programme meetings such as the annual undergraduate programme review.
 - 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**
 - The education provider sets all learners' rights and responsibilities through University Regulation B. This is set at education provider level. This includes support such as exceptional circumstances.
 - The Support to Study Policy is set at education provider level. This applies when learners need additional support to continue their studies. A plan is put in place to help the learner move forward with their studies.
 - The Personal Tutoring / Academic Mentoring code of practice is set at education provider level. Learners are allocated a personal tutor (academic mentor from academic year 2022/23) who signposts to support services if appropriate. Learner Experience and Support Officers can also perform this function.

- If a learner requires reasonable adjustments, they can contact learner services.
- University Regulation B7 determines the process by which all current and recent learners can make a complaint. This is set at education provider level. They should first attempt to resolve the issue locally. If this is not possible learners should speak with the Early Resolution Officer in the school. Learners may progress to making a formal complaint if they are not satisfied at this stage. If the outcome of the complaint does not satisfy the learner, they may submit a grievance. Following the grievance learners may contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if still not satisfied.
- 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.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - University Regulation B5 Fitness to Practice is set at education provider level. Schools with regulated programmes have a Health and Conduct Committee. If there is a concern around a learner's health and / or conduct, they will be referred to this committee. An investigation will take place and the report from this, along with the referral and any supporting evidence, will go to the panel. The learner is invited to attend a meeting to discuss the case. The committee can choose to allow the learner to return to the programme, return with conditions, or refer the case on to the Fitness to Practise Committee. This committee is chaired by the Dean of Faculty and has the power to withdraw learners from a programme.
 - Declarations relating to the health and suitability of learners are required annually. Learners are also required to inform the education provider if there are any changes on their DBS clearance.
 - 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.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - Learners engage with IPE throughout their programme.
 - Learners learn with and from professionals from a variety of clinical backgrounds and areas of expertise in both academic and clinical settings.
 - Learners also learn alongside learners from other professions. They are both taught and produce work together.
 - 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.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider informed us they are committed to ensuring equality for learners. They are a member of the Race Equality Charter,

Athena Swan, Stonewall Diversity Champion, and a Disability Confident Employer.

- The education provider runs equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) inductions for learners. They also have learner and staff working groups to implement action plans. The education provider has EDI statements on their webpages to highlight inclusive practice.
- 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - This regulation is set at education provider level and applies to all programmes. Assessments are designed to ensure they test learning outcomes. They are reviewed as part of module approval and revisions.
 - The education provider has exemptions from anonymous marking where it is not possible. For example, for presentations.
 - 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.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - Regulations here are set at education provider level and apply to all programmes. Programme specifications explain protected titles and exit awards for learners.
 - The University Academic Warning Policy makes learners aware of expectations about engagement.
 - Programme attendance requirements are stated in programme handbooks and are communicated to learners.
 - 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.
- **Appeals –**
 - This regulation is set at education provider level and applies to all programmes. Learners have the right to appeal and may only do so on the basis of exceptional circumstances not known at the time or procedural irregularity.
 - 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.

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 programme is supported by the Director of Education and the Director for Postgraduate Programmes. These roles are in place. The Programme Director has been appointed. They will be joined by another two members of staff who will be HCPC and Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) registered. The business case has provision for further staff as the programme develops and learner numbers increase. The staff:student ratio will be maintained at 1:15 as per RCOT recommendations.
- The education provider has developed clinical and simulation suites under the Faculty Director of Skills and Simulation. These are both within several Clinical Skills Houses both on campus and at University Hospital North Midlands Clinical Education Centre. The on-campus simulation suite will include specialist occupational therapy provision. For example, semi and fully adapted kitchens. The education provider informed us they offer on-site library facilities, clinical suites, and learner services. They use service users within teaching in all years of the programme and as lay members of the Student Staff Voice Committee.
- The education provider informed us of the teaching resources and support mechanisms are in place. They are an education provider with multiple health related programmes already in place. Further specific resources for the programme are in advanced planning. These were part of the initial and full business case approved in 2022 in anticipation of this new programme of study.

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,	Proposed start date

			and frequency	
MSc Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational Therapy	22 learners, one cohort per year	20/01/2024

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.

Performance data

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.

Quality theme 1 – future collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted there was a Stakeholder Group who have carried out a consultation about the proposed programme and held meetings to discuss the new programme. This group consisted of representatives from the education provider and local practice education partners. The visitors considered the collaboration which had taken place to date and were satisfied it was effective. However, the visitors were unsure what collaboration will take place in the future. This is so the arrangements for working with others reflects a partnership and ongoing relationship. They 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 informed us regular stakeholder meetings will continue with local practice education providers. They will also involve representatives of the local Integrated Care System. The focus of these meetings will be to monitor local workforce requirements, responding where appropriate to the local organisations workforce demands, and provide regular updates regarding the programme, such as sharing recruitment and attrition data.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them of the collaboration which will take place in the future.

Quality theme 2 – adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to delivery an effective programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted there is currently one member of occupational therapy staff in place. They noted two others have been appointed but were unsure if they had started yet. The visitors understand this will give a staff team a total of three occupational therapy staff prior to the start of the programme. They were unsure of the total number of hours these staff spent working on the programme. The visitors were therefore unsure whether the proportion of the time occupational therapy staff spent on the programme ensured the delivery of an effective programme. This was to ensure there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

The visitors also noted the education provider had submitted curriculum vitae of the staff team. They noted the staff team had expertise in older people, physical hand injuries, and mental health. The education provider informed us the programme is also supported by staff from the school. The visitors consequently saw the potential that the range of subject areas and expertise may be limited and were unclear how other areas of occupational therapy practice will be addressed. They were unsure how the education provider planned to ensure the full range of specialist practice areas can be taught. They therefore sought more information about these areas.

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 informed us the three occupational therapy staff equate to three whole time equivalent (WTE) hours. They stated all the staff had now started. The education provider also informed us the programme team have been approached by and have sought support for specialist teaching from occupational therapists, who they would employ as visiting lecturers.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them the proportion of time occupational therapy staff spent on the programme ensured the delivery of an effective programme. They were also satisfied the evidence provided assured them the education provider planned to use visiting lecturers to ensure the full range of specialist areas can be taught.

Quality theme 3 – future staffing

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the initial learner intake for the programme was 22 learners. They noted the business case indicated the education provider would be looking to increase the number of learners to 40. The visitors were informed there were three occupational therapy staff in the programme team. However, they were unsure how the profession-specific staff team will grow in response, to ensure there are an appropriate number of staff to deliver the programme effectively. The visitors 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 informed us during the 2023-24 academic year they anticipate there will be an increase to four WTE occupational therapy staff to support the programme. We were informed by 2027-28 there would be a further increase to five WTE occupational therapy staff. The education provider informed us this staff:student ratio would exceed the guidance of the professional body, the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) guidance.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them the profession-specific staff team will grow in response, to ensure there are an appropriate number of staff to deliver the programme effectively.

Quality theme 4 – resources for the programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted plans for appropriate resources are in place to support the effective delivery of the programme. For example, the programme is supported by online resources, specialist equipment and access to generic and occupational therapy-specific teaching spaces e.g., ward environment, activities of daily living (ADL) suite, and sensory room. The visitors understood a new building was under development which would include teaching spaces. They were however unsure of the plans and layout of this occupational therapy physical teaching space. They were also unsure what other equipment and specialist resources will be available, for example for carrying out assessments, consumables, orthotic materials, and moving and handling equipment.

The visitors also understood the programme is supported by library resources. However, they were unsure of the library resources available to learners which are specific to occupational therapy. They therefore sought more information about these areas.

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 informed the visitors the development is for a simulation building. An existing building has been repurposed. It will include rooms such as two ward areas, GP consultation rooms, an occupational therapy workshop, a therapeutic kitchen, a shower room and living space. The education provider informed the visitors this building will be available from early January 2024. The visitors noted the plans for the rooms within this building. This new building will support existing facilities of the health house and bungalow. These are a conventional house and bungalow which have been fitted with cameras to enable live streaming to larger groups for teaching. The education provider informed us learners will also have access to simulation and health library facilities within the Clinical Education Centre at the University Hospital North Midlands.

The education provider informed us they have existing equipment. They stated they are looking at buying specialist moving and handling equipment and had bought equipment for ADL. They were also discussing with practice partners about what equipment is in use now, so this would be useful for learners and prepare them.

The education provider informed the visitors profession-specific library books have been ordered. They were informed occupational therapy specific journals have been ordered, for example, the British Journal of Occupational Therapy, and the Journal of Occupational Therapy Education.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them of the plans and layout of this occupational therapy physical teaching space, and of the resources available to learners which are specific to occupational therapy.

Quality theme 5 – an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced practice educators

Quality activity 1

Area for further exploration: The visitors were informed of the staff within the education provider whose work relates or part-relates to practice-based learning. For example, the lead tutor is responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of practice-based learning and is a HCPC-registered occupational therapist. The education provider also informed us practice educator training and educator updates are available and will be provided. They added a range of additional continual professional development (CPD) opportunities for practice educators are offered to them to support their development needs. Tripartite meetings between the education provider, practice educator and learner support the continued development of practice educators.

The visitors were unsure how the education provider ensures there is enough staff support for learners in practice-based learning, and that they have the appropriate

knowledge, skills and experience to support learners. The visitors therefore sought more information about these areas.

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 informed us all new placements will be reviewed and audited. As part of this, they will gather information about practice educators and their knowledge, skills and expertise. The education provider informed the visitors they have identified specific numbers of occupational therapists and practice educators within each Trust and other organisations who will provide practice-based learning. They have identified there are sufficient numbers of practice educators. The education provider informed the visitors two practice educator courses will be provided prior to the first cohort starting.

Quality activity 2

Area for further exploration: The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them the education provider had the means to ensure there are adequate numbers of practice educators. However, the visitors remained unclear how the education provider ensures practice educators have relevant knowledge, skills, and experience to support safe and effective learning.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by meeting with the education provider and receiving documentation to follow up this meeting. 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 visitors received a redacted practice education audit form. They were able to see and understood the information the education provider obtains to ensure practice educators have the appropriate knowledge, skills, and experience. For example, the education provider requires practice educators to have training and access to policies connected to health, safety and security.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them there is enough staff support for learners in practice-based learning, and that they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to support learners.

Quality theme 6 – the range of practice-based learning

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted there are four practice placements within the programme. The education provider stated the duration of these are six weeks (225 hours), eight weeks (300 hours), six weeks (225 hours), and ten weeks (375 weeks) respectively. The education provider informed us learners will experience diverse practice education opportunities.

The visitors noted the structure and duration of practice-based learning is appropriate to enable learners' achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency. They were however unsure of the range of practice education and how contemporary and non-traditional practice education will be integrated into the programme. The visitors sought more information about these areas.

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 informed us the programme team aim to develop a range of non-traditional, leadership and research placement opportunities. These will be undertaken by some learners during the third and fourth practice education opportunity. We were informed this strategy allows learners to develop professional identity, gain profession specific knowledge and develop skills to support their success in practice education. The education provider stated the programme team and School placement team have experience of supporting the development of non-traditional, leadership and research placements.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence provided assured them of the range of practice education and how contemporary and non-traditional practice education will be integrated into the programme.

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 selection and entry criteria are outlined in generic University Admissions process and policy documentation and in programme specific documents. Suitable qualifications for entry normally include:
 - a 2:1 degree (or above) in a subject other than pre-registration Occupational Therapy
 - a 2:2 undergraduate degree in a relevant subject with a minimum of 2 years relevant experience and evidence of continued professional development activity.
 - Satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or an overseas police check, and health checks are required for all applicants who are successful at interview.
 - Applicants must meet English language requirements of IELTS 7.0 with a minimum of 6.5 in each component, or equivalent.
 - Admissions criteria for the programme will be reviewed regularly to ensure academic and professional standards are maintained. Applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged.
 - Applicants need to provide a personal statement demonstrating professional suitability, motivation to achieve the standards of the programme and a good understanding of occupational therapy.
 - Applicants also need to provide a satisfactory reference from a previous employer, educational institution, or person of standing providing support in terms of the applicants' good character and academic abilities.
 - The visitors therefore considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
 - Local practice partners and employers have been involved in the development of the programme. As detailed in [quality theme 1](#), a Stakeholder Group received stakeholder feedback about the proposed programme. The education provider will continue to gather feedback from stakeholders.
 - There is a placement team within the School of Allied Health Professions. Within the occupational therapy team, there is a specific member who leads on occupational therapy practice-based learning. They are responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of occupational therapy placements. The placement team has regular communication with practice partners. These communications discuss availability of practice-based learning, placement expansion and innovation.

- The school practice education team is in regular communication with practice partners. Communication ensures placement capacity is available and that placement expansion and innovation is considered.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 2](#), the programme team consists of three full time equivalent occupational therapy lecturers. They all have experience of teaching occupational therapy education, curriculum development and design within occupational therapy programmes. They have all completed a minimum of a Masters level qualification and are HCPC registered. They are all currently engaged in research or scholarship activities and have experience of leadership.
 - The programme is supported by staff from the wider school. Academic staff from the wider school team who also teach on the programme are also HCPC registered. The education provider uses a workload allocation model. The workload model is applied to all staff and includes teaching and learning activities, student support, research or scholarship and leadership and citizenship. There will be also opportunities for subject experts (service users and occupational therapists) to support teaching activities. The programme team has been approached by and have sought support for specialist teaching from occupational therapists, who they will employ as visiting lecturers.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 3](#), the initial learner intake for the programme is 22 learners. The business case indicated the education provider would be looking to increase the number of learners to 40. The education provider anticipates an appropriate increase of staff to support the programme.
 - All staff engage in a range of internal mandatory training and internal and external CPD opportunities.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 4](#), the programme is supported by online and library resources, specialist equipment and access to generic and occupational therapy-specific teaching spaces, e.g., ward environment, activities of daily living (ADL) suite, and sensory room, to meet the needs of learners and educators. An existing building has been repurposed. The building will be available from early January 2024. It will support existing facilities.
 - The business case indicated there was a budget for occupational therapy equipment.
 - Profession-specific library books have been ordered. They were informed occupational therapy specific journals have been ordered.
 - The visitors therefore considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - As evidenced through the mapping document and module descriptors, visitors noted the content and learning outcomes were outlined for the programme.
 - Professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, are taught throughout the programme. This is

clearly demonstrated in the module learning outcomes in the module descriptors.

- Learners will engage in modules of shared teaching. There will also be opportunities within all modules to apply the teaching specifically to occupational therapy. The core principles of occupational therapy and occupation-centred practice are embedded throughout the programme.
 - The school and education provider's internal quality assurance and monitoring processes support programme teams to regularly review and enhance the curriculum to ensure its currency. External mechanisms such as external examiners, also support these processes.
 - Learners develop essential knowledge prior to their first practice-based learning. They then apply this knowledge in practice. Following each practice-based learning, learners apply their practice-based learning within their academic studies.
 - The programme uses a variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods. For example, lectures, practical workshops, seminars, peer teaching, journal clubs, 1:1 supervision and essays, poster presentations, critical appraised topic, and exams.
 - The programme has been designed to meet the requirements of the Office for Students, to be consistent with the expectations of good practice as outlined by the UK Quality Code. It has been designed to reflect the education provider's Curriculum Design Framework, Learning and Teaching Strategy and Learning Principles.
 - Learners will develop their skills in autonomy, reflection, and scope of practice throughout the programme. The expectations of their achievements during their practice-based learning placements increases as they develop greater knowledge, understanding and experience. The ability to reflect, think critically and plan is assessed both academically and in practice. CPD and lifelong learning will be integrated throughout the curriculum and will be a significant aspect of the academic mentoring system.
 - The proposed programme aims to develop a strong professional identity within the learner cohort. This professional identity is reflected by the staff team. Learners will be encouraged to become involved and participate in wider professional networks and activities.
 - Evidence-based practice and research education and skill development is embedded throughout the programme. For example, the module Leadership and Service Development offers learners opportunities to gain knowledge and practical experience of evaluating and improving service.
 - The visitors therefore considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - Practice based learning is central to the programme. The programme offers four practice education opportunities. Learners will experience

diverse practice education opportunities and will be able to apply their knowledge, skills, and values in all practice-based learning.

- As detailed in [quality theme 6](#), the education provider informed us the programme team aim to develop a range of non-traditional, leadership and research placement opportunities. The education provider informed us the Trusts who provide practice education for the programme have a wide range of practice education opportunities. For example, mental health disabilities, and rehabilitation. The visitors were informed they have been seeking out non-traditional practice education such as recovery, research, and leadership.
 - The practice-based learning lead tutor is responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of practice-based learning. They are supported by a multi-professional placement team and an administrative team. The placement and administrative teams are responsible for managing practice education and placement expansion and innovation.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 5](#), the education provider has identified specific numbers of practice educators within each Trust and other organisations who will provide practice-based learning. All practice educators are suitably qualified and HCPC registered occupational therapists. The education provider will provide two practice educator courses during the first year of the programme as well as regular updates.
 - There are a range of additional CPD opportunities for practice educators offered to support their development needs. Tripartite meetings between the education provider, practice educator and learner support the continued development of practice educators. There is an audit process undertaken by the education provider to ensure practice educators have the appropriate knowledge, skills, and experience.
 - The Practice Based Learning Handbook describes the process for assessment of practice education learning outcomes. The Placement Assessment Document has been mapped to the standards of proficiency. The assessment documents and module learning outcomes demonstrate the progression across the practice education modules.
 - The programme has been structured to enable learners to gain knowledge for practice, apply knowledge in practice and apply knowledge gained in practice into future academic modules.
 - A variety of placement models currently are used, for example, long arm supervision, and will be implemented where appropriate.
 - The visitors therefore considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - The assessment requirements were clearly evidenced in the programme specification, the rationale document and module descriptors. The assessments are aligned to allow learners to

demonstrate how they meet the learning outcomes. The standards of proficiency were mapped to programme learning outcomes and assessments.

- Professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, are assessed throughout the programme. This is demonstrated in the learning outcomes in the module descriptors.
- The assessment methods use a range of techniques and technologies. For example, direct observation during practice-based learning. The assessment methods are consistent with the educational aims and learning outcomes for the programme.
- The number and types of assessment utilised within each module result from a variety of factors. For example, the need to successfully achieve the module learning outcomes, and the desire to include a variety of assessment to enable all learners to excel. Assessment submissions are spread across the academic year to reduce assessment burden and bunching and improve the experience of learners.
- The visitors therefore considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: 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:

- 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

Reason for this decision: As above

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
Keele University	CAS-01334-N4F1N2	Patricia McClure and Joanne Stead	Through this assessment, we have noted the programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.	<p>The programme is supported by the Director of Education and the Director for Postgraduate Programmes. These roles are in place. The Programme Director has been appointed. They will be joined by another two members of staff who will be HCPC and RCOT-registered. The business case has provision for further staff as the programme develops and learner numbers increase. The staff: student ratio will be maintained at 1:15 as per RCOT recommendations.</p> <p>The education provider has developed clinical and simulation suites under the Faculty Director of Skills and Simulation. These are both within several Clinical Skills Houses both on campus and at University Hospital North Midlands Clinical Education Centre. The on-campus simulation suite will include specialist occupational therapy provision. For example, semi and fully adapted kitchens. The education provider informed us they offer on-site library facilities, clinical suites, and learner services. They use service users within teaching in all years of the programme and as lay members of the Student Staff Voice Committee.</p> <p>The education provider informed us many of the teaching resources and support mechanisms are in place. They</p>

				are an education provider with multiple health related programmes already in place. Further specific resources for the programme are in advanced planning. These were part of the initial and full business case approved in 2022 in anticipation of this new programme of study.
Programmes				
Programme name			Mode of study	Nature of provision
MSc Occupational Therapy			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) Applied Biomedical Science	FT (Full time)	Biomedical scientist			01/09/2009
MSci Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (with international year)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/08/2018
MSc Physiotherapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2020
MSci Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2019
MSci Physiotherapy (with International year)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2019
MSc Prosthetics and Orthotics	FT (Full time)	Prosthetist / orthotist			01/01/2022
BSc (Hons) Radiography (Diagnostic Imaging)	FLX (Flexible)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		26/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Radiography (Diagnostic Imaging)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/2017
Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014