
Performance review process report

University of Wolverhampton, 2018-22

Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of the University of Wolverhampton. This report captures the process we have undertaken to consider the performance of the institution in delivering HCPC-approved programmes. This enables us to make risk-based decisions about how to engage with this provider in the future, and to consider if there is any impact on our standards being met.

We have:

- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission to consider which themes needed to be explored through quality activities
- Undertook quality activities to arrive at our judgement on performance, including when the institution should next be reviewed
- Recommended when the institution should next be reviewed
- Decided when the institution should next be reviewed

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- the education provider had provided clear reflection about their enterprise activities and staff retention
- the education provider had appropriately reflected how they plan to use simulation
- the education provider had provided clear reflection about their progress with interprofessional education (IPE)
- the diversity of Service Users and Carers Contributing to Educating Students for Services (SUCCESS) and their involvement in the new biomedical science session
- the education provider provided clear reflection about the work they have done across the protected characteristics related to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- there is clear reflection about how effective the variability in feedback collection and analysis has been in relation to learners and practice educators.

The provider should next engage with monitoring in five years, the 2027-28 academic year, because they:

- are committed to quality assurance
 - responded positively to the challenges of COVID-19
 - are responsive to recommendations from external regulators and professional bodies
 - identified areas which needed attention and reflected on their plans to address them
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- have implemented strategies to facilitate and respond to feedback from stakeholders.
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Previous consideration Not applicable. This performance review process was not referred from another process.

Decision The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide:

- when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be
- whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how

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

- Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2027-28 academic year

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

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

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

Our standards

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

Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

The performance review process

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

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

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

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

Thematic areas reviewed

We normally focus on the following areas:

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

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to design quality assurance assessments, and assess evidence and information relevant to the assessment. Visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make the decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee takes decisions through different levels depending on the routines and impact of the decision, and where appropriate meets in public. Their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

The assessment panel for this review

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

Keren Cohen	Lead visitor, Practitioner Psychologist, Counselling Psychologist
Carol Ainley	Lead visitor, Biomedical Scientist
Ian Hughes	Service User Expert Advisor
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer
Tracey Samuel-Smith	Education Manager

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 15 HCPC-approved programmes across six professions and including three prescribing programmes. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2004.

HCPC approved programmes are within the School of Allied Health and Midwifery. This School was created in November 2022. This was resulted from restructure of the Faculty of Education, Health and Wellbeing (FEHW).

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	2010
	Chiropodist / podiatrist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
	Occupational therapy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2016
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2017
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2004
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2020

Institution performance data

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

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	160	639	2022	<p>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 was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners above the benchmark.</p> <p>We reviewed the sustainability of the programmes / institution. As detailed in quality theme 1, the visitors were assured the education provider was financially secure and stable.</p>
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	3%	2019-2020	<p>This HESA data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider’s performance in</p>

				<p>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 1%.</p> <p>We did not explore this as the education provider is performing in line with sector norms.</p>
<p>Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study</p>	94%	96%	2019-2020	<p>This Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is above 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 5%.</p> <p>We did not explore this as the education provider is performing above sector norms.</p>
<p>Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award</p>	n/a	Silver	June 2018	<p>The definition of a Silver TEF award is "Provision is of high quality, and significantly and consistently exceeds the baseline quality threshold expected of UK Higher Education."</p> <p>We explored this by assessing the education</p>

				provider's analysis of the data point. We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	75.2%	72.6%	2022	<p>This NSS data was sourced at the summary. This means the data is the provider-level public data.</p> <p>The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 8%.</p> <p>We explored this by assessing the education provider's analysis of the data point. We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.</p>

Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

Quality theme 1 – financial security, including staff retention

Area for further exploration: The visitors recognised most HCPC approved programmes were in the School of Allied Health and Midwifery. The visitors noted the School received additional income from enterprise activities and this had alleviated some of the financial pressure on the School. The education provider informed us the detail of these activities was commercially sensitive. The visitors were unclear whether the School was dependent on this income. The visitors therefore sought more information about this.

The education provider also reflected upon their concerns relating to jobs in higher education becoming less attractive to clinicians, unless there was an increase in the salary of lecturers. The visitors were unsure what actions the education provider had undertaken to retain staff and their reflections on the developments considering this. They therefore sought more information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 enterprise activities are a supplement to the finances of the School and they reflected how they were not essential to the overall financial viability. The additional income had been used to provide opportunities for the education provider to buy new equipment, provide enhanced staff development opportunities, enhance the learner experience, and develop research. Also, this increased the School contribution to the wider education provider as part of a financial recovery programme.

The education provider reflected, they had performed well in terms of staff retention in comparison to other education providers and consider their performance was strong. They had supported staff development needs through their staff development budget. Staff had undertaken courses, attended conferences and other development opportunities. We were informed there is a process for lecturers at the top of their scale to progress to a senior lecturer role. This required the support of their line manager and Dean of Faculty. The application is supported if the staff member meets the criteria to progress. Staff looking to progress are supported by their line manager to demonstrate they can work at a higher level.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided clear and sufficient reflection about their enterprise activities and staff retention in relation to financial security. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Quality theme 2 – use of simulation to alleviate pressure on practice-based learning capacity

Area for further exploration: The education provider informed the visitors the capacity of practice-based learning provision was a concern. They indicated this was for several reasons. For example: COVID-19 and new programmes in the area resulted in capacity issues. The visitors noted the reflection about how, during COVID-19, academic staff had provided additional clinical scenario support and assessed learners through simulation. This had been well received by learners and was being taken forward. However, they were unsure what plans the education provider had for using simulation as an alternative to practice-based learning to alleviate pressure on regional capacity. They therefore sought more information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 recognised practice-based learning provision is of concern across the UK. We were informed the education provider are working with NHS England to secure appropriate practice-based learning in different settings. In terms of simulation, the education provider reflected on they plan to use it in many of their programmes. For instance, the education provider planned to run several days of simulation for final year paramedic learners to supplement learning they achieved in practice and increase capacity. The education provider reflected on how learners have been co-creators in this. They decided on the areas they would like to work on in simulation and developed some of the case studies. The education provider stated the scenarios will be run in real-time, and learners will need to do everything they would do in a real-life situation. Lecturers have the option to pause the scenario, but learners have asked for this to be as close to reality as possible.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided clear and sufficient reflection about how they plan to use simulation. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Quality theme 3 – quality assurance mechanisms for international practice-based learning for the physiotherapy programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted a proposal to have an exchange programme with Mediterranean College, their partner in Greece. The visitors were informed the programme is the same in Greece and in the UK, including the learning materials. However, the visitors were unclear of the work the education provider had done to ensure quality will be maintained for the learners spending time in Greece. They therefore sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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: As background information, the education provider outlined how Mediterranean College is their partner in Greece and runs a physiotherapy programme heavily based on the approved programme in the UK. The teaching materials and assessments were developed by the education provider physiotherapy teaching team. These materials were used by the programme team in Greece. The education provider said this ensured the materials are consistent with the approved programme. The visitors understood this separate programme is not approved by the HCPC. Graduates from the programme can apply to the HCPC Register through the international application route only.

Regarding the two physiotherapy learners who undertook a programme exchange with Mediterranean College for six weeks in 2022, assessments were undertaken in the UK, and not during the exchange, to ensure they met UK requirements. Whilst on the exchange programme learners could contact a named link tutor if they were experiencing any issues with the exchange or with their academic work. There was also a weekly Teams meeting between the learner and link tutor.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided a good overview of how they ensured, and reflected, upon the quality of learning undertaken by the two physiotherapy learners during the exchange. They also recognised this may be the start of greater interaction with the College. From their review, the visitors could not identify a risk to how the SOPs were ensured. As such, the quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Quality theme 4 – interprofessional education (IPE)

Area for further exploration: The education provider informed us they had been “slow” to develop their IPE strategy and had fallen behind other education providers in this area. The visitors noted an Inter-professional Experience strategy had been developed. However, the education provider reflected this was not fully implemented due to a lack of leadership and movement of staff. They also reflected how COVID-19 created barriers in the delivery of IPE and considered technology could have been better used to allow for IPE to continue and develop. Considering this, the visitors were unsure what the education provider's plans were regarding progressing the IPE strategic to ensure it informs future practice. The visitors therefore sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 stated how they are progressing with IPE, both as an education provider and specific to professions. Generally, they

reflected upon how they had reinstated the IPE strategy group. Representation on this group was largely at Associate Dean level and there was a clear intention to formalise IPE across the health curricula. The education provider outlined the plan to review the options available to them and to formulate a draft strategy.

The education provider identified one positive from COVID-19 was the ability to bring people together in the virtual environment. However, the education provider reflected, that in some circumstances, this was not always well used. Therefore, the IPE strategy group would be focussing on the use of IT solutions. They envisaged this will inevitably mean they can overcome some of the logistical issues that would otherwise impact meaningful IPE.

Profession specifically:

- Clinical psychology: the programme team plan to develop IPE by developing an interprofessional learning programme that has a cross-subject focus.
- Biomedical science: the programme team are planning to introduce more IPE learning opportunities in the academic taught components, particularly at Level 6. This will be in collaboration with other health related schools in the education provider.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided clear reflection about their progress with IPE. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

However, they recognised there was more work to be undertaken around enhancing the IPE strategy and recommend reflections on these developments are an area to consider through the next performance review.

Quality theme 5 – diversification of SUCCESS and outcomes of involvement

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined they had a university service user and carer team known as SUCCESS. The education provider reflected that most members were in the “older age bracket, and most are white”. During COVID-19, they reflected how service user involvement had been reduced due to members having health conditions and the need to practice social distancing. They are now able to rebuild the team and increase involvement across the programmes. The education provider informed the visitors a change to the recruitment policies was in progress and they believed this should help to broaden the scope and range of individuals involved in SUCCESS. The visitors were unclear of the current progress of the SUCCESS developments. As such, they were unable to determine whether the diversification of the group had taken place and the education provider reflections on this.

The visitors also understood a new session was introduced to a level 4 biomedical science module. This involved using interviews with service users to outline their experiences with pathology services. They discussed how their care had been impacted by pathology services. The visitors were however unsure how this new

session had been evaluated. The visitors therefore sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 new Diversity and Inclusivity Lead reviewed the diversity of SUCCESS. From this, the Lead was satisfied with the level of diversity within the group. The visitors were informed the group included people with a range of protected characteristics. The new Lead for SUCCESS has ensured all group members are given opportunities to work with learners.

The education provider reflected upon the positive feedback received from Applied Biomedical Science learners. The learners had outlined how the session was engaging, helped them meet the learning outcomes, was relevant and helpful to their studies, and was a memorable event. The education provider reflected how the module supported learners to learn about other healthcare science professions and enhance their understanding of the patient's perspective.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided clear reflection about the diversity of SUCCESS and the new Biomedical Science module. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Quality theme 6 – equality, diversity and inclusion diversity

Area for further exploration: The visitors recognised the education provider had undertaken work and research regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). This was particularly around the paramedic provision and the reflection the programme had struggled to recruit black learners. Through a review progression and outcomes over the last five years, they found a disproportionately high number were either not completing or if they were, not completing on time. It was clear the education provider had plans in place to start to address this. For example, the education provider reflected they did not fully understand yet why black learners were not progressing as well as others. As such, the Director of Diversity is to meet with all black learners on the programme to talk about their experiences and barriers to progression.

The visitors recognised the comprehensive research and work into addressing the above concerns. However, they received no reflection about how the education provider had considered other protected characteristics. The visitors were therefore unsure how the education provider had performed in characteristics, such as disability, accessibility, and learning difficulties. The visitors therefore sought more information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 ethnicity was only one part of their EDI strategy. We were informed all learners with additional needs have a Tutor Awareness Sheet. This identifies the adjustments which should be made for that learner. The education provider stated they have recently reflected on this characteristic and introduced a “support to study” process. This is a supportive process to help those learners with specific needs. This process allows lecturers who are concerned about a learner to initiate a meeting with the wellbeing team.

The visitors were informed the education provider’s current focus is on issues in practice-based learning for learners with a disability. The education provider informed us they do not believe these learners should have to repeatedly declare their disability to different practice-based sites. Across the wider institution, the School of Nursing will be employing a principal lecturer with a focus on supporting learners with disabilities in practice-based learning. Following the introduction of this, a review would be undertaken. If the analysis of this is positive, it will be implemented in other schools.

The visitors considered the education provider had provided clear reflection about the work they have done about other factors related to EDI. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors’ queries.

Quality theme 7 – evaluation of changes to the counselling psychology programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors understood, that in 2020, the counselling psychology programme was revalidated. The programme was designed to fit with changes in the education provider’s professional doctorate regulations. These required the programme to have a new credit structure and change the programme from a taught to a research doctorate. The education provider reflected how the programme team found this challenging as they needed to ensure the programme continued to meet its aim of being a clinical training programme. The visitors did not receive any subsequent reflections to demonstrate how any changes had been the evaluated. They therefore sought further information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 challenge related to the need to meet a new set of regulations. We were informed the programme team worked to change the number of modules and reduce ‘clinical /

teaching' credits, so there was a greater emphasis on research. We were also informed a greater emphasis on research reclassified the programme as a 'research doctorate'.

The education provider outlined how the programme team had had concerns about the potential to reduce the therapy-training components of the programme. This included, initial concerns, that the programme team would teach less and need to reduce the taught content. However, throughout the development process the programme team worked collaboratively with colleagues in the quality team to ensure the level of teaching was maintained. As such, they were able to incorporate all competency assessments, and SOPs criteria, into the new version of the programme. The education provider informed us the process taught the team how to successfully adapt to complex regulatory changes, while maintaining the essential spirit and purpose of the programme. They considered they had done this well and are monitoring for ongoing learner performance and feedback. The education provider stated the result is a programme operating on a different structure, while maintaining all course teaching content components, and competency assessment activities.

The visitors considered there is clear information about how the education provider evaluated any changes which were made to the counselling psychology programme. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Quality theme 8 – collecting and analysing feedback from learners and practice educators

Area for further exploration: The visitors recognised there are opportunities for learners and practice educators to raise feedback which programmes have responded to. However, across the programmes / professions, the visitors found the feedback mechanisms and associated reflection variable. For example:

Learners

- The counselling psychology programme reviewed the data around complaints and appeals since 2017. From this, key actions were identified and were being taken forward.
- The biomedical science programmes can access an online weekly 'Ask Me Anything' session, where they can ask informal questions about their programmes.

Practice educators

- The counselling psychology programme developed a networking community group in 2018 to provide a link between supervisors, potential supervisors and the education providers.
- The podiatry programme updated the practice assessment documentation to include more information to support its completion.

The visitors appreciated that programmes / professions could implement different feedback mechanisms and different levels of analysis. However, they were unsure of the education providers reflection on how this variability in process, across the professions, ensured appropriately detailed reflection was received and considered for the individual programmes. They sought more information about this area.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this area 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 programmes use a standardised model of feedback at various points of the year. For example:

Learners

- Feedback was provided anonymously via mid- and end-of-module evaluations. We understood there are opportunities for learner course representatives to present anonymous feedback from their cohorts.
- The education provider also stated programmes may supplement this with profession-specific questions and items.
- The education provider informed us they considered this model works well, and staff teams were able to formally respond with actions at appropriate levels.

Practice educators

- The education provider identified there were some profession specific feedback mechanisms in place. For example, the Independent and Prescribing Supervisor and Practice Assessor feedback is received via update days. These are provided directly to the Academic Assessors.
- We understood the education providers reflections that some variation in how feedback is gathered, and acted upon, is necessary. This was to meet the needs of practice partners and to not undermine the feedback mechanisms.
- The education provider reflected that some elements of the process benefit from standardisation, and they will be exploring this in more detail across the institution.

The visitors considered there is a base level of feedback gathered and analysed. In addition, clear reflection was provided about how effective the variability was in relation to collecting feedback from learners and practice educators. The quality activity sufficiently answered the visitors' queries.

Section 4: Summary of findings

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings for each portfolio area, focusing on the approach or approaches taken, developments, what this

means for performance, and why. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability –**
 - The education provider reflected on how events, e.g. COVID-19 and the freeze on tuition fees, had had a negative impact on finances. We noted the education provider is undergoing a transformation project to reduce the financial deficit and to ensure it has long-term viability.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 1](#), we noted the School of Allied Health and Midwifery received additional income from enterprise activities. These were in supplement to the finances of the School and were not essential to the overall financial viability.
 - We noted the education provider sought alternative sources of income and cost-cutting measures to ensure stability.
 - There has been little capital investment in equipment and there is a need to update some of the laboratory facilities. We noted capital bids have been submitted for the creation of a Cell Pathology lab and enhancement of equipment in the Physiology suite.
 - We also noted the education provider has performed well in terms of staff retention and consider their retention is strong.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider works with several professional bodies, including the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP).
 - We noted the education provider has accreditation from all relevant professional bodies except for the College of Paramedics (CoP). The education provider reflected on their engagement with the CoP developments around a new endorsement process. They will reconsider endorsement by the CoP upon publication of the revised process.
 - We noted the education provider has worked with practice partners to continue to support a high-quality experience for learners. For example, the education provider has employed a Placement Coordinator to manage paramedic practice-based learning alongside the academic lead.
 - In 2018, the education provider partnered with West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust to become the UK's first University Ambulance Service. We noted how they worked closely on

research, sharing expertise, joint curriculum development and staff exchanges.

- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Academic and placement quality –**

- We noted the different mechanisms the education provider used to review academic quality. For example, the observation of teaching scheme which is designed to be supportive for the staff member and provide opportunities for feedback.
- Regarding placement quality, the education provider reflected how the management of practice-based learning was challenging in a geographical region with a large number of approved programmes.
- For example, for the physiotherapy programme, the placement lead works with regional education providers through the Midlands Integrated Practice Placement Initiation (MIPPI) group. This group worked to ensure fair access to high quality placements and reduce disparity in access across the region.
- We noted the education provider has re-written the physiotherapy, paramedic, and podiatry programmes to ensure they are more inclusive, have achievable and understandable outcomes, and have only one assessment, unless it is essential to have two.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
-

- **Interprofessional education –**

- The education provider ensures IPE gives learners relevant and appropriate opportunities through which they learn with, from, and about other healthcare professions. It informs learners of current and future practice for the benefit of service users.
- In [quality theme 4](#), the visitors noted the education provider had been “slow” to develop their IPE strategy. Through this activity, the education provider reflected on their progress in reinstating the strategy. As part of this, the education provider outlined a focus on IT to offer enhanced IPE.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Service users and carers –**

- The education provider is committed to, and has embedded, service user and carer engagement in all aspects of their programmes. We recognised the service user and carer group known as SUCCESS and noted members are involved throughout, including recruitment, teaching, learning and research and how feedback is acted upon. The

SUCCESS team has a Code of Practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the service user.

- As detailed in [quality theme 5](#), the education provider reflected on the review of SUCCESS and recognised the diversity of the group. We noted the feedback received from biomedical science learners about the new session was positive.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Equality and diversity –**

- The education provider's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is underpinned by the principles of the Inclusive Curriculum Framework. This considered the social themes relating to health and health inequality. These are expressed clearly in programme outcomes rather than being inferred within the curriculum.
- The visitors recognised the work and research undertaken regarding equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- For example, the paramedic science provision had struggled to recruit black learners. The education provider analysed the progression and outcomes for all black learners over the last five years. They found a disproportionately high number were either not completing or if they were, they were not completing on time. To work towards improving the recruitment of black learners to the paramedic provision, the education provider outlined a range of activities. These included, the Director of Diversity is to meet with all black learners on the programme to talk about their experiences and barriers to progression. Also, the education provider will ensure black staff from the wider School are known to, and available for, the paramedic learners to talk to. This is because the education provider has no black paramedic lecturers, so learners do not see themselves in teaching teams.
- We noted the education provider has a continuous monitoring process with four specific touchpoints throughout the year. Actions in relation to equality and diversity are reviewed at these touchpoints. Each school has Diversity lead(s). They help to create the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.
- As detailed in [quality theme 6](#), the education provider reflected on work undertaken relating to other protected characteristics such as disability in practice-based learning.
- We were satisfied the education provider is performing well in this area.

- **Horizon scanning –**

- The education provider outlined several areas which they have identified as areas which will need a particular focus over the next few years.
- For example, we noted the education provider is reviewing costs to ensure the quality of delivery can be maintained given financial

pressures. The education provider is undertaking a procurement process to ensure that resources are purchased in the most cost-effective way. They are working to better understand the cost of consumables used across programmes.

- In addition, the education provider will explore new ways of supporting learners in practice-based learning and increasing capacity. They will also look to diversify practice-based learning offerings. This is already happening with paramedic learners accessing non-ambulance practice-based learning.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs)**
 - The education provider outlined how, when the new SOPs were published, they reviewed the relevant programmes. They were “pleased” that many of the revised standards were already incorporated into the approved programmes.
 - For example, due to their geographical location and communities they work in, EDI had always been a key part of their curricula. Over the last five years, the education provider developed the Inclusive Curriculum Framework. This already delivered the revised standards around EDI.
 - The visitors also noted, that while leadership was already within the programmes, the education provider had brought this into the interprofessional modules. This allowed learners to experience leadership from different professions and by different approaches.
 - Through clarification, the education provider confirmed how Promoting public health and prevention of ill-health was already fully integrated into the biomedical science programme.
 - We were satisfied the education provider is performing well in this area.
- **Impact of COVID-19 –**
 - We noted paramedic practice-based learning were severely disrupted due to service requirements by West Midlands Ambulance Service University NHS Foundation Trust. As the Trust employed some second and third years during the first wave of the pandemic, there was a significant impact on their teaching.
 - As a result, there were three groups of learners – those working for the Trust; those not working for the Trust; and those shielding. The education provider adapted the programmes to take account of the

different situations. They reflected how a “good proportion” of learners progressed.

- They identified that the paramedic programme team undertook additional practice-based practice scenarios and assessment by using simulation. This was well received and will be taken forward.
 - As with many education providers, programmes quickly changed to online training. The education provider outlined some of the challenges in doing this. For example, not all learners engaged with online learning for a number of reasons, such as having young children at home. They therefore recorded lecturers and developed online resources so that learners could learn when they had time. The education provider continues to learn from this and develop the online resources.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The education provider is taking the lessons learned from using on-line platforms during COVID-19, into day-to-day teaching and assessment practices. The use of Big Blue Button (virtual classroom software), Panopto (software to share videos) and Microsoft Teams has become a normal part of teaching, assessment, and support across all programmes.
 - Many of the recent changes in the use of technology was because of COVID-19. For example, some of the physiotherapy practice-based learning was moved into a virtual environment. While this caused initial concerns among a range of stakeholders, the education provider outlined how it had proved to be successful and some virtual clinics will remain.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Apprenticeships –**
 - The education provider has one apprenticeship approved by the HCPC, and that is the occupational therapy apprenticeship programme. They reflected upon the differences between these and traditional BSc (Hons) programmes.
 - We noted the education provider has allocated a specific person to manage the apprenticeship programme. They focus solely on managing the provision. The education provider considers this to be a successful approach.
 - Through clarification, they outlined, they are currently considering further degree apprenticeship programmes, though these plans were commercially sensitive. This programme will run along the same

policies / procedures as the approved occupational therapy programme.

- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
 - We noted the education provider has not been subject to an assessment visit by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) since 2015. All of the criteria were met, and the risk was considered to be low in all domains.
 - We noted the education provider continued to work towards the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and continued to meet the requirements of the Code. The education provider stated there is high-level oversight of the Code so programmes remained fit for purpose and met the standards expected of higher education programmes in England.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies –**
 - We noted the education provider has not had allied health learners placed in any area where there has been an adverse assessment by external bodies. The education provider has robust procedures in place if anything happens relating to allied health provision.
 - We noted the education provider monitors all Care Quality Commission (CQC) alerts. They are sent to the academic team for review and consideration. All new practice-based learning is checked with the CQC as part of the activation process, this is documented in the new practice-based learning request form.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Office for Students monitoring –**
 - Through clarification, the education provider confirmed that the OfS had not undertaken any monitoring during the period under review. They also confirmed, they are not due to be monitored by the OfS against any of its revised conditions of registration.

- The education provider integrated the revised conditions as part of the continuous monitoring and improvement process and increasing awareness of these conditions with the teaching teams.
 - The education provider informed us the OfS has accepted the education provider has robust plans in place to manage the issues.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - We noted the education provider engaged with professional bodies. For example, the biomedical science provision was reaccredited by the Institute of Biomedical Scientists (IBMS) in the 2019-20 academic year.
 - We noted the education provider has not sought approval from the College of Paramedics (CoP). Although not accredited by the CoP, the education provider used the main headings from the curriculum guidance and included the core content into their programme.
 - The education provider fully participates in on-going monitoring of programmes and maintaining compliance with regulatory standards.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development –**
 - We noted the education provider redesigned several programmes, including undertaking a curriculum review. A variety of changes were made and approved to a range of programmes. For example, the education provider made changes to the biomedical science programme, so Level 5 and 6 modules covered pathology laboratory specialisms in distinct modules.
 - As detailed in [quality theme 7](#), we noted the changes to the counselling psychology programme. The education provider reflected on the challenges they experienced in making these changes and how these had been overcome. We noted they had effectively carried out changes to the counselling psychology programme while ensuring the quality of teaching.
 - The visitors considered there is clear information about how the education provider evaluated any changes made to the curriculums.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - We noted the education provider takes responsibility and communicates with respective professional bodies to ensure any necessary changes in curricula content were made. We noted a variety of changes were made, and approved, throughout the period in response to professional body guidance.
 - For example, following guidance from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), practice-based learning was adapted to include project work and include non-traditional sites with physiotherapists in leadership roles.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning –**
 - We noted the education provider experienced challenges with practice-based learning capacity.
 - The education provider informed us they were proactive regarding capacity. They have developed several innovative practice-based learning opportunities. For example, a long-arm supervision model was being used with occupational therapy learners in a mental health charitable organisation. In addition, podiatry learners have extended periods of time in the clinical setting to enable them to gain a range of skills in the hospital environment.
 - Through [quality theme 2](#), the education provider outlined their plans to use simulation as an alternative to practice-based learning to alleviate pressure on placement capacity.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learners –**
 - We noted feedback from learners is gained through different mechanisms. Programme teams actively seek feedback from learners through module evaluations, course committee meetings and the regular meeting learners have with the Head of School as well as through informal class feedback on a day-to-day basis and will respond accordingly.
 - As detailed in [quality activity 8](#), the education provider reflected on the variation in feedback mechanisms and analysis undertaken across the programmes. From this, we noted the standardised approach to

feedback, and the benefits of this. We noted also the reflections provided regarding the benefits of profession-specific questions and activities.

- The education provider stated feedback from learners about the teaching teams is positive. Programme teams respond to feedback in a timely manner and make changes based on feedback. For example, in paramedic science, one module was moved to semester 2 to reduce the assessment burden for the learners in semester 1.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - We noted the education provider gathers feedback from practice educators in many ways, both formally and informally.
 - All learners and practice educators undertake a midway practice-based learning meeting with a member of the academic team. This is to check learner progress during the practice-based learning, to answer any questions about the practice-based learning and to receive feedback from the practice educator.
 - For example, practice educators fed back that first-year occupational therapy learners struggled with explaining the main steps of interaction between the client and practitioner (the 'OT Process'). As a result, the programme now includes a specific taught session on the 'OT Process'.
 - As detailed in [quality activity 8](#), the education provider reflected on the variation in feedback mechanisms and analysis undertaken across the programmes. From this, we noted the standardised approach to feedback, and the benefits of this. We noted also the reflections provided regarding the benefits of profession-specific questions and activities.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **External examiners –**
 - The education provider provided analysis and outcomes from external examiner (EE) feedback for each of the approved programmes.
 - Generally, the education provider reflected how feedback from EE's was positive and where suggestions were made, made in a constructive manner.
 - For example, the paramedic EE report in 2019-20 recognised how appropriate changes had been made to assessments due to COVID-19. The report flagged the high failure rate in one module. In response, the education provider reviewed the reasons for this and implemented a change to the assessment method to reduce the number of essays.
 - Where external examiners made recommendations for further enhancements to a programme, these were reviewed and actioned (if

appropriate). For example, a biomedical science EE report in 2021-22, suggested there may be an over-reliance on certain assessment types, such as presentations. They suggested, a variety of assessments should be offered to allow learners to evidence their learning to ensure an inclusive experience. The education providers outlined how those assessments will be reviewed across the programme and any changes will be made in academic year 2023-24.

- We were satisfied the education provider is performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel: The education provider reflected how there were several areas where their data point was equal to the benchmark or slightly lower than the benchmark. For example, the aggregation of percentage of learners not continuing (the benchmark and value were both 3%). They reflected on these and understood continuation rates were affected by COVID-19. For example, by need for West Midlands Ambulance Service to recruit some of their paramedic learners.

Regarding the NSS overall satisfaction score, the education provider outlined how the programme specific score for physiotherapy (95% in 2022) was higher than the benchmark. They also recognised the overall score did not include occupational therapy as the first cohort had not graduated, or podiatry as the low cohort numbers had not met the threshold. An AHP action plan has been developed to enhance the scores, across all the programmes by providing improved support mechanisms for learners. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

Referrals to next scheduled performance review

Inter-professional education (IPE)

Summary of issue: The education provider reflected upon how they have reinstated the IPE strategy group. Representation on this group is largely at Associate Dean level and there is a clear intention to formalise IPE across the health curricula. The education provider outlined the plan to review the options available to them and to formulate a draft strategy. The visitors recognised the status of the group and recommend the progress and developments associated with this initiative, are reflected upon during the next performance review.

Collaboration with Mediterranean College in Greece

Programme applicable to:

- BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, full time

Summary of issue: The education provider reflected on their collaboration with their partner college in Greece. As part of this, two physiotherapy learners had undertaken a six-week programme swap in 2022 to gain experience from a different country. The visitors understood that more interactions / developments may occur and recommend these are reflected upon during the next performance review.

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

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

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report

Reason for next engagement recommendation

- Internal stakeholder engagement
 - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were learners, service users, practice educators, partner organisations, external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with a number of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider engaged with other relevant professional or system regulators (for example, the Office for Students and the Nursing and Midwifery Council for the independent / supplementary prescribing programme). They considered the findings of these regulatory bodies in improving their provision.

- The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
- Data supply
 - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. Regular supply of this data will enable us to actively monitor changes to key performance areas within the review period.
- What the data is telling us:
 - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes and acts on data to inform positive change.
- The education provider noted the plans to continue enhance their interprofessional education (IPE) strategy which will start to impact on their provision from the 2022-23 academic year. We will review reflection on the developments in this area when the provider can reflect on implementation.
- The education provider noted the plans to continue develop collaboration with the Mediterranean College. We will review reflection of the developments in this area when the provider can reflect on implementation.

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 education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period, for the reasons noted through the report, that the education provider and its programmes next engage with the performance review process in the 2027-28 academic year.

Appendix 1 – 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			01/09/2010
BSc (Hons) Podiatry	FT (Full time)	Chiropodist / podiatrist		POM - Administration; POM - sale / supply (CH)	01/09/2021
MSc Podiatry	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Chiropodist / podiatrist			12/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Integrated Degree) Apprenticeship	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/04/2021
MSc Occupational Therapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			12/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2016
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science (Professional Pathway)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Paramedic			06/06/2022
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2017
MSc Physiotherapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			12/09/2022
Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (DcounsPsy)	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist		Counselling psychologist	01/09/2014
Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (DcounsPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist		Counselling psychologist	01/01/2004
Independent / Supplementary Non-Medical Prescribing (V300)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2020
Independent / Supplementary Non-Medical Prescribing (V300)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/09/2020

Independent / Supplementary Non-Medical Prescribing (V300) Level 7	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2020
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