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## Performance review process report

Newcastle University, 2018-22

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### Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of Newcastle University. 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 against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission to consider which themes need[ed] 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.

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
    - The education provider's approach to monitoring of involvement of service users and carers on their programmes. They collect feedback regularly and have identified this as an area for development.
    - The support they provide to learners and staff relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). They demonstrated their commitment to EDI through their efforts to achieve several related awards and outlined multiple mechanisms in place to support learners and staff.
    - Their approach to assessing the quality of practice placement providers they use through external bodies. They review the findings of external bodies which informs them of issues which may affect learners.
    - Their responses to changes in professional body guidance to inform their programmes. They engage with professional bodies to keep updated with changes and embed these within their curriculum.
    - Their management of placement capacity in line with increasing learner numbers. They have appropriate strategies in place to manage resources and ensure there is placement capacity for all learners.
  - The education provider should next engage with monitoring in four years, the 2026-27 academic year, because:
    - The visitors were satisfied the education provider is working at both institutional and programme level to develop and improve their processes
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and programmes. They identified one area which influenced their recommendation of a four year monitoring period. The education provider has a learner satisfaction score nearly 10% lower than the benchmark. The visitors agreed it would be appropriate to review the results of the action plan they have put in place in four years.

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**Previous consideration** Not applicable, this is the education providers first interaction with the performance review.

**Decision** The Education and Training Committee (Panel) decided:

- when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be

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

- The provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 academic year.

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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:

Lucy Myers	Lead visitor, Speech and language therapist
Marie Price	Lead visitor, Dietitian
Hayley Hall	Service User Expert Advisor
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer

We encourage reflections through portfolios to be made at the institution level wherever possible. The performance review process does not always require

profession level scrutiny which requires all professionals to be represented in the assessment panel. Rather, the process considers how the education provider has performed at institution level, linked to the themes defined in section 1. Lead visitors have the option to appoint additional advisory partners where this will benefit the assessment, and / or where they are not able to make judgements based on their own professional knowledge.

In this assessment, we considered we did not require professional expertise across all professional areas delivered by the education provider. We considered this because the lead visitors were satisfied they could assess performance and risk without needing to consider professional areas outside of their own.

## Section 2: About the education provider

### The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers seven HCPC-approved programmes across three professions. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1991.

The BSc (Hons) Dietetics and the Master of Dietetics gained ongoing approval in 2020. The last annual monitoring that Newcastle University engaged in was 2018-19, and no issues were raised.

### 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
<b>Pre-registration</b>	Dietitian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2020
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1995
	Speech and language therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1991

### 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<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> An explanation of the data we use, and how we use this data, is available [here](#)

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	122	295	09/03/23	<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 explored this by reviewing how the education provider ensures they are appropriately planning resources in line with learner numbers. The visitors were satisfied they are performing appropriately in this area.</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	1%	2021-22	<p>This Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data delivery – a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</li> </ul> <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 been maintained</p> <p>This shows they are performing well to ensure good learner continuation rates.</p>

Outcomes for those who complete programmes	94%	94%	2021-22	<p>This HESA data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data delivery – a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</li> </ul> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the 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 been maintained?</p> <p>This shows they are performing as expected to ensure learners continue onto employment or further education when they complete their programmes</p>
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Gold	June 2017	<p>The definition of a Gold TEF award is “Provision is consistently outstanding and of the highest quality found in the UK Higher Education sector.”</p> <p>This shows they are performing well to ensure good teaching quality on their programmes</p>
Learner satisfaction	77.4%	68.3%	2022	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) data was sourced at the summary level. This means the data is 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 been broadly maintained?</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing the education providers reflections. They have initiated a Student Experience Action Plan at all levels of the institution to address this. The visitors</p>



				were satisfied with the plans in place but agreed this was influential in the four year recommended monitoring period.
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### 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.

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

We have reported on how the provider is performing on all areas, including the areas below, through the [Summary of findings section](#).

#### Quality theme 1 – Ensuring appropriate involvement of service users and carers (SU&C)

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider explained how they planned to carry out wider work to develop the monitoring of SU&C and how feedback is addressed through exploring good systems and practice across programme teams. They reflected how engaging SU&Cs during the pandemic was a challenge. They collect feedback from SU&C in several ways to give them the opportunity to input on the programmes. There was insufficient information provided about how SU&C involvement in teaching and activities is monitored and managed, and what development in this area is planned. They also did not explain how SU&C feedback is collected and how they address the findings. The visitors explored what steps the education provider is taking to ensure SU&C involvement is monitored, feedback is addressed and plans for development are appropriate across all programmes. It is important the education provider has an achievable and sustainable plan in place to address the challenges with SU&C involvement they have identified.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider explained how responsibility for the involvement and support of SU&C within programmes sits with module leaders. SU&C involvement with teaching, activities and feedback is discussed at teaching and learning days for programme staff which allows for shared learning with regards to challenges and best practice across modules. SU&C feedback is collected through meetings, placement tasks, consultations, and regular feedback to programme teams. They state how any feedback from the SU&C shapes subsequent development of SU&Cs contribution to programmes. They explained how the pandemic reduced SU&C involvement, but they are developing the management of SU&Cs to include a SU&C reference group. The visitors were satisfied the education provider's response provided clarity on their processes place around SU&C involvement. They were satisfied the education provider recognises there could be benefit in exploring practices across the programmes to share learning and processes.

### Quality theme 2 – Ensuring appropriate support and monitoring of equality and diversity in staff and learners.

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider reflected on how their institutional level initiatives to increase inclusivity on programmes. For example recruitment and marketing will represent diverse groups and there are interview preparation workshops to widen applications. There was limited information in relation to learner and staff experience and support relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The visitors explored the education provider's approach on EDI monitoring and the support available for learners and staff. Furthermore, they are in the process of rolling out a revised Equality Analysis process. The visitors requested more information on how this process will contribute to the development of their approach to EDI. It is important the education provider is appropriately supporting learners and staff with issues relating to EDI, with suitable processes in place to monitor and act upon outcomes.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider stated they have an EDI Strategy in place and report annually on their Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives. To support learners, they work with the Students' Union Wellbeing services, the Sabbatical Officers and have learner representation on institutional level committees e.g., the University EDI Committee. They have dedicated staff who support learners with a range of EDI related issues. They outlined how there is support available for staff an online colleague health and wellbeing hub which signposts to resources, self-help and services. They demonstrated their commitment to EDI through their Athena Swan action plans and successful achievement of EDI awards such as the Race Equality Charter (REC) (bronze). Through these mechanisms to monitor EDI across learners and staff, they are able to identify areas for development and create action plans to improve the experience and programme approaches.

Their Equality Analysis (EA) process is a screening tool to analyse EDI characteristics. It is an evidence-based process which they use to consider and address the potential issues, both positive and negative. The visitors were satisfied they were provided with clear descriptions of processes around consideration of learner experience in relation to EDI as well as extensive actions around staff

diversity. Areas for development have been identified and actions taken to address these areas are clearly described.

#### Quality theme 3 – Ensuring assessments of placements by relevant external bodies are appropriately considered.

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider stated there was no routine consideration of assessment of practice education providers through any of the typical external bodies (such as Care Quality Commission (CQC)). There was no information about what processes are in place for becoming aware of outcomes of investigations by external bodies and what action would be taken. This was a concern particularly for programmes which may have placement providers outside of the NHS. The visitors explored how the education provider monitors the assessments and outcomes of their placement providers by external bodies. It is important there are mechanisms to ensure they become aware of issues which may affect learners in placement settings and have appropriate processes in place to address this.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider explained how there are different mechanisms in place to monitor external body assessment outcomes of placement providers. One form of placement assessment comes from the accrediting bodies. Reviews are considered by Boards of Studies, including any actions, and reported to programme staff. Programme leads sit on relevant committees where outcomes from CQC reports, Ofsted reports, placement providers Self-Assessment Reports (SAR), and information sharing with HEE (now NHS England) are reported and discussed. This ensures they are aware of issues highlighted in the outcome of assessments through these external bodies. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has identified regulatory bodies who would provide relevant information regarding their practice placement providers. The agreed there is awareness of these outcomes of reports and information sharing takes place between NHS England for NHS providers.

#### Quality theme 4 – Responding to practice placement requirements set by professional bodies.

**Area for further exploration:** The visitors noted how the education provider is fulfilling professional body requirements and considering changes to their curriculum in line with this. There are clear processes in place to review changes and implement new teaching to cover changes to guidance and standards. At the time of submission, they were considering the new Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) guidance on eating, drinking, and swallowing (EDS) competencies. The visitors agreed there were clear considerations of the new EDS standards, however there was missing information regarding how the practice placement requirements will be met. The visitors explored what plans are in place to meet the placement requirements. It is important the education provider can appropriately address all changes to guidance and standards in a timely, efficient manner.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider submitted detail about how they meet the practice placement requirements for the EDS competencies. EDS

competencies will be taught and assessed through relevant modules through taught lecture content and clinical simulation, structured around adult and paediatric video cases. They explained how they will ensure the EDS requirements are embedded into their programme, demonstrating how they are able to review programmes and incorporate changes appropriately. This covers taught material, placement settings and assessments. The visitors were satisfied their example of embedding changes from the RCSLT regarding EDS competencies demonstrates the education providers ability to respond to and address changes to guidance.

#### Quality theme 5 – Ensuring ongoing placement capacity to support learner numbers.

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider outlined how placement capacity requirements are regularly discussed with service leads in the trusts they are partnered with, to ensure all learners have placements secured. They reflected on several challenges with ensuring placement capacity with increasing learner numbers and explained their actions planned to address these. There was limited information submitted regarding how they manage and monitor placement capacity in line with recruitment numbers. The visitors requested more information about their monitoring of placement capacity and plans to align placement opportunities for changing learner numbers. They also mentioned how placements on some programmes are in surplus and therefore not used, which is contradictory to the placement challenges for the majority of programmes. The visitors explored their views on the long-term impact of unused placement providers because it is important the education provider does not lose placement provider offers and maintains a good partnership with them.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider stated placement capacity is managed at programme level. Learner recruitment to programmes is carefully planned to be in line with placement capacity and to consider workforce planning needs. Regular meetings with regional service managers enabled problem solving where there were gaps in practice placement provision. Placement providers are confirmed through formal communications such as letters of intent. They have explored alternative placement opportunities such as shared placements to increase capacity. They have developed an Index of Need in response to a request from the Department for Education (DFE). This will be used to address surplus placements and creates flexibility to consider where learners might be best placed. They maintain ongoing dialogue with placement providers to ensure communications are positive and retain the opportunities offered. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is monitoring and maintaining placement capacity in line with learner numbers to ensure ongoing demand is met.

## Section 4: 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 ensured the stability of their provision through annual strategic planning discussions, learner number planning discussions and corresponding strategic workforce planning discussions. Their planning cycle ensured their provision aligned to placement numbers, resources and financial stability. They regularly meet with Health Education England (HEE) to consider local workforce needs and, where feasible and appropriate, accommodate increase to learner numbers.
  - They noted there was a significant impact on resourcing and sustaining programmes during the pandemic. They moved to online delivery and followed relevant guidance to enable programmes to continue. There were challenges accommodating and managing short notice to changes in learner numbers from HEE in response to workforce needs. They were able to support the changes to learner numbers and therefore workforce analysis through their engagement with stakeholders and strategic planning.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this area. The education provider demonstrated they are managing resources appropriately and responding effectively to emerging changes.
  
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
  - The education provider worked with a range of other organisations including practice educators and providers, commissioning groups like HEE, relevant professional bodies. They stated how partnership management with placement providers is an integral part of the programme governance and quality management. It enabled joint problem solving and creative solutions, during the challenges faced during the pandemic.
  - They conducted regular meetings with other organisations to share information, and this was done online during the pandemic. They are members of relevant boards such as the Council of Deans for Health (CoD). This is useful in accessing timely relevant information and enables them to be aware of wider sector initiatives, challenges and opportunities.
  - They were reviewing their position on placement agreements, which are not completely in place with specific placement providers. They plan to find an approach which is appropriate for all types of placement providers they work with to improve these partnerships further.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this area because the education provider demonstrated they are managing partnerships appropriately and responding to emerging changes.
  
- **Academic and placement quality –**

- The education provider assessed the quality of their programmes at an institutional level, with additional detail relevant at the programme level reviewed. They have several mechanisms for quality assurance. These include detailed programme level review, reflection and action planning, an Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) and Institutional Learning and Teaching Reviews. These reviews included detailed considerations of academic and placement quality. They enable programme staff to conduct detailed reviews of programmes, drive improvements and produce action plans.
  - Feedback from stakeholders such as external examiners (EE) were considered by academic teams. They took forward plans which were acted upon through the Education Committee. The education provider stated how their quality assurance mechanisms enable continual assurance of quality. It provided opportunities to plan actions, identify best practice and share enhancements.
  - They plan to enhance the sharing of good practice across programmes and involve more staff in the AMR process. They planned to introduce a workshop to carry out the 'Quality Circle' element of the process to help this. The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area. They demonstrated how they were monitoring academic and placement quality appropriately.
- **Interprofessional education –**
    - The education provider submitted information about their interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities. These included opportunities with groups of learners utilising case, problem and enquiry-based learning approaches to develop critical thinking and values-based learners. Most of their IPE activities are embedded within programmes curriculums, with some being outside of curriculum and led by learners and staff.
    - They reflected on how IPE opportunities changed and developed during the pandemic and with the introduction of a new programme. They identified challenges around curriculum differences, timetabling, resources, geography, prioritisation and commitment. The differences in cohort size of programmes presented challenges in IPE opportunities which equally represent each programme. Despite these challenges, they have maintained appropriate IPE opportunities for learners to meet learning objectives on their programmes.
    - They have an IPE Strategy group who have moved to work virtually so they can continue to develop IPE opportunities. This enabled work to continue despite logistical challenges. They also have secured HEE innovation funding and will use this to continue to develop IPE opportunities.
    - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area because the education provider demonstrated how they were monitoring and developing IPE opportunities.
  - **Service users and carers –**
    - The education provider involved service users and carers (SU&C) in programmes in multiple ways. This included interviews, development of

resources, assessment, and teaching sessions. They gathered feedback from SU&Cs through formal and informal mechanisms such as surveys and meetings. SU&Cs are managed at a programme level rather than at an institutional level to ensure their involvement with programmes is relevant to the profession.

- They identified challenges regarding engaging SU&Cs with speech, language and communication difficulties with large groups of learners in the academic setting. To address this, they introduced virtual resources such as videos, but acknowledged these need a lot of preparation and regular updating.
  - The visitors explored SU&C involvement further in [quality activity 1](#). The education provider plans to facilitate meetings between relevant staff across programmes to explore good systems and practice. They intend for this to develop their monitoring of SU&C involvement, feedback, and processes for agreeing and communication actions from feedback. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area because the education provider demonstrated they are monitoring and developing SU&C involvement across their programmes.
- **Equality and diversity –**
    - The education provider regularly monitored equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) through recruitment data, programme outcomes and progression. They engaged with several projects which evaluate their approach to EDI, such as Inclusive Newcastle and the Athena Swan award.
    - They reflected on how their intake is not broadly demographically balanced, with men under-represented. However, they noted this balance is consistent with the national picture within the professions. The ethnic mix on the programmes is similar to the region in which they work, but not the UK as a whole. They continue to work on increasing diversity across their professional groups, because they recognise their widening participation targets are not being consistently met.
    - The visitors explored how they are ensuring appropriate monitoring of EDI in [quality activity 2](#). They plan to engage with their relevant professional body's initiatives to promote greater diversity. This involves ensuring recruitment and marketing materials are representative of a diverse group of learners. They are also introducing a revised Equality Analysis process which will inform their business plan, policies and strategies. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area because the education provider demonstrated they are continually developing their approach to EDI to benefit learners.
  - **Horizon scanning –**
    - The education provider reflected on potential future challenges and changes. For example, the change in government agenda to support life-long learning. This will impact the traditional model of a three year programme being developed to make learning more accessible in

smaller chunks over a lifetime. The education provider will have to adjust their programme structures to support.

- They have recognised a long term challenge for non-commissioned programmes will be funding. For the learners to access programmes as well as the education provider funding staff and resources. They acknowledge the NHS Learning Support Fund helps to address this but are aware the challenges may impact on the diversity of learners who are able to access programmes. To ensure financial security, the education provider is exploring changing the proportion of home/ international learner numbers. They reflected on how this may impact upon staff workload, but will increase diversity within the programmes, increase financial input and introduce more cultural awareness. They are currently leading a pilot 'Collaborative Intercultural Encounters' which provides those learners who engage with greater opportunity to engage interculturally.
- The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area as the education provider demonstrated they are identifying potential future challenges. They identified ways they plan to manage risks and utilise opportunities appropriately.

**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 stated how all programmes underwent a review and mapping exercise to ensure they aligned to the revised SOPs. Assessments were reviewed leading to a reduction in the overall assessment and a change from summative to formative assessment for some modules. Modules leaders updated learning outcomes and proposed content as appropriate for implementation in September 2023. The active implementation of the standards is overseen by the Boards of Studies.
  - They appointed a Dean of Digital Education in 2022 after recognising the emphasis on the importance of digital skills for our learners and staff. They also reflected on how their approach to leadership would benefit from more detailed discussion to consider shared focus and differentiation across programmes. A working group will consider these modules in the summer 2023 with changes introduced in September 2024.
  - They reflected on how promoting public health will be addressed at programme level, but they envisage IPE opportunities developing around this theme. After the mapping exercise, they state they are confident their current work with SU&Cs is appropriate and embeds the revised SOPs relating to this theme.
  - The education provider explained how there is an institutional wide focus on mental health. There are several support mechanisms in



place, including Student Health and Wellbeing, online GP registration service and wellbeing advisors.

- The visitors were satisfied leadership is facilitated within both academic and placement modules.

- **Impact of COVID-19 –**

- The education provider went through a rapid and unplanned transition to online learning and assessment during the pandemic in 2020. For the subsequent academic year (2020-21), their Education Resilience Framework (ERF) set out the context and overarching principles with respect to delivery of teaching, shape of the academic year and assessment for programmes.
- Teaching staff were supported through guidance, support sessions and tutorial materials. They reflected on the workload pressures on staff due to the pandemic and challenges with producing online teaching resources. Despite this, there was successful development and adaptation of materials for remote learning and online delivery. They recognised their staff showed tremendous adaptability to changing circumstances. The development of pre-recorded videos for delivery of lectures was recognised by learners as an enhancement for some aspects of learning, enabling flexibility of learning.
- Online group activities were successfully facilitated, and assessment methods were adjusted as appropriate. Programmes put in place opportunities for learners to meet up during academic learning and socially. There were challenges with learner engagement and attendance, but they were supported by personal tutors, and they received good feedback from external examiners on how they handled this.
- Since the pandemic, the education provider moved teaching and assessment back to in person in September 2021. Where there was online innovation which enhanced the programmes, they have retained those. They have retained the most effective innovations of the programmes online based on learner feedback. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area as the education provider reflected on what worked well from some of the adaptations made to academic delivery and support.

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**

- The education provider stated they have always integrated technology into all their healthcare programmes. This increased during the pandemic and ensured access to clinical specialist teaching where local expertise was not available.
- They use a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to host module information, content and study materials. They make materials available electronically before, during and immediately after teaching sessions which makes learning more accessible for learners. They modified delivery of programmes to facilitate and maintain effective delivery so learners could achieve competencies.

- They addressed the challenges with placement capacity through greater reliance on simulation. Some of the technology introduced during the pandemic will continue as an option, such as tele healthcare. They reflected on the challenges of learner access to technology systems in the practice environment due to the range of systems being used. The education provider stated how learners are encouraged to develop their own technological skills to support them employment.
  - The education provider reflected on how teams have become more flexible and responsive when considering and ensuring all innovations are fit for purpose. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on the development of their digital platforms and new ways of working. They have responded to the needs of learners through simulation and modification of programme delivery.
- **Apprenticeships –**
    - The education provider had no HCPC-approved apprenticeship provision at the time of their submission. They do have a Life-Long Learning & Apprenticeship hub, led at Dean level. They monitor apprenticeships opportunities at institutional level in relation to the government's life-long learning agenda.
    - They reflected on how Teesside University was developing an apprenticeship in Dietetics and how they do not expect this to impact on their own provision. They do not have current plans for apprenticeships within the HCPC approved programmes but will continue to monitor opportunities and potential impact of local provision. The visitors were satisfied with their reflection in this portfolio 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 –**
  - The education provider outlined how there is no ongoing regulatory requirement to meet the Quality Code in England. Despite this, they plan to maintain alignment with the Quality Code as a source of reference when policies and procedures are updated. The visitors were satisfied with their reflections on the UK Quality Code.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies –**
  - The education provider outlined how some of their professions complete and submit a Self-Assessment Report to ensure the quality of provision. The visitors explored how they respond to assessments by external bodies in quality theme 3. The education provider outlined how there are different mechanisms in place such as review from

- accrediting bodies. These are considered by Boards of Studies, including any required actions, and reported to programme staff.
- Programme leads sit on relevant committees where findings from CQC reports, Ofsted reports (LEA level), placement providers Self-Assessment Reports (SAR), and information sharing with HEE (now NHS England) are reported and discussed. This ensures they are aware of issues highlighted in the outcome of assessments through these external bodies.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on developments in processes to ensure their programmes have ongoing compliance with all relevant organisations.
- **National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes –**
    - The education provider outlined how NSS applies only to the two undergraduate (UG) Speech and Language Sciences programmes. The other programmes, at postgraduate level, do not participate in NSS and the newer programme at UG level does not yet have graduating cohorts. They reflected how overall satisfaction had decreased significantly in 2022 and the drop in overall satisfaction for the BSc learners were consistent with institutional concerns.
    - A key issue was the low response rate from learners from an already small cohort size. They noted this cohort was impacted most by the pandemic and remote engagement, limited opportunities for placements and high learner workloads. The education provider has reflected how their communication could have been better during this period.
    - The programme team are actively engaging with the University Student Experience Action Plan. They have plans to encourage the sharing of good practice across programmes, develop their approach to personal tutoring and they have carried out a detailed review of assessments. In response to learner feedback there were changes to teaching to make the workload more manageable. The curriculum was reviewed in relation to the curriculum guidance and additional teaching time was added to cover core content. They will monitor the impact of these changes.
    - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on their processes to monitor learner satisfaction and developments they plan to make to improve this.
  - **Office for Students (OfS) monitoring –**
    - The education provider was admitted to the OfS Register of Higher Education Providers (HEPs) in 2018 and are subject to the ongoing conditions of registration. They undergo annual monitoring to ensure they meet the conditions set by OfS. They stated how they have not been subject to any ad hoc monitoring action by the OfS. They produced and had approved an Access and Participation Plan and engaged with the Teaching Excellence Framework as required by the conditions of registration.

- The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on their processes to monitor their programmes and how they have developed and improved their processes.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
  - The education provider outlined how all HCPC-approved programmes are accredited by their respective professional bodies. They have active engagement with them through regular online meetings. This ensures programme staff are aware of professional developments and their potential implications for learners. They stated they have received positive feedback from their stakeholders with regards to their standard of teaching and engagement with stakeholders.
  - They provided examples of where engagement with professional bodies had shaped the direction of professional guidance and learner resources. For example, engagement with RCSLT by programme staff has shaped the curriculum guidance, provision of assessment resources for learners and pre-registration eating, drinking and swallowing competencies. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio 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 –**
  - The education provider reflected on how each programmes curriculum is primarily driven by their relevant regulatory and professional body standards and guidance. This ensures the currency of the curriculum and increases the employability of graduates. The curriculum is revised annually to reflect current developments.
  - Programmes are currently going through a curriculum review to ensure alignment with the new SOPs, as discussed in the [thematic reflection](#) section. Changes will be implemented in the 2023/24 academic year. They outlined how there will be an additional review of professional issues modules for implementation in 2024/25 to integrate an increased focus on leadership.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on their processes to review programme curriculum. They have identified where changes have been made and the justifications for these changes.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
  - The education provider outlined how their programmes are meeting guidelines set out by relevant professional bodies. For example, programmes meet the requirements set out by RCSLT. In 2021, RCSLT produced Practice-based Learning Guidance which provided

information about practice-based learning models, structure of placements and supervision.

- The visitors explored how the education provider responds to changes in professional body guidance in [quality theme 4](#). They demonstrated how programmes are regularly reviewing changes in guidance and responding appropriately. Another example is a working group consisting of programme staff and specialist clinicians have reviewed the new competencies, audited placement experiences and proposed changes to the curriculum. This was to address changes to competencies outlined by RCSLT.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider provided examples of responses to professional body guidance changes, illustrating their responsiveness and appropriate means to address changes.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning –**
    - The education provider has committees who oversee placement provision for their programmes. These include programme staff, clinical leads and practice educators. Placement structures were changed in 2016 to implement longer block placements. There are ongoing discussions of placement models to increase placement capacity, for example peer placements, shared placements and workshops. They have campus-based clinics which helps support placement capacity.
    - They reflected on challenges with maintaining placement capacity during the pandemic. To address this, they replaced placements with provision of virtual, video-based placements. This ensured learners met learning objectives to progress on their programme. The pandemic put pressures on staffing at placements too. This resulted in last minute changes to placement offers resulting in the education provider using reserve placement offers.
    - They have identified an increased need in placement capacity from September 2023 for their current cohort. This was explored in more detail in [quality theme 5](#). They stated planning is in place to accommodate this increase in learner number.
    - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider provided examples of responses to challenges with placement capacity and have provided a range of examples of innovations to increase opportunities for learners.

**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 –**
  - The education provider collected feedback from learners in formal and informal ways. Feedback was considered at programme, academic unit, faculty and institutional levels.

- They have reflected on the low number of complaints which were submitted by learners across programmes. In 2021-22, there was a group complaint from the MSc Language Pathology Stage 2 cohort regarding constraints imposed by the pandemic. They stated the complaint was not upheld but each learner was offered a goodwill gesture to recognise distress and inconvenience, demonstrating their responsiveness to learner concerns.
  - The education provider outlined how they consider externally collected learner feedback, such as the National Education and Training Survey (NETS) survey. However, due to small learner numbers and low response rates the data is not significant enough to be used to develop the programmes at this stage.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider provided examples to show they acknowledged and responded to feedback and are seeking to find ways in increasing the number of responses.
- **Practice placement educators –**
    - The education provider outlines how all programmes seek feedback from placement educators. This is done through meetings, formal committees, informal communications, and the focus of this feedback is at programme or cohort level, rather than feedback about individual learner performance.
    - They stated how feedback is encouraged in multiple ways and collaboration to problem solve issues. They submitted examples of feedback and actions resulting from this which the visitors agreed demonstrated they are addressing feedback appropriately. Feedback ensures placement educators can raise issues and promotes a collaborative approach to learning. It provides opportunities to jointly problem solve important issues such as curriculum development and placement.
    - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider demonstrated how they have obtained and addressed feedback from placement educators.
- **External examiners –**
    - The education provider submitted each programme's External Examiner (EE) reports and reflected on actions resulting from the reports specific to each programme. They stated how feedback from EE were 'overwhelmingly positive'. An example was an EE reporting a programme to continue to be outstanding and commending them on their support for learners.
    - They reflected on themes identified by EEs as exemplary practice and commendations. These included assessments, consistent expectations, feedback detail and provision of virtual placements. They also identified themes for consideration including more specific 'feed-forward' feedback and reluctance to use top of marking scale to recognise exceptional performance. In response to this, the education provider provided examples of 'feed forward' feedback and marking rubrics were updated.

- EEs recommended the education provider reviewed their feedback practises to enable learners to feel as safe as possible in uncertain times. They outlined how the Student Staff Committee allows a mechanism for learners to comment on the programme team's responses to feedback received.
- The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider clearly outlines how EE feedback is used to drive actions and is considered as an important contribution to develop programmes.

**Risks identified which may impact on performance:** None.

**Outstanding issues for follow up:** None.

### Data and reflections

#### **Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Learner non continuation:**
  - The percentage of learners not continuing on the programmes is low compared to the benchmark. The education provider reflected on how this was a positive outcome considering the recent impact of the pandemic. They stated how the learners not continuing generally reflects the initial transition from school to university study and initial uncertainty about career choice.
  - To support these learners, there are a variety of support mechanisms. These include personal tutoring, supervision, school-based wellbeing advisors and central learner health and wellbeing services. Learners who do not continue are supported to make decisions about their future direction, with signposting to the careers service.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area and agreed the education provider's reflections were appropriate.
  
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
  - The percentage of those who complete the programmes who are in employment is consistent with the benchmark. The education provider reflected on how this was a positive outcome considering the recent impact of the pandemic.
  - They reflected how this result indicates they support learners to become competent and confident practitioners. There are local initiatives in place to obtain more detailed information about graduate employment, including transition from first job to subsequent roles, and these will continue. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area and agreed the education provider's reflections were appropriate.
  
- **Teaching quality:**
  - The education provider was awarded a TEF gold award in 2017. They reflected on the limitations of the TEF award and have therefore focused on retaining the delivery of excellence in their programmes. They stated they considered key data to shape their institutional,

faculty and school priority focusses in order to continue to develop their educational experience.

- They will be participating in the 2023 TEF exercise. This will be driven by the targeted school and institutional educational improvement action plans that were developed in 2022-23. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area and agreed the education provider's reflections were appropriate.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
  - The education provider outlined how NSS data only currently captures the undergraduate (UG) provision within Speech and Language Sciences. They reflected on how overall satisfaction had decreased significantly in 2022.
  - One issue was the low response rate from learners from already small cohort sizes. They noted this cohort was impacted most by the pandemic and remote engagement, limited opportunities for placements and high learner workloads. The education provider has reflected how their communication could have been better during this period. This was further explored in the [National Student Survey \(NSS\) outcomes](#) section.
  - They have initiated a Student Experience Action Plan at all levels of the institution. It includes initiatives such as includes prioritising provision of present-in-person education and synchronous sessions, strengthening induction processes to support learner 'belonging', refreshing training and engagement with personal tutors.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on their processes to monitor learner satisfaction and developments they plan to make to improve this.
- **Programme level data:**
  - The education provider submitted their staff to learner ratios for programmes, showing they are appropriately resources. They outlined how some staff work across programmes, and there is a range of expertise to provide teaching and support to learners. They currently have a vacancy for a clinical lecturer/senior lecturer and expect this appointment to continue to strengthen the staff team.
  - The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this portfolio area. The education provider reflected on their processes to monitor learner satisfaction and developments they plan to make to improve this.

**Risks identified which may impact on performance:** The visitors noted the low learner satisfaction rate as an area of concern. They were satisfied the education provider has appropriate measures in place to address this and have acknowledged the issues causing learner dissatisfaction. The visitors did not consider this a risk, however agreed it influences the recommended review period.

**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).

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

## 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 2026-27 academic year.

### 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 regulator(s) (e.g., NETS, OfS). They considered the findings of other regulators in improving their provision.
  - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
- Data supply
  - [where data points available through external sources] 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 visitors were satisfied the education provider is working at both institutional and programme level to develop and improve their processes and programmes. They identified one area which influenced their recommendation of a four year monitoring period. The education provider has a learner satisfaction score nearly 10% lower than the benchmark. The visitors agreed it would be appropriate to review the results of the action plan they have put in place in four years.

## **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 2026-27 academic year

**Reason for this decision:** The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period, for the reasons noted through the report.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

<b>Name</b>	<b>Mode of study</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Modality</b>	<b>Annotation</b>	<b>First intake date</b>
BSc (Hons) Dietetics	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/09/2020
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2018
Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Educational psychologist		01/09/2006
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Clinical psychologist		01/01/1995
Master of Dietetics (Integrated Masters)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/09/2020
Master of Speech and Language Sciences	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2018
MSc Language Pathology	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/08/1991