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## Performance review process report

Teesside University, 2018-22

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### Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of Teesside 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 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 areas we explored focused on how the education provider:
    - responded to feedback from stakeholders. They demonstrated there are multiple ways they obtain feedback from internal and external stakeholders. This is addressed through meetings and action plans.
    - ensures appropriate placement capacity to support learners. They outlined how learner numbers are agreed based on approved numbers and placement capacity and availability.
    - was addressing low learner satisfaction rates. They have created appropriate action plans which have several initiatives to address learner feedback.
    - was ensuring appropriate staff to learner ratios. They outlined how they have hired several new staff posts during the review period and have plans to continue to increase this to ensure learners are supported.
  - The following are areas of best practice:
    - Their involvement in the Schwartz Round Project was identified as an area of good practice. This a structured forum where learners from health and social work programmes come together regularly. They discuss the emotional and social aspects of working in health and social care.
    - The education providers approach to EDI is progressive, demonstrated through their approach to developing and monitoring EDI. They were
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named 'University of the Year for Social Inclusion', recruiting more learners from low participation rate areas than other education providers.

- The provider should next engage with monitoring in four years, the 2026-27 academic year, because:
  - The education provider noted there has been a large increase in learner numbers during the review period, which they have invested in resources and facilities to support. They have outlined there are processes in place to support this expansion. They also have plans to implement several significant changes and action plans in 2023 in response to feedback and challenges. The visitors noted these need to be monitored to ensure appropriate support and resources for the increasing learner numbers over multiple programmes. They are going through the approval process for a new programme due to start in September 2023 which will provide further assurances on their performance and sustainability. Whereas we would normally engage a review after five years, here because of the staffing issues, large learner number increase, challenges with placement capacity and learner satisfaction responses the visitors agreed it was suitable to recommend a four year monitoring period. This is an appropriate amount of time to ensure we can review the impact of changes when the provider can reflect on implementation, which will be in the 2026-27 academic year.

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Previous consideration	Not applicable – this is the education provider's first interaction with the performance review.
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Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be</li></ul>
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Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 academic year.</li><li>• The education provider is currently going through the approval process for a new Arts Therapy programme. The outcome of this will be reached in 2023.</li></ul>
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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:

Gemma Howlett	Lead visitor, paramedic
Kathryn Campbell	Lead visitor, physiotherapist
Ann Johnson	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 20 HCPC-approved programmes across seven professions, and three programmes are post-registration to gain a prescribing entitlement. It is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1994.

The oldest programmes started in 1994 and are for occupational therapist and radiographer professions. Apprenticeship programme provision began in 2020 and now cover paramedic, dietitian, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, radiographer, and operating department practitioner professions.

They have engaged in the approval process on two occasions for new provision for the dietitian, physiotherapist, and occupational therapist professions between 2018 and 2021. There have been 32 major changes in the legacy model covering many professions and annotations as a response to changes in professions and prescribing legislation. These changes impacted how they met standards including programme governance, management and leadership, programme design and delivery, practice-based learning, and assessment. In 2021 they underwent programme closures for radiographer, occupational therapist and physiotherapist programmes.

### 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	Dietitian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2019
	Occupational therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1994

	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2017
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2014
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1998
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1996
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1994
<b>Post-registration</b>	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2014

### Institution performance data

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

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	1003	1509	2022	The number of learners enrolled on the education providers is higher than the benchmark value (which shows the number of learners the programmes are initially approved for). The education provider has acknowledged this growth and reflected on how they have resourced this through increased staffing and facilities. The visitors satisfied with the actions taken by the education provider to effectively manage the increase in learner numbers
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	4%	2019-20	This data point is gathered through Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data delivery. The education provider has a value slightly higher than the benchmark for learners continuing in their study. They have reflected on how their continuation rates have improved during the review period and their plans to continue this development. The visitors were satisfied with their performance.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in	94%	95%	2019-20	This data point is gathered through HESA data delivery. The education provider has a value of learner retention higher than the benchmark which indicates good

employment / further study				performance. The visitors were satisfied with their performance.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Silver	2019	This data point is gathered through the Office for Students Summary. The education provider received the Silver award in 2017, which demonstrates 'The student experience and outcomes are typically very high quality, and there may be some outstanding features'. The visitors were satisfied with their performance and reflections regarding improving and maintaining teaching quality.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	72.8%	76.4%	2021	This data is collated from the Office for Students (OfS) subject data. The education provider's result sits above the benchmark, suggesting they are performing well with ensuring learners are satisfied. The visitors were satisfied with their performance.
HPCP performance review cycle length	N/A	TBC	2018-22	The visitors have recommended a four year monitoring period. This will be recommended to the Education and Training Committee Panel at the end of the process for the final decision.

### 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 processes are in place to response to internal stakeholder feedback

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider reflected within their portfolio how they receive feedback from internal stakeholders via several mechanisms. An example they provided included feedback received from apprenticeship learners regarding their challenges with accessing online and blended learning. Another was feedback from academics delivering interprofessional education (IPE) regarding how managing learners from different professions was challenging. The narrative did not include information about how they responded to and addressed feedback from internal stakeholders. The visitors explored if there were processes in place to effectively manage feedback received from their internal stakeholders. It is important the education provider to show how they are actively obtaining, reviewing, and addressing areas identified from feedback. Feedback is important to make improvement to programmes and the experience of learners and staff.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider explained how they continually monitor and address feedback from learners. They responded to this particular feedback, stating it was related to their first experience of online and blended learning on the programme. They outlined how they continue to monitor and address feedback from learners through planning meetings between module leaders and programme teams. Over the review period, they continued to obtain feedback and found successive feedback was more positive, suggesting learning experience was improving.

To address the challenges faced by academics delivering IPE the module leaders had detailed planning meetings with programme teams. This was to ensure consistency of delivery and across interprofessional learning groups. They outlined how they continue to reflect on learner and staff evaluations to improve their experience on the programmes. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has demonstrated they have appropriate measures in place to address feedback. As shown by these examples, they are monitoring and responding to feedback suitably.

### Quality theme 2 – Ensuring stability of capacity of practice-based learning

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider highlighted the challenges faced with securing practice-based learning opportunities for learners across their programmes. We asked for an explanation about how they were going to address these challenges.. The visitors explored if the education provider had any solutions or partnership collaboration in place to mitigate against the risk of placement capacity. It is important the education provider have mechanisms in place demonstrating how they are addressing issues with placement capacity. This is to ensure there are appropriate resources and opportunities for learners on current and future programmes.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider outlined how learner numbers are agreed based on approved numbers and placement capacity and availability.

Their Practice Development Leads work with Health Education England (HEE) to increase placement capacity. To monitor and ensure appropriate placement capacity they are moving towards toward a regional based capacity approach for practice placements with collaboration with Northumbria University and the University of Sunderland. This aims to ensure placements are appropriately and fairly distributed between the competing education providers to ensure all learners have placements in the region. With regards to apprenticeships there is an agreement with individual providers to provide placements. This will not impact upon the offering of placements for their pre-registration programmes. The visitors were satisfied there is sufficient understanding of process and partnerships provided to ensure appropriate placement capacity.

### Quality theme 3 – Responding to low learner satisfaction results from NSS

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider acknowledged there was a drop in learner satisfaction scores for some of their programmes. There was limited detail within the portfolio regarding how they are addressing this. The visitors explored how the education provider is addressing lower learner satisfaction rates and if there is an improvement plan. It is important the education provider is recognising and responding to data which suggests a drop in learner satisfaction through appropriate plans.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider outlined how programmes which had lower NSS overall satisfaction scores have developed action plans. These action plans outlined initiatives responding to learner feedback. Examples include learner satisfaction workshops to be held with programme teams, releasing teaching materials to learners within 48 hours of teaching taking place and introduction of drop-in meetings. The visitors reviewed the action plans and were satisfied they demonstrate an organised and strategic approach by the education provider to the NSS results.

### Quality theme 4 – Ensuring appropriate staff to learner ratios across programmes

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider supplied data on their staff to learner ratios (SLR) for each programme. The education provider's SLR's were broadly consistent for all programmes, however it was noted the SLR for their paramedic programme was an outlier and much higher. There was limited reflection on this in the portfolio, and therefore the visitors were unclear if this was intentional or down to limited recruitment of staff. The visitors explored if the education provider is concerned about this SLR compared to other programmes and if there are any actions to address this. It is important there are appropriate staff resources in place on all programmes to ensure learner support.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider responded to concerns about this high ratio by noting it is a challenge they are aware of and continuing to address. They outline how over the past two years they have increased the staff on this programme through recruiting five full time paramedic staff. They state how one has since left but they plan to replace them. They also plan to advertise for two further full time paramedic lecturing staff positions. The visitors were satisfied the education

provider is aware of the high SLR and are appropriately addressing this to ensure there are appropriate staff resources on the programme.

## 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 reflected on challenges with recruiting appropriate staff on their programmes. To address this, they developed several initiatives, including introducing a new category of academic position. This meant there was no compulsory requirement for the postholder to hold or study for a doctorate level qualification but focuses on practice based initiatives. They also made part time and job share appointments and funded hourly paid zero hours part time and visiting lecturers to add value to the learner experience. Their planning process incorporated staff workforce planning allows for future growth in learner numbers.
  - There is a £36.9 million facility currently under construction for the School of Health and Life Sciences. They plan for this development to include specialist equipment to enable new and interactive forms of learning. They invested in facilities and infrastructure to increase spaces for learners, including a new postgraduate student hub and space for Psychology's Virtual Reality Suite.
  - They reflected on their positive response to HEE requests to increase learner places. An example of this was the 150% increase of learners for their psychology programme over three years. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has an appropriate strategy for staffing increases in place. They agreed the significant investment in facilities and infrastructure shows positive development of the education provider.
- **Partnerships with other organisations:**
  - The education provider reflected on their partnerships with regional employers and placement providers. Partners are involved with activities such as knowledge exchange events, programme reviews, development sessions and specialist employer and placement events. For their psychology programme, all local trusts are committed to providing placements and working flexibly together to accommodate training expansion.
  - All placement providers are audited by the provider every three years to ensure continued compliance and quality for being able to support

learners. The education provider developed formal service level practice placement agreements with placement providers to determine the number of placements they could offer. They introduced a Placement Development Lead, who's role was to strategically identify where additional placement capacity is required and to deliver this. They reflected on the challenges maintaining placements during the pandemic. They outlined how their placement providers were supportive in the provision of placements for learners who were in their final year. They maintained placement capacity during the pandemic, moving aspects of it online such as practice educator forums.

- They have increased the number of private placements and non-clinical providers across their pre-registration provision. During the pandemic, Connect Health provided several placements for their physiotherapy learners, utilising their experience of remote and virtual healthcare delivery.
  - The education provider developed a practice supervisor training induction which will be delivered online. They also developed a Teams group for practice supervisors where questions can be posted, find the learning material and enable regular engagement. They confirmed practice supervisors provided positive feedback in relation to development. The visitors agreed the education provider had positive relationships with partners across all programmes. They were satisfied there is a strategic response to the differing needs of each programme.
- **Academic and placement quality:**
    - The education provider has a Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) process. This allows ongoing reflection informing programme action planning, development, and enhancement. The EvaSys Module Evaluation System was developed and implemented during the review period. They state how EvaSys provides numerous benefits, through identifying issues and guiding interventions at an early stage. Student Voice Forums are a formal opportunity for feedback between learners and staff who contribute to the operation and management of programmes.
    - They outlined how all practice placements are subject to a detailed audit every three years. Learners complete a placement evaluation form which helps to inform about placement quality. Any concerns highlighted in this are followed up by the Placement Development Leads to ensure ongoing monitoring of quality and responses to issues. They reflected on the positive development of the Placement Development Lead positions during the review period. They strategically identify where there is additional capacity required and work to deliver this. They work with programme teams, administrative team, and placement providers to ensure placements are diverse and monitor them.
    - The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate processes in place to ensure academic and placement quality. They were satisfied the education provider has invested in resources to monitor quality.
- **Interprofessional education (IPE):**

- The education provider reflected on how they developed shared modules across their programmes. These modules increased IPE opportunities for learners enabling them to work with each other. It involved cross-programme induction activities, specific IPE modules and involvement from service users.
  - In October 2020 the education provider began the Schwartz Round Project. This is a structured forum where learners from health and social work programmes come together regularly to discuss the emotional and social aspects of working in health and social care. Learners get to experience perspectives from other professionals as apposed to the patient, giving them a better insight into their role.
  - They identified challenges with online and blended learning not enabling the same IPE opportunities as pre-pandemic. Academics and the department leadership team managed these challenges to ensure staff were confident in their delivery of online and blended IPE opportunities and inclusion of learners. Staff were also provided support from the departmental leadership team in the development and delivery of these modules, which is ongoing.
  - The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate IPE opportunities for learners which are continually being developed. They agreed there is suitable support in place for staff and learners.
- **Service users and carers (SU&C):**
    - The education provider has a full-time post holder who acts as the single point of contact for staff and SU&Cs. They are responsible for the development, coordination and administration of SU&C involvement and participation in all their programmes.
    - SU&Cs are involved in reference groups, programme development and reviews, recruitment, assessment, and research. The education provider developed a SU&C facing webpage which highlights the contribution of SU&Cs to the programmes. They plan to reintroduce the SU&C forum since its temporary suspension due to the pandemic to reconnect service users. They reflected on the challenges of maintaining SU&C engagement during the pandemic, particularly during the lockdowns. In response, the SU&C co-ordinator quickly established training for SU&Cs on Microsoft Teams so that SU&Cs could continue to support recruitment and programme activities. They recognised this timely response as a success which enabled the continued involvement of SU&Cs during the pandemic.
    - There is a regular Service User/Carer Working Group in which SU&Cs talk about their roles and how things can be made better. This contributes to the continuous development of programmes. Since 2017 the education providers number of SU&Cs in this group increased by 10, showing positive growth. The visitors were satisfied the education provider demonstrated SU&Cs are involved in major components across the programmes. They agreed they are appropriately developing engagement with SU&Cs and monitoring this involvement.
  - **Equality and diversity:**

- The education provider introduced a four-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) plan in 2016, which they state has continued to improve equality and diversity each year. It has specific objectives relating to the learner's community and embedding equality and diversity into the approach to learning and teaching. They collect learner data which is collated in an annual report from which an action plan is created. This action plan helps to support the EDI objectives. In January 2020 they launched the Values & Behaviours Framework which set out expected behaviours in relation to embracing diversity for all staff, further developing their approach to EDI.
  - They recognised the pandemic created challenges with inclusion due to restrictions and lockdowns. Their EDI plan, events and activities continued despite the pandemic. They state their proactive response to supporting their most vulnerable staff and learners during the pandemic was a clear example of their approach as a 'caring, fair and supportive' education provider.
  - For their psychology programme they outlined their learners are from predominantly white backgrounds. In 2021 they noted an increase in successful learners from Asian backgrounds but recognised this needs transparent monitoring and action to ensure this positive inclusion continues. Since 2021 there have been EDI leads in place. They worked with the EDI Steering Group (made up of current and ex-trainees representing a range of diversity and lived experience) to establish Teesside as an anti-racist education provider.
  - The education provider successfully won a HEE bid for a full time EDI Lead Position which will be facilitated from September 2023 onwards. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidenced good practices and results from their actions towards EDI.
- **Horizon scanning:**
    - The education provider reflected on challenges with maintaining learner numbers. This was due to increased provision of HCPC regulated programmes across the Northeast of England, resulting in increased competition for placements. They acknowledged the move towards a regional audit of practice placements will benefit all education providers in the region, which is the plan.
    - They are increasing learner numbers on their psychology programme in line with HEE commission. They plan to recruit further staffing to ensure learner to staff ratios remain appropriate and anticipate their planned number to be manageable and achievable. We explored this further in [quality theme 4](#). They do not foresee challenges with placement provision or ability to meet the learner recruitment goal. The visitors noted the education provider's development of a new £36.9 million state-of-the-art facility as a positive expansion. The new building will be completed by September 2023 and will support their increasing learner numbers.
    - The education provider outlined several upcoming changes. Some examples include their BSc (Hons) Dietetic Apprenticeship programme which will commence May 2023. They are seeking approval for Arts Psychotherapy Higher Degree Apprenticeship with a view to

commence delivery in September 2023. They are in the process of developing a BSc (Hons) Podiatry to respond to local need. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately planning for the future whilst considering external factors.

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

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

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

- The Schwartz Round Project was identified as an area of good practice. This brings learners from different programmes (health and social work) together to learn from each other. It was recognised as an innovative project which was initially funded by HEE, and is now funded jointly by the School of Health and Life Sciences and the School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Law.
- The education providers approach to EDI is positive. They were named 'University of the Year for Social Inclusion', recruiting better from low participation rate areas than other education providers. They state they are committed to widening access/ improving cultural competence of trainees/ redressing inequality. This was recognised as good practice by the visitors.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs):**
  - The education provider has reviewed each programme and mapping was revised to reflect the changes in the SOPs. Group meetings with Apprenticeship, BSc and MSc programme leads took place to discuss which SOP's needed further development within their shared module provision.
  - Where profession specific changes were required, these were made through amendments to profession specific modules. This was carried out through their module modification processes for approved programmes / modules between scheduled reviews. They acknowledged the changes needed impacted their Diagnostic Radiography provision to the greatest extent, as it required the most amendments to deliver and assess the revised SOPs. They appended the revised module specifications to reflect the amendments to their shared interprofessional learning (IPL) modules across each of the programmes.
  - They outlined how amendments to the indicative content of some of their shared modules were made to ensure that learners meet the revised SOPs. They stated no changes needed to be made to learning outcomes or assessment strategies. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately embedding the revised SOPs and has done the relevant reviews to identify areas for change.
- **Impact of COVID-19:**
  - The education provider reflected on the challenges created by the pandemic on their programmes moving online. They moved to fully

online learning and assessment in 2020, and then in 2021 adopted a blended learning model. They outlined how Future Facing Learning allowed their learner to transition more seamlessly to online learning. The blended approach allowed them to increase IPL opportunities between programmes.

- They reflected on challenges with timetabling, organisation and management during their blended learning approach. Online learning resulted in some poor learner feedback through the NSS, so in response, where possible they implemented a minimum of four hours on campus for learners. In 2021 all modular activities were returned face-to-face.
  - All placements continued with a combination of face to face and online working dependent upon the practice area. They outlined how all adjustments made to placements and hours followed relevant regulatory body guidance. They utilised the pandemic as an opportunity to review practice placements and to explore the use of simulation and virtual placements. Peer Enhanced e-Placements (PEEP) were a virtual alternative to face-to-face placements and used to give learners experience equivalent to placements.
  - The visitors were satisfied the education provider handled the challenges posed by the pandemic appropriately. They supported learners in ensuring there were placement alternatives to give them the experience needed and responded to learner feedback by adapting teaching methods towards blended learning.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods:**
    - The education provider outlined how it was a key objective of the University Learning and Teaching Strategy 2016-2020 to embed the future-facing education focus within curriculum and to improve learner's digital literacy. They reflected on how this was achieved through investing in information technology and library resources during the pandemic.
    - All learner received an iPad and digital toolkit to support online and blended learning. This ensured programmes were accessible and inclusive for learners. Staff received development programmes to support them with the transition to technology to support them with the challenges posed by moving to online teaching. Assessments were moved online, and some have continued this way post pandemic. They reflected how online examinations provided learners with greater flexibility.
    - PEEP was incorporated into some programmes to give learners practical placement experience through simulation and virtual placements. They state how technology-enhanced learning is used extensively throughout their provision to support learners. This includes the use of complex simulation equipment such as SimMan and programmable monitors. They also live streamed sessions to learners to demonstrate key clinical skills and procedures. This allowed learners to see inside a working operating theatre before going into placement to ease anxiety, but also help bridge the gap between theory and



practice. The visitors were satisfied the education provider's programmes have a variety of uses of technology embedded on them to support learners and enhance their experience.

- **Apprenticeships:**

- During the review period the education provider developed degree apprenticeships across several of their professions. They have a collaborative partnership with North-East Ambulance NHS Trust who deliver 70% of their apprenticeship modules at their training centre, using their modular materials and assessments.
- They reflected on challenges created by increased demands on placement capacity for the new apprenticeship provision. This was explored in [quality theme 2](#). Whilst they are aware of this potential problem, they state it has had minimal impact due to apprenticeship learner numbers remaining low. They reflected the apprenticeship programmes have not impacted upon the recruitment to their traditional undergraduate and postgraduate pre-registration provision. This shows sustainability of all their programmes which will be continually monitored.
- They stated the apprenticeship model is employer led and placements are organised by the employer and supported by the education provider. They acknowledged how the apprenticeship model was well received by employers. Employers fed back how apprentices being released from practice for only one day per week (less than traditional apprenticeships) for on campus teaching ensured they had a more supported workforce. It has also helped employers who have had challenges in recruitment to develop their own workforce. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is aware of the potential challenges if their apprenticeship learner number increases. They were satisfied they are managing the apprenticeship provision well and there has been positive feedback.

**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 was reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in 2016 and "met UK expectations". They developed an action plan in response to feedback received which was implemented in 2017. Examples of this include the education provider amending their Assessment and Feedback policy to provide enhanced feedback to learners. They revised their approach to programme monitoring to address concerns regarding levels of performance in some of their partner colleges. These are ongoing revised approaches to address concerns raised through the assessment.

- Following the publication of the updated UK Quality Code for Higher Education in 2018, they undertook a mapping exercise. This ensured their policies and procedures remained in alignment with the QAA's revised approach to the Advice and Guidance aspects of the Code, including the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is consistently reviewing assessments against the UK Quality Code and underwent appropriate mapping exercises.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies:**
  - The education provider continually reviews all Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports relating to their practice placement areas. If areas are flagged as requiring improvement the report is reviewed by appropriate programme staff. A decision is then made as to whether it is appropriate to send learners to that practice placement area. They have reflected on the need to manage the challenges of both capacity and quality of placements. They acknowledged they also need to consider the needs of each individual professional group who will share practice placement sites and locations to ensure all programme and learner needs are met.
  - They reflected how there are increased numbers of Practice Placement Facilitators within local trusts. They are responsible for managing placement capacity and monitoring quality and feedback through monthly meetings. They also employed Practice Development Leads which has strengthened communication between the education provider and practice providers. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has responded to feedback and challenges appropriately, with suitable processes in place to develop assessment of placement providers.
- **Office for Students (OfS) monitoring:**
  - The education provider developed a living compliance mapping tool to facilitate compliance monitoring of OfS ongoing conditions of registration. This will ensure timely responses to changes from OfS. They completed an advisory audit on OfS compliance in 2019. This resulted in them establishing a cross-University working group who had operational responsibility for review and oversight of the OfS compliance mapping tool.
  - They outlined how they plan to continue to innovate and improve the effectiveness of their controls and measures set out in the mapping tool. This is to ensure they remains responsive to the changing regulatory landscape. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers developments and ongoing monitoring processes.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies:**
  - The education provider reflected on successfully gaining approval from HCPC, Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), College of Radiographers (CoR) and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) in 2021. This was for new degree apprenticeship provision, and existing programme reapprovals. They made minor amendments to

their dietetic programme in line with changes in the British Dietetic Association curriculum guidance 2020.

- The outlined it was challenging undertaking programme approvals and reapprovals during the pandemic. They reflected on how they had experience from the previous years engaging online with relevant bodies and regulators via Teams which helped ensure a smooth and timely process. They were confident they could deliver blended learning and undertake assessments online and received positive feedback from professional bodies and approval panels regarding this. They were also commended by professional bodies and approval/reapproval panels on their commitment to widening participation through the delivery of their apprenticeship programme and practice-based learning opportunities for learners. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidenced engagement with various professional bodies and positive feedback demonstrated their successful engagement.

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

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

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

- The visitors noted the education provider received excellent feedback from various professional bodies and approval panels. This was during the pandemic, when they faced challenges going through approval and reapproval events, suggesting the education provider was responsive and managed this period well.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Curriculum development:**
  - The education provider outlined how some of their programmes are undergoing modular changes during their internal review. This will be done through their internal approval process, of which several of their programmes will go through in 2023. They have reflected on how they are embedding the revised HCPC SOPs to all programmes. Programme leads reviewed their programmes against amended mapping to include the changes to the SOPs. They highlighted how some areas are already embedded into the current curriculum, which will be made more explicit in the new mapping. The areas which need adjusting will be amended prior to September 2023. All programmes will be mapped against the new standards and specifications released to reflect this.
  - For their prescribing programmes, they incorporated Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) 2021 Prescribing Competency Framework. This was embedded throughout the portfolio and assessment in practice.
  - Their dietetics programme reflected how as a new programme in 2019, they were an early adopter of the new British Dietetic Association

(BDA) curriculum. This means that many of the upcoming curriculum changes are already embedded, showing they are updating the curriculum in line with professional guidance in a timely manner.

- The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's developments and reflections during the review period for each of their programmes.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance:**
  - The education provider supplied individual programme reviews which reflected relevant changes to professional body guidance. This included responses to changes in guidance and standards from professional bodies such as the BDA, HCPC, RPS (as outlined in paragraph above) and RCOT. Their radiography programme was reapproved by the CoR in 2021 and deemed to have met professional body guidance and standards.
  - During their review period they responded to relevant guidance regarding the pandemic to ensure they were supporting learners and staff, including government guidance regarding restrictions. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is monitoring and responding to relevant professional body guidance in a timely and appropriate way.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning:**
  - The education provider reflected on challenges regarding placement capacity across their programmes. Some programmes have had challenges ensuring consistent numbers of placements for learners. To address this, they are planning to implement a placement capacity model to ensure appropriate planning for placement and learner numbers. This was explored during [quality theme 2](#), and the education provider outlined how learner numbers will be agreed based on approved numbers and placement capacity and availability.
  - They stated how programme teams worked hard to ensure learners were caught up on missed placement hours due to cancelled placements during the pandemic. They delivered several Virtual Placements, also known as PEEP which ensures learners got access to placement experience and met learning objectives.
  - They also reflected on how they offered new, non-clinical placement opportunities on some programmes such as dietetics. They stated how the introduction of this to a profession previously training using only NHS clinical hours was met with some reluctance from their NHS practice educators. However, these experiences benefited learners who were considered far superior candidates at job interviews due to the breadth and diversity of practice-based learning experience.
  - The visitors were satisfied with the developments made to enhance learner experience in relation to placements. They were satisfied the education provider is monitoring and addressing issues regarding placement capacity appropriately.

**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 has a Continuous Monitoring and Enhancement (CME) process which collates feedback from learners for ongoing reflection. This informs programme action planning, development, and enhancement. It is based on collecting evidence of what has worked well and areas requiring development. They implemented a EvaSys Module Evaluation System in 2017-18. They reflected on the benefits of this, including allowing them to identify issues and guide interventions at an early stage. Any concerns lead to the development of an action plan and are fed back to learner through the system.
- There are Student Voice Forums for learners to feed back into programme development. The outcomes are reported to School Student Learning & Experience Sub-Committee (SSLESC). This provides oversight of the learning opportunities provided to learners on programmes in their department.
- Learners complete a placement evaluation form to give feedback on placements. The visitors explored how the education provider addresses feedback through [quality activity 1](#). They demonstrated they continually monitor feedback and learner satisfaction has improved as a result of this. The visitors were satisfied the education provider gives appropriate opportunities for learner feedback and has implemented systems to improve this.

- **Practice placement educators:**

- The education provider outlined how during programme approvals in this review period, consultation was undertaken with their practice placement educators to inform their practice developments. Practice educators are involved in specialist teaching, approval panels and recruitment within programmes.
- They reflected on the challenges with maintaining dialogue with placement educators during the pandemic. They were able to continue with practice placement forums online. These gave practice educators and opportunity to raise any issues or concerns relating to practice education. At these meetings there was also the opportunity for the programme teams to respond and to also discuss any programme or placement updates.
- In the notes provided from the practice educator approval and reapproval panels which took place in 2021, lone professionals in private practice were discussed. It was noted they find it more difficult to take on multiple learners if they are in a niche role therefore capacity is an issue for them, and this effects placement capacity. It was also discussed how social distancing during the pandemic restricted the number of learners able to be supported by some placement settings.
- They state how they continue to have very strong partnerships with their practice placement providers and educators. They developed the Practice Placement Facilitator posts for allied health professionals

within their local NHS Trusts, which helped to strengthen their relationships. They redesigned their Practice Educator Support Site to support practice educators to access training easier. They developed new fully online accredited and non-accredited practice educator courses for practice educators which will commence in 2023.

- The visitors explored how the education provider addresses feedback through [quality activity 1](#). They demonstrated they continually monitor and appropriately address practice educator feedback. The visitors were satisfied there are strong partnerships in place with practice educators and the education provider has made positive developments to support them.
- **External examiners:**
  - The education provider outlined how external examiner (EE) feedback was very positive across HCPC provision. They reflected on challenges EEs faced accessing learner work and using multiple systems to access feedback. To address this, they streamlined systems, so EEs only needed to use the virtual learning environment (VLE) to access learners work and feedback. They also reflected on how moving assessment boards online during the pandemic benefited the EEs. It ensured work could continue and they could attend live Viva Voce or presentation-based assessments online.
  - EE feedback indicates the education provider improved various aspects of their programmes in response to feedback. Examples of this were developing a more consistent approach towards marking and improving the learner experience following a recent institutional review of the programme. The visitors were satisfied there was positive overall feedback and challenges have been acknowledged and addressed by the education provider.

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

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

Data and reflections

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Non-continuation rates:**
  - During the review period the education provider noted an increase in their learner continuation rate showing positive performance. They reflected how during this period their Operating Department Practice programme has had the greatest challenges with retention. They provided a retention plan and report which demonstrated how they are addressing non-continuation and increasing retention across the School of Health and Life Sciences. The visitors were satisfied with their plans and agreed they are appropriate for moving forward.
- **Graduate outcomes:**
  - The education provider reflected how they have seen consistently strong performance for learners going into further employment or study

across their HCPC provision during this period. Their data shows high percentages (96%) of learners going into employment for each of their programmes which has increased over the last two years. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers results showing positive performance here.

- **Teaching quality:**

- The education provider outlined how they launched a strategic approach to learning and teaching, namely Future Facing Learning (FFL). This encompasses five key themes: future readiness; social and ethical engagement; research activeness; global connectivity and digital empowerment. They state how these themes are central to every aspect of their high-quality programme design, delivery and the effectiveness of their learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- They identified several other institutional activities which were undertaken during the review period. Examples include the implementation of a new Personal Tutoring Code of Practice in 2018/19 and investment of £10.2 million in the Student Life Building which opened in January 2020. They reflected how their learner experience measures are outstanding for all modes of study during this period, with all measures being either substantially above or broadly in line with TEF benchmarks. The visitors were satisfied with the developments which were made and ongoing monitoring.

- **Learner satisfaction:**

- The education provider reflected how from 2018 to 2021 their overall learner satisfaction dropped. This increased in 2022. They recognised the pandemic presented a challenge; however, their results were lower than the provider benchmark, which takes into account experiences at similar institutions during this period. This was explored during [quality theme 3](#). They acknowledged areas which could have been improved, such as communication to learners and timetabling issues. They created an action plan to address this and improve learner satisfaction. The visitors were satisfied they have an organised and strategic approach to improving and maintaining learner satisfaction.

- **Programme level data:**

- The education provider outlined their staff to learner ratio for each programme. They reflected how their planning process incorporates staff workforce planning where learner number projections are reviewed against existing resource levels and gaps identified. During the last two years they have employed nine more staff posts with two more approved for 2023-24. The visitors noted a higher staff to learner ratio for their paramedic programme and explored this in [quality theme 4](#). The education provider acknowledged this ratio, and outlined how they plan to recruit more staff to support this programme. The visitors were satisfied with their response and plans to ensure appropriate resources across their programmes.

**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).

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) (for example, 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
  - 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 there has been a large increase in learner numbers during the review period, which they have invested in resources and facilities to support. They have outlined there are processes in place to support this expansion. They also have plans to implement several significant changes and action plans in 2023 in response to feedback and challenges. The visitors noted these need to be monitored to ensure appropriate support



and resources for the increasing learner numbers over multiple programmes. They are going through the approval process for a new programme due to start in September 2023 which will provide further assurances on their performance and sustainability. Given the staffing issues, large learner number increase, challenges with placement capacity and learner satisfaction responses the visitors agreed it was suitable to recommend a four year monitoring period. This is an appropriate amount of time to ensure we can review the impact of changes when the provider can reflect on implementation, which will be in the 2026-27 academic year.

### **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 education and Training Panel agreed with the findings of the visitors. They were satisfied with the recommendation of four years and approved this.

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 (Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			16/05/2022
MSc Dietetics (Pre-Registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Dietitian			01/01/2019
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/07/1994
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2021
MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2005
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/01/2020
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Studies	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2017
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/01/2014
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice (Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Paramedic			19/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/1998
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2021
MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2005
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DclinPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Clinical psychologist		01/01/1996
Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (DCounsPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Counselling psychologist		01/01/2002
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/1994
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography (Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/2020

MSc Diagnostic Radiography (Pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer	01/09/2004
Advancing from Supplementary to Independent Prescribing	PT (Part time)		Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2014
Advancing Non-Medical Prescribing (postgraduate)	PT (Part time)		Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014
Non-Medical Prescribing (undergraduate)	PT (Part time)		Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014