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## Performance review process report

University of Exeter, 2018-22

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### Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of University of Exeter. 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.

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on how:
    - the education provider ensures equity in mental health support for learners across all their programmes. They do this through several mechanisms to signpost and provide mental health support to learners.
    - they ensure the new leadership Standard of Proficiency is integrated across their all their programmes. They plan to teach leadership in both online and in person content starting in 2023.
  - The following are areas of best practice:
    - The opportunities the education provider has for learners for interprofessional education (IPE). Some examples include undertaking 'learning from' IPE in the ward setting, learning from radiology nursing and other healthcare staff.
    - The education provider received significant praise from the healthcare sector and Public Health Devon for its handling of the pandemic.
    - The visitors noted the education provider's improvement of National Student Survey (NSS) results were an area of good practice. This relates to their recovery in 2022 NSS performance (14th nationally and 1st in the Russell Group of Universities for overall satisfaction).
  - The provider should next engage with monitoring in five years, the 2027-28 academic year, because:
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- The visitors were satisfied the education provider is performing well in the majority of areas. They recommended a five year monitoring period because they agreed this was an appropriate length of time, relative to performance and risk. This will give the education provider adequate time to implement action plans detailed within their submission and evaluate the results of changes to reflect upon in their next performance review.

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**Previous consideration** This is the education provider's first interaction with the performance review.

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

- To approved a monitoring period of five years

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

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

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## Section 1: About this assessment

### About us

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

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

### Our standards

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

### Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

### The performance review process

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

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

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

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

### **Thematic areas reviewed**

We normally focus on the following areas:

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

### **How we make our decisions**

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

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

### **The assessment panel for this review**

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

Mark Widdowfield	Lead visitor, diagnostic radiographer
Rosemary Schaeffer	Lead visitor, occupational psychologist
Jenny McKibben	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 six pre-registration programmes for practitioner psychology and radiography professions, and one post registration programme for the supplementary prescribing and independent prescribing entitlement. It is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1995.

The last annual monitoring in the legacy model of quality assurance took place 2018-19. In the legacy model they had an approval for a new diagnostic radiography degree apprenticeship programme in 2019. They also engaged in the approval process in 2021 for new post-registration prescribing provision.

In 2021 they engaged in the major change process and reported five changes for their diagnostic radiography programmes and one for their prescribing provision. This was for the addition of a degree apprenticeship variant on the Practice Certificate in Independent and Supplementary prescribing. The University of Exeter have engaged with our current model of quality assurance for diagnostic radiography programmes, in 2021 to introduce a full time programme and in 2022 to introduce a work based learning programme.

### 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	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2005
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2004

<b>Post-registration</b>	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing	2021
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## 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>.

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	219	508	2022	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners above the benchmark.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing the resources and expansion of provision the education provider has had during the review period. The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate resources to manage this change and were not concerned by this increased value.</p>
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	3%	2019-20	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data delivery – a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (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>

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

				When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has been maintained
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	91%	2019-20	<p>This 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 worse than sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has gone down by 3%</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing how the education provider has responded to this, as outlined in <a href="#">section 4</a>. They have several plans in place to improve the number of learners going into employment.</p>
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Gold	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>We explored this by reviewing how the education provider plans to maintain this high quality teaching. They have monitored their teaching quality throughout the review period and demonstrated it has remained at an appropriate level.</p>
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	77.7%	82.7%	2022	<p>This data was sourced at the summary level. This means the data is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary – the provider-level public data</li> </ul> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing better than sector norms</p>



				<p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 15.6%</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing the education providers reflections. They acknowledged a drop in learner satisfaction within BSc Medical Imaging (Diagnostic Radiography) and have appropriate plans in place to address this.</p>
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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 – Method of ensuring appropriate support for learner’s mental health on all programmes

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider outlined how all programmes were embedding the new Standards of Proficiency (SoPs), including standards relating to registrants’ mental health. The visitors noted how there was an inconsistency in approach to ensuring equity in mental health support for all learners across all programmes. They recognised good practice in the education psychology programme through a range of mechanisms to support learners’ mental health. However, the education provider had not clearly shown how the clinical psychology programme was planning to manage this for learners who are potentially at most risk of vicarious harm to their mental health in their placement environments. The visitors explored how the education provider plans to manage this and support learners for this programme. It is important the education provider demonstrates they have considered the appropriate support needed for learners on each programme.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider outlined how they ensured equity in mental health support for all learners. They stated how all clinical psychology learners have weekly supervision with placement supervisors. They are supported by an allocated appraiser who sets goals, meet regularly and addresses concerns. They explained how learners have access to a pastoral support person who does not work on the programme. The senior management group have a 'trainee issues' meeting fortnightly where individual learners who may be struggling are discussed and avenues of support investigated. The curriculum includes a number of teaching days on self-care and staff support, as well as regular 'reflexive groups' where learners meet with a facilitator to talk through any issues they have during their training. The visitors were satisfied there is an appropriate level of opportunities within the programme for all learners to access mental health support. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

#### Quality theme 2 – Method of ensuring leadership is embedded across all programmes appropriately.

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider outlined how they had plans to embed the new standards relating to leadership in the SoPs into their independent prescribing (IP) programme. Their reflections did not show how they plan to embed leadership SoPs in all of their programmes. The visitors explored the education provider’s plans in more detail on how they will integrate leadership into the independent prescribing programme so they can ensure this will be appropriate. It is important all programmes have robust and appropriate plans to embed the new SoPs to ensure all learners are taught based the revised standards.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider supplied additional evidence regarding how they will integrate leadership into the IP programme. They plan to include teaching on leadership in both the online and in person content from the 2023-24 academic year. They state how leadership and management is one of the four pillars of Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) and will be taught within the IP programme. Teaching will include IP specific examples such as a focus on mentoring, leadership and workforce development. They also referenced the teaching to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) framework to demonstrate how there will be competencies met which crossover between RPS and HCPC. The visitors were satisfied their plans to include leadership in teaching and mentoring demonstrated an appropriate approach and evidenced suitable activity going on in this area.

## 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 the outcome of the restructure which was completed in September 2022. This led to all programmes becoming part of larger faculties which were more financially sustainable than the previous structure. Multiple faculties were merged which brought most HCPC health related programmes under one management structure. They expect this will create opportunities to share support and experiences over time.
  - Four new programmes were approved by the HCPC during the review period in response to workforce challenges and opportunities in the healthcare sector. The new programmes demonstrated their sustainability and appropriate resourcing through HCPC's approval process. Medical Imaging benefited financially during the pandemic from additional funding provided by Health Education England (HEE) for equipment purchases. They secured a last-minute increase in commissioned places when international learners withdrew from one programme due to the pandemic. This ensured continued sustainability of the programme, and use of all placements and resources available.
  - Their reflections show how they effectively managed the increase in learners' numbers through business planning, annual reviews of resources and staff recruitment. Recruitment and retainment of staff was a challenge because of the pandemic increasing workload and resource pressures. In response, the education provider supported

staff to move teaching online. They provided mentoring and skills development and reviewed academic workload.

- The visitors agreed the education provider successfully demonstrated they appropriately resourced an increase their provision during the monitoring period. We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Partnerships with other organisations:**

- The education provider reflected on how their positive relationships with external partners enabled flexibility for their programmes. They demonstrated how they worked to continue to build and maintain relationships with partner organisations. They reflected on how these have remained strong and frequent contact was maintained with stakeholders during the pandemic.
- Programme staff continually monitored placement sites for quality and learner feedback. They also ensured dialogue with new and current providers around opportunities to increase the number of placements and therefore learners.
- They stated all partnership sites from all programmes are embedded within their institutional governance structures, such as Steering Groups and Partnership Boards. This shows there are structured connections being made with these organisations to embed them into programmes.
- The visitors were satisfied there are strong, positive relationships with other organisations which support the delivery of provision. They agreed the education provider has responded to challenges during the pandemic appropriately by supporting placement providers and learners. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Academic and placement quality:**

- The education provider reviewed the quality of their programmes through several processes, including Annual Module Review, Annual Programme Monitoring and stakeholder feedback. Some of their provisions are also monitored by external bodies such as The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), who assesses the quality of the programmes.
- The education provider reflected on how learner engagement activities regarding low level of learner feedback was a challenge across all programmes. This was due to learners' high workload and relatively small cohort sizes meaning there was limited learner engagement with feedback. To increase learner feedback, they trialled a learner feedback platform (in 2022) to enhance learner feedback which will be complete in 2023. They also amended timetables in response to feedback and improved engagement. The education provider stated improving feedback is a focus for the 2023-2024 academic year to improve programme quality.
- They have increased training for all placement supervisors across all programmes to improve placement quality. For example,, they constructed a competency-based criteria for minimum training

experience to improve the quality of supervision. They are considering changing supervision models to include group supervision to support competency development further.

- The visitors were satisfied there are a range of quality assurance processes in place, including a comprehensive process for monitoring placement quality to inform improvements. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Interprofessional education:**

- The education provider embedded interprofessional education (IPE) across all their programmes through clinical settings, campus based opportunities and multi-professional modules. They state the need for, and value, of IPE is also embedded within the curriculum within core modules across all programmes. All IPE activities are clearly outlined, under the heading 'IPL' so that learners recognise when they are undertaking it.
- The education provider reflected on how the restrictions caused by the pandemic created challenges with IPE opportunities for learners. Some events such as an interprofessional training days were cancelled and were rescheduled for 2023. Some clinical placement providers were unable to support learners' onsite visits due to restrictions and work pressures which limited learners' ability to meet IPE needs. The education provider addressed this by holding an interprofessional learning day in 2022 and making IPE opportunities available online.
- They reflected on how learners preferred a hybrid offer for IPE sessions; however, this altered the depth of discussion and opportunities to learn experientially so they are encouraging a return to in-person sessions. They also ran simulated examinations with professionals to increase IPE opportunities for learners.
- The programme teams planned to add IPE as a standing item to their convenors team agenda and will discuss the ongoing challenges and sharing solutions. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has a range of IPE opportunities across their programmes and continue to respond to challenges. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Service users and carers:**

- The education provider reflected on how they embedded service user and carer (SU&C) in all programmes and their direct input into selection, teaching and assessment processes. The education provider reflected on challenges with SU&C involvement because of their geographical location. They stated there is limited demographic composition in the Southwest of England and therefore it has been challenging to ensure a diverse range of SU&Cs are involved in their programmes. To address this, all programmes continually strive to reach out to new communities to increase diversity in SU&C involvement.
- They have developed groups on programmes to provide a platform for SU&Cs to input into teaching and assessments of programmes. Examples of these include the Independent Prescribing Advisory

Group (IPAG) and the Doctoral Clinical Portfolio Lived Experience Group (LEG) group committee. This has increased SU&C involvement in the development of programmes.

- During the monitoring period, the education provider has recruited roles to support SU&C involvement. This includes a LEG co-ordinator, two leads for the Doctoral Clinical Portfolio LEG group, and an intern to enhance involvement and twelve new SU&Cs who will be part of the developing network of SU&Cs. They actively pursued recruiting a more diverse group to increase representation and reported this is developing well. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has identified ways to appropriately address the challenges relating to SU&C involvement. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Equality and diversity:**

- The education provider prides themselves on their approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), as demonstrated through the awards they have won including Athena Swan Silver award and Race Equality Charter bronze award. Their staff are required to complete mandatory EDI training as part of their employment at the University, and seconded staff are required to have completed an NHS Trust or other authority training.
- The education provider acknowledged the prevalence of white ethnicity within the profession of clinical psychology. In response, the programme team worked with the legal team to put 'Positive Action' an 'anti-racism working group' and an 'addressing disability working group' in place. These examples show how the education provider is actively aiming to improve their accessibility and support for learner.
- They stated how outcomes from monitoring suggest that all programmes support widening participation. They increased accessibility to individuals through alternative entry routes to programmes. Under-representation from specific groups or issues with recruitment are discussed with stakeholder groups so actions to address any under-representation can be agreed.
- The education provider started running decolonising training for staff. This was to address the challenge of teaching staff decolonising their teaching content and sending their teaching materials at least 48 hours before the teaching. This will support well-timed establishment of reasonable adjustments. They have given a number of examples of developments they have made towards their approach to EDI showing their responsiveness, showing continuous improvement and good performance. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Horizon scanning:**

- The education provider reflected on their approach of looking for new or altered opportunities as changes take place in the external environment. They reflected on how horizon scanning resulted in the development of programmes over the review period. For example, the degree apprenticeship for radiography was established through the

programme team's connections with HEE and the Society of Radiographers. This enabled them to keep abreast of developments in the sector.

- The education provider reflected on the potential financial challenges in the future due to stagnated tuition fees and the national economic challenges. They have processes and plans in place to ensure sustainability of their programmes.
- The visitors were satisfied the programme teams are well connected with relevant organisations. These partnerships have evidently allowed them to identify long term changes to the sector in which the programmes are delivered and plan appropriately for these. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

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

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

- The education provider received significant praise from the sector and Public Health Devon for its handling of the pandemic. The visitors noted this as an area of good practice. They maintained strong relationships with partner organisations, despite the challenges of the pandemic, especially around the provision of healthcare placements.
- The visitors noted the education provider should be commended on the examples given in terms of providing real-world and meaningful scenarios for IPE, particularly from the diagnostic radiography programmes. Some examples include undertaking 'learning from' IPE in the ward setting, learning from radiology nursing and other healthcare staff and regularly undertaking clinical reflections on IPE.

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. They stated their current programmes only needed minor amendments to align fully to the new SOPs.
  - Profession specific changes were made through amendments to profession specific modules by mapping each module descriptor's learning outcomes against standards in a 'live' document. Wording has been revised to require learners to "demonstrate" rather than just "understand" areas relating to the updated SOPs.
  - A small number of module amendments have been approved to ensure alignment with the incoming SOPs through their module modification processes. They acknowledged the changes needed impacted their Diagnostic Radiography undergraduate provision because it required the most amendments to deliver and assess the revised SOPs. They reflected on how a key change will be the change in emphasis for the development of clinical skills. All programme teams will be working

closely with their partnership clinical sites to discuss, agree and implement the required changes in practice.

- The visitors explored how the education provider is ensuring appropriate support for learner's mental health in line with the new SOPs. This was particularly in response to a lack of detail regarding their clinical psychology programme which was explored in [quality theme 1](#). The education provider outlined the numerous mechanisms in place to support learners. The visitors also explored how they will include the new SOPs regarding leadership in the independent prescribing programme in [quality theme 2](#). They outlined how this will be included in the curriculum content to ensure learners meet the amended SOPs.
  - They were in the process of updating paperwork ahead of the implementation of new SOPs in September 2023. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately embedding the revised SOPs and has done the relevant reviews to identify areas for change. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Impact of COVID-19:**
    - The education provider reflected on how the pandemic had a significant impact on all programmes, with many placements disrupted and new approaches being needed to ensure continuity of delivery. They faced challenges with moving teaching to online, maintaining placements and ensuring safe face-to-face teaching during the pandemic. There were challenges with ensuring appropriate practice placement capacity during the pandemic. They used online platforms for virtual meetings to maintain contact with placements which they reflected was successful and effective. This practice has been continued post-pandemic as it saved time, was more sustainable and safer in terms of transmission of infection.
    - In Medical Imaging, they changed the placement and added two weeks of simulated and virtual learning. Due to the success of this, it continues to form part of the placement profile in the future. They reflected how the flexibility in placement capacity helped them work with their placement sites more innovatively with future placements as an outcome of these approaches.
    - The restrictions caused by the pandemic resulted in some programme end dates being extended to ensure learners were able to complete all areas of the programme.
    - The education provider expanded their Technology Enhanced Learning team at pace, embedding a member of their Technology Enhanced Learning team to each programme to support the transition. They reflected on how this was a challenging time but also effective because all learning happened as scheduled.
    - The education provider now offers a blended learning model which has been developed through staff and learner feedback. It provides a more flexible model for learners, making the programmes more accessible. The visitors were satisfied the education provider adjusted appropriately to the challenges of the pandemic, supporting learners



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

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods:**
  - The education provider reflected on the positive impact the development of online teaching had on the programmes. Although it was initially challenging for learners and staff, it led to upskilling for staff and allowed new technologies and assessment methods to be incorporated into teaching delivery. The new technologies increased flexibility of the programmes making them more accessible to learners.
  - Problem Based Learning (PBL) assessments were moved online, which has allowed SU&Cs to be part of these assessments and give feedback. The education provider showed they were flexible in the delivery of aspects of their programmes to ensure continued stakeholder involvement.
  - The education provider outlined how moving assessment online presented some challenges. To address the restrictions with in-person assessments they were moved from closed to open book on a virtual platform. They reflected on the benefits of this change, including ability to record professional discussions for moderation purposes. This meant a single academic could undertake the assessment, therefore freeing up staff time. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has effectively embedded blended learning across their programmes, and assessments and involved simulation technology appropriately. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
  
- **Apprenticeships:**
  - During the reporting period, degree apprenticeship (DA) programmes were introduced in the areas of Medical Imaging and Clinical Psychology. To ensure there were no issues with placement capacity, prospective employers for the DA programmes completed a pre-contract questionnaire. This ensured there was suitable placement capacity for learners across all programmes.
  - In 2022, the independent prescribing programme was offered as an optional module on the Advanced Clinical Practice Degree Apprenticeship. This increased the number of learners which was a challenge to manage. The education provider reflected on how it improved the viability and sustainability of the independent prescribing programme by ensuring a minimum cohort size, and therefore the challenges to initially manage this were worth the change. The visitors were satisfied the education provider responded to challenges appropriately and effectively monitored their apprenticeship provision. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

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

## Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

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

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education:**

- The education provider outlined how the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) did not make any formal assessments of them against the UK Quality Code during the review period. They have continually reviewed their provision in line with the requirements of the QAA to ensure compliance.
- They have an internal policy within their Teaching Quality Assurance (TQA) Manual which ensures the appropriate quality monitoring of their programmes, called the Quality Review and Enhancement Framework. As part of the Credit and Qualifications Framework review, they created a Student Records Data Manager role who has a vital role in ensuring qualifications are consistent with relevant national qualifications frameworks and meeting the core practices (standards).
- In June 2022 they stopped reporting internally on compliance with QAA's core and common practises. This was in response to the consultations from the Office for Students (OfS) on their revised approach to Quality and Standards, which proposed the removal of the Quality Code from the Regulatory Framework. They plan to continue to engage in the resources and training materials provided by the QAA to support their practice and maintenance of their quality and standards. This ensured they can use the relevant resources in the best capacity and shows they are responsive to changes. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is responding appropriately to changes to ensure they comply with the QAA. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies:**

- Some of the education providers placement providers are regulated by either the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or the British Psychological Society (BPS). Educational Psychology placement providers are primarily local authority educational psychology services. The education provider reflected on how there were challenges in assessing practice placements during the pandemic. Despite this, they stated they were able to continue with these assessments, collect relevant data and make improvements. An example of this was receiving a notification from CQC that a placement 'required improvement'. To address this, the programme team reviewed the learner placement feedback to identify if any action was required. The outcome was learners had not identified any impacts on their placement and their feedback remained positive.
- They acknowledged there have been several changes to senior leaders within placement practises in the Southwest of England, resulting in communication and organisational challenges. They responded to this by meeting new leaders more regularly to ensure they understand the programme requirements. New leaders have

provided positive feedback about this support and are committed to providing high quality placements for learners.

- The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidenced appropriate engagement and have responded suitably to the assessment of placement providers by external bodies. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Office for Students (OfS) monitoring:**
  - The education provider stated they were not monitored by the OfS during the review period. They have however responded to the consultations on Quality and Standards undertaken by the OfS during 2020-22 from which the new/revised conditions of registration were formed. They also followed guidance produced by the OfS in relation to the pandemic to inform their practice during the review period.
  - The visitors were satisfied the education provider is responding to and continuing to meet the OfS conditions, despite not having been directly monitored during this period. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies:**
  - The education provider has connections with HEE, NHS England and relevant professional bodies across their programmes. Programme staff regularly feedback and communicate with these organisations and have contributed to policy documentation. For examples, they reflected on how programme staff as members of the Society and College of Radiographers (SCoR) Approval and Accreditation Board having acted as Assessors allows them to contribute more widely to education within the radiography profession and observe best practice elsewhere.
  - They also reflected on feedback received from their visit from BPS in 2022. They received five commendations for good practice which included a recognition of their positive work with SU&Cs. They received one condition to address, concerning the provision of a “positive and coherent student experience” with regard to accessibility of staff, streamlining tutor support roles and clarifying pathways for escalation of concerns. They stated the programme team are currently working on these conditions.
  - The visitors were satisfied the education provider is working effectively to communicate with and respond to other relevant professional regulators and bodies. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

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

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

- The visitors noted the education provider’s improvement of NSS results was an area of good practice. This is relating to their recovery in 2022 NSS performance (14th nationally and 1st in the Russell Group for overall

satisfaction) which demonstrates the quality and ongoing improvement of learner experience.

#### Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

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

- **Curriculum development:**

- The education provider developed their programmes' curriculums during the review period in line with professional body requirements, employer needs and advancements within professions. For example, a final year employer negotiated module was developed to enable radiography learners to upskill in a particular area of practice. This was well received by learners and employers and can be utilised to gain further competence / confidence in a particular area of practice.
- The updated RPS competency framework was incorporated into their prescribing programme to ensure the curriculum aligned with the new competencies. The appraisal role is now distributed across staff within the programme. This increased responsiveness and monitoring of the learners' development both personally and professionally through the appraisal system. This shows the education provider's responsiveness to changing guidance from professional bodies and feedback.
- Clinical Psychology outline how they are engaging with an ongoing programme of decolonisation, working with their lecturers to ensure their slides are inclusive of all the clients that they may serve, and staff they may work with. They recognised this as a challenge as not all teaching staff feel confident yet in decolonising their teaching and actively addressing anti-racism. The programme team are providing ongoing training to support lecturers to address this. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is continuing to respond to external influences on their curriculum development.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance:**

- The education provider reflected on changes to their programmes during the review period which were influenced by professional body guidance. The radiography programme team regularly review and update their provision to reflect changes to guidance from SCoR. Examples of changes were updated guidance for imaging Suspected Physical Abuse, and Inclusive Pregnancy Status checking. They state these changes were readily incorporated into teaching and assessment material. They reflected how this was done in a timely manner due to the programme teams proactive communications with SCoR. The SCoR have recently launched an updated Education and Skills framework and they are at the early stages of reviewing their provision within the context of that framework to ensure it aligns.
- Their prescribing programme was required to align to the publication of the updated Royal Pharmaceutical Society's Competency Framework for all Prescribers. They faced a challenge in addressing how they assessed and ensured all learners were able to meet the new competencies. The curriculum was updated to ensure the new competencies are covered in taught content, in person and online.

Learners were required to evidence their practice learning using their portfolio of practice. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidenced developments to reflect changes in professional body guidance appropriately. They have assessed changes in a structured way to ensure they are incorporated into the programmes. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning:**
  - The education provider outlined how they model their placements each year to ensure they have adequate spaces and adjust placements. They reflected on external factors which have resulted in some placement providers reducing their placement capacity post pandemic. Examples include the pandemic and availability of qualified supervisors. To address these, programmes operate some hybrid and simulation teaching post pandemic to alleviate pressures on placement sites. New education providers have come online resulting in increased placement sharing to increase capacity.
  - They reflected on how the cost-of-living crisis and costs of travel to placements was a challenge for learners. To address this, they worked with relevant bodies such as HEE to source placements and funding for learners to enable them to train and qualify. All learners have been able to successfully complete their programme so far, and the education provider will continue to support learners and placement providers. The visitors were satisfied there is ongoing work being done to support learners and ensure appropriate capacity of placements. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

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

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Learners:**
  - The education provider reflected on how learner engagement and feedback had declined over the previous few years across all programmes. They acknowledged how feedback received for individual lectures have been a minority view and therefore difficult to make strategic decisions based on feedback. There was an institutional-wide action to encourage more engagement, involvement and feedback loops. Some programmes participated in a trial of a new software platform to enhance learner feedback. They have also implemented a strategy to let learners know their feedback rate each month to help improve responses.
  - The education provider reflected on how they addressed cultural diversity and reasonable adjustments challenges for learners with disabilities, improving accessibility of placements. This was through increasing training of supervisors across all placements to include anti-racism and awareness of disability training. They reflected on how

learners have fed back regarding challenges in the variation and range of placements, support and processes involved. To address this the education provider developed a range of resources to support placements and learners including prominent displays on how to report issues and find sources of support.

- The visitors were satisfied the education provider seeks learner feedback on programmes and has several examples of their responses to feedback. Their NSS learner satisfaction score of 82.7% shows they are performing above the average of 77.7% and they have demonstrated they respond appropriately to positive and negative feedback. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Practice placement educators:**

- The education provider had regular meetings with placement educators to help all their programmes identify cross-site issues specific to each programme. This enabled timely discussions and problem solving as well as enabling them to be responsive to feedback. They stated meetings with placement educators will continue to ensure continuous dialogue and improvements.
- They reflected on their positive introduction of multiple patient assessment in response to learner and staff feedback. They increased frequency of catch-up meetings gave the departments the opportunity to share how they implemented the assessment during the placement. The placement sites have been able to support each other more directly and share best practice.
- The Clinical Psychology team's strong relationships with placement educators allowed them to receive information on learner numbers and placement allocation early to enable equipment to be arranged and make placement educators aware of placement tariffs. They received feedback on how placement educators wanted further links between planning and allocation of learners as some supervisors wanted to provide placements but were not allocated a learner.
- The visitors were satisfied the education provider appropriately supported placement educators. They agreed the education provider has suitable measures in place to address the challenges in communication and coordination with placement providers. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **External examiners:**

- External examiners (EEs) are governed at an institutional level by the education provider. They highlighted areas of good practice and areas for improvement through their feedback about the programmes through reports. The education provider stated how their programmes teams used working with EEs as an opportunity for them to reflect on their teaching, assessment, marking and communication processes.
- During the pandemic, they faced challenges with adjusting assessments in line with restrictions, however all learning outcomes were delivered and assessed appropriately. Some exams were adjusted in terms of time allocations and online delivery to respond to

EE feedback. They also experienced the abrupt departure of an EE in 2021, resulting in challenges for a new EE to be appointed and complete the required work. They were appointed in 2022 and were able to complete the EE report and attend necessary meetings to ensure programmes could continue in a timely manner.

- The visitors were satisfied the education provider is addressing EE feedback appropriately and working to improve on areas highlighted. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

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

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

- The visitors noted learner feedback showed a positive experience on the programmes and recognised this as an area of good practice. From the NETS for Clinical Psychology, learners noted that the overall educational experience they gained in their current/ most recent practice placement was “good” (47.8%) or “outstanding” (52.2%). This was the same with respect to their overall supervision experience (31.3% “good and 68.8% “outstanding”).

#### Data and reflections

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Non-continuation rates:**
  - The education provider is performing in line with the benchmark for learners continuing to complete programmes. This is reviewed annually, and any concerns highlighted by the data would be addressed through the ‘Teaching Excellence Action Plan’. They provided data for each programme, highlighting higher values of non-continuation represented where learners dropped back a year due to the pandemic. They also acknowledged how for the smaller programmes the percentage of non-continuation is skewed by a small cohort size. For example, one learner withdrawing from a programme of 13 learners is 7.7%.
  - For other programmes, they reflected on a value of zero percent for non-continuation and stated they were able to consistently support learners to successfully graduate. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers reflections and responses to the variation between programmes. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Graduate outcomes:**
  - The education provider reflects on this data annually and have reflected how several of their programmes do not have this data to report yet. This was due to them being new programmes and no first cohort has completed the programme yet. They provided data on programmes with graduated cohorts, showing high percentages (92% and more) of learners going into employment or further education. They reflected on the positivity of most learners going into employment

within the regions they trained, therefore supporting the needs of local organisations. They stated they work closely with training partners in the NHS to ensure that job vacancies are advertised to their learners. The visitors were satisfied with the current data which shows good performance for learners going into employments. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Teaching quality:**

- Since receiving its Gold Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award in 2017, the education provider stated they continued to work to enhance the quality of its teaching, learning and assessment. To provide a framework for such work, in 2019 they launched an Education Strategy 2019-2025. This was reinforced by the institutional University Strategy 2030 which supports learners by ensuring good teaching quality. Furthermore, between 2018-22 they undertook a detailed review and redevelopment of their Quality Review and Enhancement Framework. This forms a core part of their Teaching Quality Assurance Manual.
- They identified the pandemic had the biggest impact on ensuring teaching quality due to the changes and restrictions posed on the programmes. They stated it was well met with academics, professional services staff and learners coming together to support the academic learner experience.
- The visitors were satisfied there has been multiple developments in this area showing the education provider is striving to continually improve their approach to teaching quality. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Learner satisfaction:**

- The education provider creates Teaching Excellence Action Plans for each programme in response to NSS data collected each year. They noted a drop in learner satisfaction for some programmes and identified areas around placement satisfaction, assessments and staff support as needing improvement. They reflected how this feedback was gathered during the pandemic and expect many issues will be resolved by returning to the normal delivery of programmes. They have recruited new staff to fill the vacancies and increased learner support and will return to a blended learning approach to offer learners more flexibility.
- The visitors were satisfied the education provider is working towards improving their identified decrease in learner satisfaction. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Programme level data:**

- The education provider outlined how their programmes are increasing in size each year. Learner numbers are managed through regular monitoring to ensure they are suitable resourced, and staff to learner ratios are managed to stay within appropriate ratios (where outlined by relevant professional bodies).
- The visitors were satisfied programmes are being monitored appropriately and resources managed suitably. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.



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

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

## Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

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 2027-28 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 several professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
  - The education provider engaged with other relevant professional or system regulators (e.g., NMC, 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.
- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a five year monitoring period is:

- The visitors were satisfied the education provider is performing well in the majority of areas. They suggested a five year monitoring period as they felt this was an appropriate length of time, relative to performance and risk. This will give the education provider adequate time to implement action plans and evaluate the results of changes to reflect upon in their next performance review.

### **Education and Training Committee decision**

Education and Training Committee considered the assessment panel's recommendations and the findings which support these. The education provider was also provided with the opportunity to submit any observation they had on the conclusions reached.

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year

**Reason for this decision:** The education and Training Panel agreed with the findings of the visitors. They were satisfied with the recommendation of five 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>
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist		Clinical psychologist	01/10/2010
Doctorate in Educational, Child and Community Psychology (DEdPsych)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist		Educational psychologist	01/01/2005
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging	WBL (Work based learning)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	01/03/2020
BSc (Hons) Medical Imaging (Diagnostic Radiography)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	01/09/2004
MSc Diagnostic Radiography & Imaging (Pre-Registration)	WBL (Work based learning)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	01/11/2021
MSci Medical Imaging (Diagnostic Radiography)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	19/09/2022
Practice Certificate in Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/10/2021