

Formal Observation: MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) & MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration) Approval Process

We welcome the Health and Care Professions Council's conclusion that all relevant education standards have been met, and we are pleased that the MSc Occupational Therapy (pre-registration) and MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration) courses at Canterbury Christ Church University have been recommended for approval. We are grateful to the visitors for the clarity and rigour with which the process was conducted, and we value the opportunity to reflect on the findings.

We would like to submit the following formal observation in response to the process report, which is intended to support future quality assurance dialogue and to highlight an area that may benefit from ongoing attention.

- The report indicates that all course-level standards are met, and no recommendations or conditions have been applied. However, the exploration of Quality Theme 4 relating to practice-based learning opportunities highlights a wider sector challenge. While the panel was satisfied with the university's evidence and oversight mechanisms, we recognise that the increasing pressure on traditional placement capacity requires continued innovation. We would welcome further sector-level clarity and guidance on the evaluation and assurance of non-traditional placement models such as virtual placements, community settings, and leadership placements, particularly in relation to the Standards of Proficiency. We believe such guidance would benefit education providers, students, and employers, and help ensure continued compliance while responding to workforce demand.

In addition, we reaffirm the university's formal commitment to maintaining staffing levels that support the delivery of high-quality education. We have established internal planning processes to ensure that the staff-to-student ratio remains consistent with institutional policy, currently set at 20:1 and we are currently in a recruitment cycle to uphold this principle. This also includes active monitoring through our Workload Allocation Model (WAMs), confirmed academic recruitment for both courses, and the inclusion of this metric in our performance and planning cycles. We recognise the importance of aligning staff resource with curriculum delivery and placement supervision, and we will continue to review our staffing against anticipated student growth and course needs.

We thank the HCPC again for their engagement and support throughout the process and look forward to continued collaboration through future monitoring and review cycles.