

Approval process quality report

Education provider	Coventry University
Programme cluster	School of Nursing Midwifery and Health
Name of programme(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSc Dietetics and Leadership (Full time) • MSc Dietetics and Leadership, Integrated degree apprenticeship (Full time)
Date Assessment commenced	30/03/2021
Visitor recommendation made	14/07/2021
Case reference	CAS-01030-L8X6V7

Summary of findings from this assessment

This is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the Coventry University, School of Nursing Midwifery and Health - MSc Dietetics and Leadership and MSc Dietetics and Leadership, Integrated degree apprenticeship route detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

The outcomes of this process were as follows:

- Further Stage 1 assessment was not required based on the new programme(s) being proposed for delivery.
- The visitors recommended the programme(s) be approved as all programme level standards were met through their Stage 2 assessment.

The Education and Training Committee will now meet to consider the visitors recommendations and make a decision regarding programme approval.

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Section 1: Background information

Who we are

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.

Our standards

We approve programme clusters 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 standards are divided into two levels based on their relevance to the programme cluster and programme(s). The following considerations were made when splitting standards between the programme cluster and programme level:

- Where accountability best sits, with either the accountable person for the programme cluster or programme
- How the standard is worded, with references to the education provider and processes often best sitting at the programme cluster level, and references to the programme or profession often best sitting at the programme level
- We have preferred seeking assurance at the programme cluster level, to fit with our intention to put the programme cluster at the centre of our quality assurance model.

Our approach to quality assuring education

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
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards

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

The approval process

We take a staged approach to quality assurance, as we need to understand practices which will support delivery of all programmes within a programme cluster,

prior to assessing the programme level detail. The approval process is formed of two stages:

- Stage 1 – we assess to be assured that programme cluster level standards are met by the programme cluster delivering the proposed programme(s)
- Stage 2 – we assess to be assured that programme level standards are met by each proposed programme

Through the process we will initially review the proposal and then design our assessment based on the issues we find. As such, the assessment methods will be different based on the issues which arise in each case.

How we make 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 of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. 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 meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

Section 2: Our assessment

Stage 1 assessment: The programme cluster

Education provider	Coventry University
Programme cluster	School of Nursing Midwifery and Health
Accountable person	Patricia Bluteau

As part of the initiation of the process the education provider indicated that the proposed programme would be part of School of Nursing Midwifery and Health at Coventry University. This programme cluster is well established with HCPC and currently delivers approved programmes in:

- Dietetics
- Occupational Therapy
- Operating Department Practice
- Paramedic Science
- Physiotherapy
- Prescribing

In previous standards assessments of these programmes, visitors have established the programme cluster level standards are met. The provider has also demonstrated this through ongoing monitoring carried out by the HCPC.

As part of the provider's definition of their programme cluster, they have defined the policies, procedures and processes that apply to the programmes delivered within it. These relate to the programme cluster level standards we set which ensure the following areas are managed effectively:

Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for applicants • Assessing English language, character, and health • Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) • Equality, diversity and inclusion
Governance and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective programme delivery • Effective staff management • Partnerships, which are managed at the programme cluster level
Quality, monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic components, including how curricula are kept up to date • Practice components, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments • Learner involvement • Service user and carer involvement
Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support • Ongoing professional suitability • Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) • Equality, diversity and inclusion
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectivity

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression and achievement • Appeals
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Assurance that programme cluster level standards are met

As part of this stage we considered how the proposed programmes fit into the named programme cluster by considering any notable changes to the policies, procedures and processes related to the areas above.

We considered how the proposed programmes are assimilated with the management of existing approved programmes in the programme cluster. We determined the proposed programmes would be managed in way that was consistent with the definition of their programme cluster. On this basis, we were satisfied it is appropriate for the programme to sit as part of the School of Nursing Midwifery and Health and take assurance the intuition level standards will continue to be met by its introduction.

Stage 2 assessment: The programmes

Education provider	Coventry University
Programme cluster	School of Nursing Midwifery and Health
Accountable person (for the programmes)	Patricia Bluteau
Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSc Dietetics and Leadership (full time) • MSc Dietetics and Leadership, Integrated degree apprenticeship (full time)
Profession	Dietitian
Type of programme	Pre-registration
Qualification level	Postgraduate
Start date	01/09/2021

The education provider was asked to demonstrate how they meet programme level standards for each programme. They supplied information about how each standard was met, including a rationale and links to supporting information via a mapping document.

We also considered additional information from the professional body, British Dietetic Association

Visitors appointed to undertake this assessment

We appointed the following panel to assess the above information against our programme level standards:

Registrant visitors	Sara Smith - Dietitian
	Helen Catherine White - Dietitian

Assessment of the proposal

Initial review:

- The visitors reviewed the education provider's submission and considered their approach to each standard.
- This first review culminated in a virtual HCPC meeting in which the visitors discussed and made decisions around the standards they considered to be met and the areas they required further information around.
- Following the finalisation of areas to explore the visitors discussed and finalised the most appropriate quality activity to undertake this investigation.

Quality activity: Further documentary evidence

We design our assessment to be proportionate and appropriate to the issues identified and to seek input from relevant stakeholders when necessary. We considered that it was appropriate and proportionate to request additional documentary evidence to address the issues that were outstanding prior to the quality activity. The themes we explored are as follows:

Theme	Reason for additional evidence
Ensuring availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners and working with placement providers	The visitors were unclear about the education provider's contractual agreement process so they sought clarification on number and types of placements available from existing / new partner providers as well as evidence of communications with other education providers.
Resources to support learning in all settings	There was very limited information provided regarding the resources available to meet the specific criteria of the apprenticeship route so visitors requested further evidence.
Staffing capacity in practice-based learning and ensuring appropriate knowledge and experience	The visitors sought to understand how the education provider would ensure the specific aspects of the apprenticeship specification are met to ensure eligibility for application for registration with the HCPC
How the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency	The education provider has capitalised on COVID virtual adaptations and changes in BDA curriculum guidance around setting / simulation etc. It was unclear how the approach aligns to / meets the requirements of the apprenticeship specification. The

	visitors required clarity around the management of the apprenticeship experience / meeting the requirements of the apprenticeship specification - on the job experience.
Assessment	Because the visitors did not see all the module descriptors, particularly the End point assessment module for the apprenticeship route, they were unable to determine that the assessment strategy and design would ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for dietitians. Also, lack of clear information around pass marks, number of resits allowed, compensation and other assessment areas caused visitors to request further clarification.

From their detailed documentary review of the additional evidence submitted, the visitors were satisfied with the clarification provided to address all of the issues identified above. As such, they were able to recommend approval of the programmes.

Summary of visitor findings

SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register

The visitors were satisfied that the programmes align with the level of qualification expected for entry onto the Register as a dietitian. The programmes are also aligned to that of level 7 qualifications detailed in the Framework of Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

SET 2: Programme admissions

The visitors noted that there was clear information provided about the academic and professional entry and selection criteria onto the programme. They were confident that the entry criteria laid out are appropriate to the level and content of the programme and were assured that learners who complete the programme would be able to meet our standards for registration.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership

The education provider was able to demonstrate how the partnership arrangement between them and practice education providers would ensure available practice – based learning for all learners. The project outlines for placements as well as sample contractual agreements between the education provider and the employers reassured the visitors that practice education providers are committed to the programme. In addition, the visitors saw arrangements in place for employers to provide corresponding practice placement within their organisation for another dietetic learner or apprentice in situations where an apprentice is undertaking a practice placement in a setting away from their normal place of work. The education provider also demonstrated additional placement capacity generated by Coventry University to ensure stability in placement capacity.

Through the tripartite review form and mapping to apprenticeship standards, the education provider was able to further demonstrate the availability of sufficient physical resources that would effectively support the apprenticeship learners in the delivery of the programme.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

SET 4: Programme design and delivery

The evidence submitted along with the mapping to the professional body standards showed how the curriculum delivers the standards of proficiency (SOPs). For the degree apprenticeship programme, the mapping of apprenticeship standards also showed how apprenticeship duties are met through the programme. As such, the visitors were satisfied that learners who successfully complete the programme would be equipped with the necessary skills to practice as autonomous professionals.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

SET 5: Practice-based learning

The visitors could see how the learning outcomes would be delivered through the range of practice based learning opportunities. The tripartite reviews as well as the mapping of apprenticeship standards assured the visitors that the structure and duration of practice-based learning for the degree apprenticeship support the delivery of the learning outcomes.

There was sufficient evidence in the training course provided to practice educators to demonstrate that they will be provided specific training required for the apprenticeship learners and how to support them.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

SET 6: Assessment

The visitors were able to see from the module information descriptors that there is a range of assessment which would effectively assess the learning outcomes and ensure learners who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs. The course specification outlined the academic regulations governing the programme and there was clear evidence of how this information is made available to learners. Therefore, the visitors were clear that learners are well informed about requirements for achievement and progression on the programmes.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

Section 3: The visitors' recommendations

Based on these findings the visitors made the following recommendations to the Education and Training Committee:

Programme approval

The programme is recommended for approval, without conditions.

Section 4: Committee decision on approval

- We will record the decision of the Education and Training Committee here following their meeting on 25 August 2021