
Approval process report

Anglia Ruskin University, Physiotherapy / Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship), 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve the BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Degree Apprenticeship) and BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship) programmes at Anglia Ruskin University. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programmes against our standards, to ensure learners who complete the proposed programmes are fit to practice.

We have:

- Reviewed the institution against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area.
- Reviewed the programmes against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area.
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programmes should be approved
- Decided all standards are met, and that the programme should be approved

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- We did not need to undertake any quality activity during the review process. We did, however, seek clarification around a number of points mentioned in the programme documentation, as outlined in section 4.

Previous consideration	N / A as this process did not arise from a previous process.
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Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide whether the programmes are approved.
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Next steps	• Subject to the Panel's decision, we will add the programmes to the list of approved programmes.
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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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programmes detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programmes' approval / 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 approval process

Institutions and programmes must be approved by us before they can run. The approval process is formed of two stages:

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

Through the approval process, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess whether providers and programmes meet standards based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. Our standards are split along institution and programme level lines, and we take assurance at the provider level wherever possible.

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

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 this review:

Fleur Kitsell	Lead visitor, Physiotherapist
Joanne Stead	Lead visitor, Occupational therapist
Temilolu Odunaike	Education Quality Officer (stage 1)
Niall Gooch	Education Quality Officer (stage 2)

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 14 HCPC-approved programmes across six professions. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2000. This includes 4 post-registration programmes for independent prescribing and supplementary prescribing, and prescription only medicines (POM) Administration annotations.

The education provider engaged with the performance review process in the current model of quality assurance in 2022.

The education provider engaged with the approval process in the legacy model of quality assurance in 2020 for the introduction of the MSc Occupational Therapy, Full time, and MSc Physiotherapy, Full time programmes. After considering the education provider's response to the conditions set, we were satisfied that the conditions were met, and the programmes were approved in September 2021.

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	Arts therapist	☐ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2000
	Biomedical scientist	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2007
	Hearing Aid Dispenser	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2008
	Occupational therapy	☒ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2022
	Operating Department Practitioner	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2003
	Paramedic	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2014
	Physiotherapist	☒ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2022
	Radiographer	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2004
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2006
	Prescription Only Medicine – Administration			2005

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.

This data is for existing provision at the institution, and does not include the proposed programme(s).

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	1240	1288	2024	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 is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision. The enrolled number of learners is higher than the approved intended numbers on record. However, this also includes the figures for the new programmes, so we did not consider that this data raises any concern.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	2%	2020-21	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 2%.

				We did not explore this data point through this assessment because we did not consider that the data highlighted a significant concern, but as part of the approval process we do consider how the education provider will support learners.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	92%	90%	2021-22	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 3%. We did not specifically explore this data point through this assessment because we did not consider it indicated any issues, but considering how education providers support learners into their next steps is part of the approval process.
Learner satisfaction	85.8%	78.6%	2023	This data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms.

				When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has been maintained. We explored this considering how well the education provider was supporting learners and helping them to achieve and complete the programme.
HCPC performance review cycle length	Five years			The education provider underwent performance review in the 2022-23 academic year and were given a five year interval until their next review. This is the maximum period.

The route through stage 1

Institutions which run HCPC-approved provision have previously demonstrated that they meet institution-level standards. When an existing institution proposes a new programme, we undertake an internal review of whether we need to undertake a full partner-led review against our institution level standards, or whether we can take assurance that the proposed programme(s) aligns with existing provision.

As part of the request to approve the proposed programme(s), the education provider supplied information to show alignment in the following areas.

Admissions

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Information for applicants –**
 - Information related to admissions is available on the education provider's website. The 'Senate Code of Practice on Admissions' document outlines the institution wide policies covering information for applicants.
 - The education provider holds recruitment events, including taster days, open days, and applicant days, where key details about the programmes and admissions are explained.
 - These policies and procedures are all set at the institutional level, although minor adjustments may be required according to specific

professions. These same policies also apply to the education provider's existing MSc programmes in the same profession. This means there will be no material changes necessary.

- Admissions for the degree apprenticeship programmes follow the same institutional policies and process but is managed through its own subdivision called 'Degrees at Work'. Applicants will undergo an 'onboarding' process which includes interview, an initial assessment and training plan.
- Employers are fully involved in the entire recruitment and application process. The education provider liaises with existing employers to provide support and information through the recruitment and application processes. Employers are required to sign the skill scan which forms part of the admission process and joint interviews are held with the employers.
- Before a learner commences the programmes, employers participate in an initial assessment and commit to supporting the learner's learning, including providing necessary off-the-job training. Additionally, employers sign a comprehensive agreement with the education provider, along with individual agreements for each learner.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider operates.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
 - English language requirement, character and health are stated in the 'Senate Code of Practice on Admissions' document which also includes information on entry requirements, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and engagement with Occupational Health (OH) requirements. This operates at an institutional level.
 - This is underpinned by the 'Academic Regulations 16th Edition' document which sets out the requirement for all applicants to healthcare programmes declaring any previous criminal convictions and actions arising from such disclosure. This policy also operates at an institutional level.
 - Each programme specification form will outline, in the Entry Requirements section, specific requirements for DBS, OH process and the level of English language competency for each programme.
 - Requirements for English Language, DBS clearance and OH screening are also stated on individual programme webpages and via the institution's general admissions webpage.
 - These policies and procedures will apply to applicants for the proposed programmes.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - The education provider uses its 'Senate Code of Practice on Admissions (including Accredited Prior Learning)' document to set out requirements for recognition of prior learning (RPL). This operates at an institutional level.
 - Individual accredited prior learning (APL) cases are considered by Faculty Admissions Tutors and, where necessary, referred to the

Faculty RPL Committee. The Committee review a sample of APL cases annually for internal quality assurance purposes.

- Learners on the new programmes can APL with 240 credits at level 4 and 5 and will complete a further 180 credits in their specialist area. This follows the established processes already in place.
- The policies and procedures are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programmes.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider have demonstrated they are committed to advancing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and has strategies and initiatives in place to support this.
 - The 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy' is available to applicants and learners on their public facing website. The same document includes the institution wide EDI policy.
 - Other resources in support of EDI are the 'Senate Code of Practice on Curriculum Approval' document, the 'Race Equality Strategy' and the 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group'. These resources are also available to support staff involved in recruitment and admissions.
 - The policies and procedures are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Management and governance

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register¹ –**
 - The Academic Registry's Quality Assurance Service is responsible for overseeing institution-wide quality assurance and enhancement policies and procedures. This includes taking responsibility for coordinating and administering procedures for programme approval and re-approval. They also oversee annual monitoring and appointing and inducting external examiners, as well as approval and review of collaborative partners.
 - Each programme is led at an operational level by a programme leader who is also a registrant. Each programme is then part of a larger group line managed by a deputy Head of School and overseen by a Head of School.
 - The education provider refers to their Academic Regulations document which operate at institutional level to establish provision of delivery and quality assurance. This includes regulations on curriculum design, appropriateness of academic level, credit and assessment design, academic progression, and conferment of awards.

¹ This is focused on ensuring providers are able to deliver qualifications at or equivalent to the level(s) in SET 1, as required for the profession(s) proposed

- In addition to internal quality assurance mechanisms the education provider is subject to monitoring through the Office for Students (OfS), the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).
- Policies and procedures are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed new programmes.
- **Sustainability of provision –**
 - The education provider referenced policies, procedures and processes in the approval request form (ARF) including Financial Regulation (2022), People Strategy (2022), Designing our Future 2017-2026, and the Academic Workload Balancing Model.
 - The Financial Regulations (2022) set out how the education provider manages financial stability. This is overseen by the Financial Services Team which operates at an institutional level. Sustainability of provision is maintained via Minimum Expected Target (METs) Annual Reviews. These are annual meetings between the education provider's Executive Team, led by the Vice Chancellor, and senior strategic members of staff. They review recruitment target figures for the upcoming academic year. These targets are set according to various metrics including market intelligence, annual monitoring, previous recruitment cycle statistics and availability of resource, including estates.
 - The education provider uses its People Strategy (2022) to set out their recruitment and retention principles. These are to recruit high quality staff who are able to support and deliver excellent and sustainable provision. This is underpinned by their Staff Development Guides and Staff Development Policy documents. These enable all staff to access both mandatory and optional training, as well as continuing professional development. This ensures their skills are up to date, and also to diversify their portfolio of skills, which further contributes towards sustainability of provision. Extensive staff development also enables attraction and retention of high-quality staff.
 - The arrangements for maintaining programme sustainability are appropriate. The policies and procedures are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programmes.
- **Effective programme delivery –**
 - The education provider has been delivering HCPC accredited programmes since 2000. They have been delivering the MSc Occupational Therapy and MSc Physiotherapy since 2022.
 - The education provider currently runs two apprenticeships. The BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (Degree Apprenticeship) and FdSc in Hearing Aid Audiology (Higher Apprenticeship).
 - They are a well-established education provider with undergraduate and post-registration programmes in this curriculum area. This indicates there is a large amount of institutional experience and expertise available, as well as the facilities to enable effective delivery of the programmes. There are different apprenticeship committees that have expertise and experience relevant to apprenticeship programmes who

will be involved in the new programmes. For example, the Institutional Apprenticeship Committee chaired by the Head of Learning and Development Services, and the Pro-Vice Chancellor Education Enhancement.

- The education provider uses annual monitoring and periodic review as mechanisms for continual monitoring and quality assurance to ensure effective programme delivery. This is underpinned by the Senate Codes of Practice which operates at institutional level.
- The education provider noted that employers are involved and engaged in every aspect of the programme delivery to ensure it is effective. Some of these include:
 - Recruitment, application and marketing
 - Co-production of curricula
 - Co-delivery – for example employers delivering taught sessions on campus and education provider staff delivering sessions within the practice environment. Employers will support both on and off the job learning in the practice environment.
 - Employers are responsible for monitoring and keeping track of learners' journey through different mechanisms including progress reviews, regular meetings, etc
 - Regular opportunities to feedback and feedforward
 - Tripartite involvement and partnership working
- In response to a request for additional clarification, the education provider named specific employers with whom they would be working on the apprenticeship. Specifically, they stated that Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (CUH) and Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust (MSE) would be their key employer partners for the programme. The education provider stated in the clarification document that they had agreements in place with CSU and MSE. The additional narrative set out in some detail how the relationships would be managed, through the creation of an institutional School of Apprenticeships (SOA). The SOA will use Key Account Managers to ensure that these relationships function appropriately.
- Considering this experience and expertise, we are confident that the new programmes align with existing approaches.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
 - The education provider stated they promote gender equality in higher education, leadership and development through the Athena Swan Charter and the Aurora Development Programme. The Athena Swan Charter is a voluntary framework which promotes gender equality within higher education. The education provider has been a member of Athena Swan since 2012, and they currently hold an institutional 'Bronze' award. The Aurora Programme is an introductory leadership programme, which is run by the Leadership Foundation. It is designed for women in academic or professional services aimed at those aspiring to, or just beginning in, leadership roles.

- Existing established development and management systems at the education provider will apply to these programmes also. These include an annual appraisal of all staff and annual peer teaching reviews. Support is offered through continuing staff development and access to resources. A fee waiver scheme operates for staff who wish to pursue further study, for example at PhD level.
- This assessment is based on information within the approval request form (ARF).
- This aligns with our understanding of how the institution runs and we are confident the new programmes align with this approach.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
 - The education provider uses their 'Senate Code of Practice on Collaborative Provision' and 'Academic Regulations' documents to set out the procedure for collaborative partners. These policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed new programmes.
 - They also have policies and procedures specifically related to health professions. These include 'Partnership Agreement' documents, 'Educational Audit', Practice Educator Group and Education Champions. A central Faculty Placements Team oversee these activities alongside Directors of Practice Education and Placement Co-ordinators.
 - Partnerships are arranged and administered by Degrees at Work (DaW) and ensure all parties understand, and will be able to support, learners through all aspects of the programmes.
 - Learners on the new programmes and their employers also have individual contracts in the form of training plans which provide them with detailed overviews of the learners including modules to be undertaken and their learning outcomes, mapping to KSBs, key milestones such as end of level study and End Point Assessment, breakdown of off-the-job hours to include academic led, learner led and employer led hours, support needs etc.
 - Practice placement partners who are responsible for learners in the practice environment are required to sign a Partnership Agreement document between the placement and the education provider.
 - The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - The proposed new programmes will follow the established procedures at the education provider for monitoring and enhancing quality. They have supplied relevant regulations and placement agreements.
 - The education provider uses its 'Academic Workload Balancing Model' to review academic workload at regular points in the academic year.

This enables line managers to plan work and to provide support to staff where needed. This process aims to maximise staff engagement and moral to improve staff retention and to ensure academic quality.

- We can be confident in the education provider's approach in this area because they have just completed performance review in August 2023 with a maximum five-year review period.
- The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programmes.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - The Education Provider has a number of mechanisms in place to ensure practice quality. This is evidenced through an established Practice Educator Group, the Practice Education Committee, and the Quality Learning Environment Group. This information is included in the approval request form.
 - Learners are supported on practice placement by Practice Supervision Teams. The teams provide support to learners on placement and have regular contact with the learner and the education provider. Supervisors within these teams can also escalate any issues to Practice Education Committee via Education Champions.
 - Education Champions are the key academic link to individual placement providers. They coordinate audits, mentor and assessor updates and learner/mentor support. They support regular learner forums, which are held in practice settings. These forums enable ongoing and open dialogue with learners regarding their practice learning experiences and any issues or concerns they might have. Education Champions also monitor audits of practice placements and report to Practice Education Committee.
 - The 'Fitness to Study Policy' and process can also be applied where there is a concern for learners' physical or mental wellbeing, either at placement or outside of learning environments.
 - These arrangements are aligned with existing quality practice at the education provider which have recently been assessed through performance review.
- **Learner involvement –**
 - Similar mechanisms will be used to gather and implement feedback on the new programmes as on the existing HCPC approved provision. These include student representatives to gather and provide feedback on academic issues, to feed into academic committees, and to ensure the learner's voice is heard. The 'Senate Code of Practice on Curriculum (Re)-Approval and Review' document requires that wherever possible learners should be represented on curriculum approval panels. This indicates the education provider's commitment to involving learners in curriculum design.
 - Learners are also involved through mechanisms including Module Evaluation Surveys, Student Staff Liaison Committee, National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Taught Experiences Survey (PTES).

- Relevant programme leaders, members of management, and learners meet at the Student Staff Liaison Committee Meetings to discuss issues including feedback from learners. Relevant members of professional services staff as well as representatives from the Student Union also attend.
- The Director of Student Experience and Engagement, the Deputy Dean for Education and the Student Experience Manager have ultimate oversight and monitor learner involvement and feedback.
- We can be satisfied with the alignment of the new programmes and the existing arrangements at the education provider. Those arrangements are stated in the baseline document and have been recently reviewed via performance review.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - The education provider stated that there are no institutional level policies governing the involvement of service users and carers across their provision. Each Faculty takes a different approach.
 - Service users and carers are involved in different parts of programmes within the Faculty of Health, Education, Medicine and Social Science (HEMS), where the proposed programmes will sit. This includes their involvement in curriculum design, programme admissions, interviews and in teaching.
 - Within HEMS they use their 'Service User Strategy' to detail service user and carer involvement across the whole Faculty. The well-established service user group in Mental Health nursing and Social Work, also work closely with Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy to enhance cross-disciplinary working and understanding.
 - We can be satisfied with the alignment of the new programmes and the existing arrangements at the education provider. Those arrangements are stated in the baseline document and have been recently reviewed via performance review.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**
 - The approval request form (ARF) notes that learners on the new programmes will have access to all the usual and established mechanisms for support. These include access to Counselling and Wellbeing Service, Student Services, Complaints Process and Policy, and Placement Support. These are institutional-wide policies.
 - At the Faculty level, learners are supported via Personal Development Tutoring (PDP). This enables learners to benefit from developing their academic, professional, employability and their personal development skills and applies to all learners, including those on the new degree apprentice programmes.

- The education provider noted they have a dedicated placements team, as well as Directors of Practice Education and a Deputy Dean for Practice Education and Simulation.
- Learners are able to access IT support and 'Study Skills Plus' via the library. The 'Study Skills Plus' is a resource led by coaches who provide regular workshops on preparing for assessment, feedback clinics, numeracy and literacy skills. They also provide a wide variety of online resources.
- Learners on the new programmes will participate in a 12 weekly progress review with a study coach from the education provider and an employer representative. Where a learner needs to undertake practice-based learning outside their primary place of employment, the education provider noted they will arrange 'swaps' or 'reciprocal' arrangements for these as they do on their other degree apprenticeships.
- These policies are aligned with the existing arrangements at the education provider and apply to all programmes.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - Learners on the programmes will have access to a range of ongoing support mechanisms and there are policies and procedures in place, as evidenced in the approval request form, should there be any concerns regarding academic performance or professional suitability.
 - The 'Academic Regulations' document sets out the criteria for ongoing suitability including continuation, progression and award and ongoing assessment of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Occupational Health (OH) checks.
 - The Fitness to Practice Policy is embedded within the 'Rules, Regulations and Procedures for Students' document. It outlines disciplinary procedures in the event of a cause for concern being raised to Fitness to Practice panel.
 - These policies are aligned with the existing arrangements at the education provider and apply to all programmes.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - The education provider has stated that interprofessional learning is an institutional key objective. This is written into the 'Education Strategy 2018-2022' document and written into their Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 submission.
 - They use 'Ruskin modules', introduced in the academic year 2021-2022. These are 15-credit modules at level 5 which sit outside the 'normal' modular/programme structures. They are available to all undergraduate learners and are designed to be cross-disciplinary and encourage interprofessional learning. The education provider plans to incorporate these modules and other options into the degree apprenticeship programmes.
 - The education provider noted the possibility of shared simulated practice-based learning opportunities, for example with mental health settings where Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy learners can

learn together with learners from Social Work, Paramedic Science, Music or Dramatherapy.

- These arrangements have been considered through previous approval processes and have also been considered as part of the performance review process.
- The above align with our understanding of how the education provider runs their programmes and we have been assured that they will apply to the new programmes in the same way.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider stated they are committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) at an institutional level. They have numerous strategies and initiatives in place to support this. At the core of which is their 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' policy. This policy is a public facing document, available via the website, which is accessible to all applicants.
 - The education provider also uses their 'Designing our Future 2017-26' and their 'Education Strategy 2018-2022' documents to embed EDI into their institutional strategic planning.
 - The policy and procedures are set at institution level and will apply to all programmes.
 - We can therefore be confident that the proposed programme will continue to meet the relevant standards.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - In order to ensure objectivity in their assessments the education provider has several policies and regulations in place, including their 'Senate Code of Practice on Assessment of Students' and 'Senate Code of Practice on External Examiners for Taught Courses' documents.
 - The setting, review, submission, marking and moderation of examinations and assessments are subject to these existing regulations.
 - Information relating to these processes is embedded within learner facing documentation such as the 'Student Charter', the online learning management system and programme handbooks.
 - These policies are set at institution level and will apply to all programmes.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - Learner progression and achievement will be managed at institutional level, apart from practice assessment documents which are specific to each programme and applied at programme level. This process follows the normal mechanisms already in place at the education provider.

- These policies are set at institution level and will apply to all programmes. Therefore, we can be confident that there is alignment between the proposed programmes and existing provision.
- **Appeals –**
 - Learners will have access to and be made aware of the existing informal and formal appeals processes.
 - The Academic Appeals Team is responsible for the administration of academic appeals in accordance with the ‘Academic Regulations’ document. The Team ensure that all appeals are dealt with effectively and in a timely way. Learners who are considering submitting an appeal are directed to consult the document which sets out the process via a flow diagram.
 - The proposed programmes will use the same policies and procedures and therefore we can be confident that there is alignment between the new programme and existing provision.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Outcomes from stage 1

We decided to progress to stage 2 of the process without further review through stage 1, due to the clear alignment of the new provision within existing institutional structures, as noted through the previous section

Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:

- A range of teaching facilities from small group work rooms to large lecture theatres. Team based learning rooms, open access and closed computer suites are also part of the physical estate on both campuses.
- New suites of flats at both education provider sites, including those specific to physiotherapy and occupational therapy on both William Harvey Building in Chelmsford, and Young Street Building in Cambridge.
- Each site has a library with an extensive range of physical resources, as well as group study rooms, computer rooms and printing facilities.
- All learners are able to access the full range of support resources both online and on campus, including for example the Counselling and Wellbeing service and Study Skills Plus.
- Both campuses have social spaces, including gyms and sports centres.

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including	Proposed learner number,	Proposed start date
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		modality) / entitlement	and frequency	
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist	12 learners, 2 cohorts	15/09/2025
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist	12 learners, 2 cohorts	15/09/2025

Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

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.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided, and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their submission.

We considered the quality activity was not required, as the education provider had demonstrated that all the stage 2 standards were met through their initial documentary submission. We did ask the education provider to clarify certain parts of their submission. This is explained in more detail in section 4 below.

We have reported on how the provider meets standards, including the areas below, through the [Findings section](#).

Section 4: Findings

This section details the visitors' findings from their review through stage 2, including any requirements set, and a summary of their overall findings.

Overall findings on how standards are met

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings against the programme-level standards. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment.

- **SET 2: Programme admissions –**
 - The education provider submitted evidence to demonstrate how they meet the relevant standards in this area, including a Course Information document, a Student Interview Template and an institutional apprenticeship guidance document.
 - Applicants for the programmes will be required to pass an Initial Assessment (IA) process. This will involve a Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB)-based interview, and an opportunity for applicants to either declare additional needs or to be screened for conditions like dyslexia or dyspraxia. The IA will also involve discussions with employer partners to ensure that applicants are suitable for undertaking the programmes as apprentices, and a Skills Scan. The education provider has not set out formal academic requirements but they do state that assessment of academic potential and readiness will form part of the overall assessment process.
 - We considered that the relevant standard was met in this area as the education provider had a clear and defined mechanism for ensuring that applicants have appropriate professional and academic skills. We did ask for some clarification around how they would ensure that applicants had appropriate English language skills, but they outlined that they would use International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores as part of the process described above – they described how an English language assessment had been appropriately integrated into the application and interview process.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership –**
 - The education provider demonstrated effective collaboration with practice-based learning partners by submitting evidence such as records of discussions with local NHS Trusts during programme development, minutes from the Practice Education Governance Committee meetings, shared document templates for managing learners (e.g. raising concerns forms and tripartite meeting templates), and planning documents showing joint efforts to maintain placement capacity with local stakeholders.
 - As noted through stage 1, we considered through the stage 2 documentation whether the education provider had clear agreements in place with their employer partners. There was detailed information in the stage 2 submission about these agreements. For example, the document named 'East of England Physiotherapy practice Education Partnership (EEPPP) Terms of reference' set out how the education provider would work with the employers. The 'Physio Eastern Region HEI Placement Mapping 2024-2025' document demonstrated how the education provider would put into practice the collaborative relationships they had developed with the employer partners.
 - For the occupational therapy programme, we saw two important documents. These were 'Practice Education Governance Committee Terms of Reference' and 'Practice Education Governance Committee Agenda'. They demonstrated how the education provider would agree, develop and maintain agreements with the employer partners. The

visitors also reviewed job descriptions for members of staff at the education provider whose role involved developing and overseeing the employer collaboration. The education provider clarified that there are “contracts with individual employers” who send apprentices on to the programmes.

- The visitors reviewed the online hub where the education provider and employers could communicate and share information about learners. It also provides access to the training documents used for practice educators.
- The education provider has a dedicated team responsible for managing and ensuring the availability and quality of practice-based learning. This team is responsible for ensuring that employer partners have suitable arrangements and standards in place for the learners. The placement expansion lead is responsible for engaging with current and potential employers to develop diverse and innovative placement models. The academic placement lead will work with employers to monitor capacity and ensure learners' needs are met. The education provider is also involved with the East of England physiotherapy placement partnership, in which six local HEIs collaborate on placement planning via quarterly meetings.
- The education provider submitted staff CVs, job descriptions, line manager handbooks, a workload model, relevant policies, and schedules of training. The visitors noted that the education provider will have 5.0 whole-time equivalent (WTE) staff available for the proposed apprenticeship programmes, including three full-time senior lecturers and three lecturer practitioners who maintain active clinical roles. All team members are appropriately qualified and HCPC-registered.
- All staff across both programmes have completed or are working towards the provider's Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and Learning. A dedicated apprenticeship training scheme supports teaching quality, while the Academic Workload Balancing Model ensures staff efficiency, educational standards, and absence cover.
- Additional sessional teaching will be provided by associate and guest lecturers, including HCPC-registered clinicians, public health experts, and specialists in healthcare leadership and ethics, all of whom undergo mandatory training and formal staff application processes. Support staff are also in place, including faculty course administrators, learning technologists, and clinical skills technicians.
- Each learner will also be assigned a Personal Development Tutor (PDT). Communication between learners and PDTs will be facilitated via the education provider's virtual platform. This means that learners will have access to their PDT while working in placement with the employer.
- The education provider will use the Canvas virtual learning environment as a hub for all programme-related digital resources. All learning materials will be available on this platform and serves as the central online learning platform, offering access to lectures, module guides, assessments, and reading lists. Learners will be able to access

this platform while working in placement with the employer. The university teaching facilities include skills labs, clinical suites, active classrooms and simulation suites.

- The visited requested clarification around how the education provider would maintain and expand capacity. Specifically, we wanted them to elaborate on how they intended to mitigate the impact of the new apprenticeships on their existing physiotherapy and occupational therapy provisions. The education provider explained that they have a dedicated placement team, whose institutional remit is to monitor and address possible capacity issues with all programmes and all subject areas.
- We also requested clarification about the education provider's timeline for recruiting more staff for the occupational therapy programme. In the documentation the education provider stated that they intended to grow the team by 1.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE). We asked them when this would happen, and they confirmed that it would be undertaken over the summer of 2025. As part of this clarification, they also explained the roles visiting lecturers with regards to how they were appointed, trained, monitored, and how they received feedback.
- Based on the information reviewed, and the clarifications provided, the visitors considered the relevant standards were met because the education provider had demonstrated they would be able to manage, staff and provide resources for the programme appropriately.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The education provider submitted a standard of proficiency (SOPs) mapping document, alongside other documentation, which outline how they will deliver and have designed the new programmes. We reviewed a Course Information document, a Course Specification Form and a Module Definition Form. We also saw an Apprentice Handbook and documents related to maintaining learner suitability and professional standards. Part of the submission also included documents from the internal approval process. This set out how they would deliver evidence-based learning and how they would encourage autonomous working.
 - The SOPs mapping document and the module descriptors enabled us to be satisfied that the programmes would enable the learners to understand and meet the SOPs and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs). It was also clear from the internal approval documentation that the education provider had designed the programmes to incorporate professional expectations and requirements. It was also clear that the curriculum had been benchmarked against current professional standards, and that the theory elements would support the clinical education appropriately.
 - The education provider submitted evidence demonstrating the integration of theory and practice. Specifically, we saw programme mapping documents demonstrating that the various clinical placements at the employer would be preceded by academic delivery of the theoretical knowledge required for those placements. There was clear

alignment between the clinical competencies that learners would be acquiring and the understanding they would have acquired in prior teaching and learning activities.

- We also saw evidence showing that the education provider have plans to have regular meetings with employer partners to review the learning and teaching methods used in the employer setting. There will fortnightly meetings between representatives of the education provider and the employer to manage operational issues and less frequent but more formal meetings to consider whether any amendments related to teaching and learning are required.
- We considered that the standards were met for both programmes, because the curriculum was fit for purpose in preparing learners for professional practice and enabling them to meet the SOPs and the SCPEs. We were also confident, from the evidence of collaboration we had seen, that the education provider was able to have appropriate oversight over the employer's delivery of parts of the programme, such that any issues could be addressed effectively.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - The Course Information document and the module descriptors explained how the time that the learners spend in the employer settings would be appropriately integrated into the academic learning on the programme. As noted above, the clinical learning undertaken in the employer setting will be appropriately integrated with academic learning delivered by the education provider. The range of topics covered in the taught components is scheduled such that learners should be able to have the necessary theoretical knowledge. The education provider's organisational charts of the programmes demonstrated that they worked with employers to ensure that employers could provide an appropriate structure, range and duration of placement settings during the programmes. In the situation where a particular clinical setting would not be available to a particular learner for any reason, the education provider had a defined process for working with other placement partners to ensure the learner acquired the clinical skills.
 - The visitors reviewed evidence demonstrating how the education provider will manage the suitability and experience of practice educators. These included plans for biweekly meetings involving practice educators, training materials for practice educators, audit templates for practice-based learning placements, and a virtual learning environment (VLE) which would be used as a hub for management, development and monitoring of all practice educators.
 - We requested clarification about the integration of practice-based learning with the rest of the programmes. The education provider stated in their response that academic assessment and clinical learning will be closely tied together, with placements integrated into specific modules through their learning outcomes. These placements will be assessed on a pass/fail basis, and successful completion is essential for overall module achievement.

- The education provider noted also that specific modules were designed to embed key themes of the programme – Quality Improvement, Leadership, and Developing as an Autonomous Practitioner. They stated that the “practice placement learning outcomes have been designed to scaffold learners’ development in practice”.
- We also asked the education provider to clarify how they would ensure that all placement settings, especially smaller ones, would be able to deliver all the clinical learning outcomes. The education provider submitted a detailed narrative explaining how this would be achieved. For example, they outlined their “reciprocal arrangements to expand the variety of placements for learners.” What they mean by this is that they would enable larger and smaller providers to co-operate to fill gaps and to ensure that all learners have access to the necessary settings. The practice team at the education provider includes an Allied Health Professions (AHP) Expansion Lead, whose role is to secure further practice placement opportunities. We considered that the existence of the reciprocal arrangements was further evidence of the education provider’s ability to collaborate effectively with employer partners through their agreements.
- A Learner Guide for Role Emerging Placements has been developed and deployed for learners – this document sets out expectations for such placements and explains their integration into the programme.
- In light of the information provided and the clarifications, we considered the relevant standards met because the education provider had appropriately integrated effective practice-based learning into their programmes. They also had clear pathways for ensuring that practice educators were suitably qualified and experienced for supervision of the learners.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - The education provider submitted module descriptors, SOPs mapping and an assessment strategy. We reviewed assessment design documents for the programmes, but also documents reflecting how the individual programmes would implement the institutional policies. The Apprentice Handbook outlines the assessment approach for learners.
 - From these documents we understood that there was close alignment between the SOPs and the programmes’ learning outcomes. The standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs) were also mapped closely to the learning outcomes, and the assessment methods and approaches used would, in the visitors’ judgement, assess the learners’ achievement of those learning outcomes appropriately. The visitors’ viewing of these documents satisfied them that the education provider had a plan in place to appropriately assess the learners’ understanding of the SOPs and SCPEs.
 - We considered the relevant standards are met because there was a clear strategy in place for assessing learners’ achievement with appropriate methods.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Section 5: Referrals

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

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

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that all standards are met, and therefore the programmes should be approved.

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 programmes are approved.

Reason for this decision: The Panel accepted the visitor's recommendation that the programmes should receive approval.

Education provider	Anglia Ruskin University		
Case reference	CAS-01536-J7S6R6	Lead visitors	Fleur Kitsell, Joanne Stead
Quality of provision			
Through this assessment, we have noted: We did not need to undertake any quality activity during the review process. We did, however, seek clarification around a number of points mentioned in the programme documentation, as outlined in section 4.			
Facilities provided			
Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities: • A range of teaching facilities from small group work rooms to large lecture theatres. Team based learning rooms, open access and closed computer suites are also part of the physical estate on both campuses. • New suites of flats at both education provider sites, including those specific to physiotherapy and occupational therapy on both William Harvey Building in Chelmsford, and Young Street Building in Cambridge. • Each site has a library with an extensive range of physical resources, as well as group study rooms, computer rooms and printing facilities. • All learners are able to access the full range of support resources both online and on campus, including for example the Counselling and Wellbeing service and Study Skills Plus. • Both campuses have social spaces, including gyms and sports centres.			
Programmes			
Programme name	Mode of study	First intake date	
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	Work-based learning	January 2026	
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	Work-based learning	January 2026	

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MA Dramatherapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Drama therapy		01/09/2010
MA Music Therapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Music therapy		01/09/2006
FDS <i>c</i> in Hearing Aid Audiology	DL (Distance learning)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/07/2008
Fd <i>Sc</i> in Hearing Aid Audiology (Higher Apprenticeship)	DL (Distance learning)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/09/2021
M <i>Sc</i> Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/01/2022
B <i>Sc</i> (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/08/2017
B <i>Sc</i> (Hons) Operating Department Practice (Degree Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2020
B <i>Sc</i> (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2014
Diploma Higher Education Paramedic Studies	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/01/2016
M <i>Sc</i> Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2022
Advanced Non-Medical Prescribing (level 7)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014
Advanced Non-Medical Prescribing (level 7) (SP only)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/01/2014
Non-Medical Prescribing (level 6)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014

Non-Medical Prescribing (level 6) (SP only)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/01/2014
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