
Performance review process report

Medway School of Pharmacy, Review Period 2022-2024

Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of the Medway School of Pharmacy. 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 quality themes and found that we needed to undertake further exploration of key themes through quality activities
- Undertaken quality activities to arrive at our judgement on performance, including when the institution should next be reviewed
- Decided when the institution should next be reviewed

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
 - Visitors recognised that processes for monitoring academic quality were in place through the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) procedures and annual monitoring. However, they noted a lack of reflection on the effectiveness of these processes and requested further reflections. Through [Quality theme 1](#) the visitors were provided with further information outlining how these mechanisms had contributed to improvements in academic quality and monitoring outcomes during the review period.
 - The following areas should be referred to another HCPC process for assessment:
 - New processes have recently been introduced, such as the feedback process within the prescribing portfolio review (PPR) documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit and the new reflective diary. It was noted these new processes were aimed at improving connections between academic tutors and practice educators. We recognised these developments were positive, however they were still in the early stages of implementation and had not yet been fully evaluated. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.
 - Through this review the education provider worked with the HCPC to establish data points, however due to the way the education provider gathered the programme level data it was not clear how many learners were HCPC registrants. It was therefore recommended the HCPC should
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work with the education provider to establish a process by which these learners could be identified.

- The education provider should next engage with monitoring in two years, the 2027-28 academic year, because:
 - 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, and external examiners.
 - The education provider engaged with a number of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider engaged with the NMC, GPhC and RPS. They considered their findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
 - The education provider highlighted new processes introduced to increase the volume of feedback, which will begin to affect their provision from the 2024–25 academic year. We will need to assess the impact of these changes once the education provider has had time to reflect on their implementation, which will be in the 2027–28 academic year.
 - Through this review, the education provider supplied two data points that have been externally verified, however there is still one data point that is not externally verified. We were therefore unable to accept this data as equivalent to the data we receive from HESA and the NSS and will continue to work with the education provider to establish a regular supply of data. Alongside this, the HCPC will also work with them to develop a process for identifying the number of HCPC registrants completing the programme and establish a clearer method for recording these learner numbers.

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This performance review process was not referred from another process.
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Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: • when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be • whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how
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Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: • Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2027-28 academic year • Subject to the Panel's decision, we will undertake further investigations as per section 5
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Included within this report

Section 1: About this assessment	4
About us	4
Our standards	4
Our regulatory approach	4
The performance review process.....	4
Thematic areas reviewed.....	5
How we make our decisions	5
The assessment panel for this review.....	5
Section 2: About the education provider.....	6
The education provider context	6
Practice areas delivered by the education provider	7
Institution performance data	7
Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes	9
Portfolio submission.....	9
Quality themes identified for further exploration	9
Quality theme 1 – how the education provider reflected upon academic quality.	9
Section 4: Findings.....	10
Overall findings on performance	10
Quality theme: Institution self-reflection	10
Quality theme: Thematic reflection	17
Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection	19
Quality theme: Profession specific reflection.....	20
Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions	21
Data and reflections	23
Section 5: Issues identified for further review	25
Referrals to next scheduled performance review.....	25
Practice educators	25
Programme level data	25
Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes.....	25
Assessment panel recommendation	25
Appendix 1 – summary report	28
Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution	30

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:

Lead visitor name	Jennifer Caldwell, Occupational therapist
Lead visitor name	Nicholas Haddington, Independent prescribing
SU expert advisor name	Catherine Rice
Saranjit Binning	Education Quality Officer
Additional visitor	Nicola Carey, Advisory visitor, Independent prescribing

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. However, we did involve a support visitor to provide them with the opportunity to be involved with the performance review process to expand their knowledge of the process.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers three Postgraduate Independent and Supplementary HCPC-approved programmes. It is a Higher Education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2006.

The Medway School of Pharmacy is a higher education institution (HEI) and is a partnership between the University of Greenwich and University of Kent.

The education provider engaged with the performance review process through the pilot in 2021-22. During this review concerns were highlighted in relation to service user and carer involvement, which were referred to the next performance review. At the meeting in September 2021 the Education and Training Committee agreed that there was sufficient evidence that the standards continued to be met, and the programmes remain approved.

In 2022-23 they engaged with the performance review process again. During this review, the visitors concluded there were continued concerns regarding the involvement of service users and carers. Alongside this, concerns were also highlighted relating to the lack of learner feedback. At the meeting in September 2023 the Education and Training Committee agreed that there was sufficient evidence that the standards continued to be met, and the programmes remain approved.

The education provider engaged with the focused review process in the model of quality assurance in 2023. This was following on from both previous performance reviews where visitors highlighted risks with service user and carer involvement. In addition to this, the review completed in 2022-23 also highlighted concerns with the lack of feedback obtained from learners. At the meeting in February 2024 the Education and Training Committee agreed that there was sufficient evidence that the standards continued to be met, and the programmes remain approved. However,

these two areas were referred to this performance review where it was recommended the progress in these two areas should be reviewed again.

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 2](#) of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level	Approved since
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing		2006

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 programmes¹.

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Learner number capacity	473	220	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 was presented by the education provider through this submission. The education provider is recruiting learners below the benchmark. We explored this further through the Data and reflections section.

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

Learner non-continuation	7%	5%	2021-22	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment, and they decided to establish this data point through the submission. Further information about the outcome of establishing data reporting is available in the Data and reflections section.
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	92%	100%	Null	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment, and they decided to establish this data point through the submission. Further information about the outcome of establishing data reporting is available in the Data and reflections section.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	N/A	Null	There is no data available for this data point because the education provider is a collaborative school between the University of Kent and the University of Greenwich. TEF assessments are conducted at the institutional level, so any TEF ratings or data would be linked to these education providers individually, not to the Medway School of Pharmacy.

Learner satisfaction	N/A	N/A	N/A	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment, and they decided to establish this data point through the submission. Further information about the outcome of establishing data reporting is available in the Data and reflections section.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	2027-28	2 years	The education providers next interaction with this process is in 2027-28.

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.

Quality theme 1 – how the education provider reflected upon academic quality

Area for further exploration: The visitors acknowledged there were processes in place to monitor academic quality through the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) procedures and annual monitoring process, however noted there was a lack of reflection on how effective these processes had been. Further reflections were

therefore requested to explore how effective these processes had been during the monitoring period and how they had led to improvements with academic quality and monitoring outcomes.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We agreed to explore this area further by requesting email clarification from the education provider. The visitors considered the email clarification would be the most effective method for the provider to respond with further reflections.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined the internal and external mechanisms they had in place to support the quality of the provision. This included staff being involved with the peer review process, input from external examiners and service users and carers. Oversight was also included from the University of Greenwich and University of Kent quality assurance teams who were external to the education provider. By implementing these processes, the education provider was able to uphold the quality and consistency of its provision, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and thoughtful practice.

In September 2024, the education provider introduced the new clinical review assignment. As this was the first academic year where a cohort had been assessed under this new format, its effectiveness was yet to be formally reviewed by the Exam Board. The education provider has committed to offering further reflections on the impact of this change in their next performance review, which demonstrated a willingness to evaluate the changes made.

Reflections were also provided on how the education provider had experienced an increase in the volume of learner feedback they received. The education provider recognised the importance of this feedback and had taken appropriate action to ensure they continued to monitor it and make improvements to the provision accordingly. The visitors recognised that the last performance review was conducted two years previously and the timescale meant that other than the introduction of the new assessment there had been no other changes that the education provider were able to reflect on. This approach demonstrated the education providers commitment to continuously improving and enhancing the provision to maintain the quality. The visitors were satisfied the evidence had provided reassurance of the education providers commitment to maintain the quality of the provision. This included regular evaluation of the provision and taking appropriate steps to make improvements where necessary.

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:

- **Admissions procedures –**

- The education provider implemented a structured admissions process for the programme, which ensured fairness, consistency and quality. This was a multi-stage process where applications were reviewed and further evaluation and decision making took place through an interdisciplinary panel. It was noted this review included checks on professional registration, qualifications and organisational support, which ensured applicants were prepared and appropriately supported by their employers. We acknowledged how unsuccessful applicants were supported and provided with personalised feedback, which provided them with the opportunity to be successful next time. This approach supported future development and demonstrated their commitment to ensuring applicants were prepared and appropriately supported for the requirements of the programme.
- During this period the education provider recognised a reoccurring pattern whereby each cohort tended to include one learner who found the programme challenging, despite meeting the entry requirements. They acknowledged staff were committed to supporting these learners, however noted concerns regarding the equity of the support being offered across the multiple cohorts. To address this, a thematic analysis was conducted in December 2023, where personal statements from learners were reviewed to identify the factors influencing learner outcomes. Five key themes emerged, which were alignment of work area with scope of practice, years in role, connection to patient care, access to support networks, and use of academic references. This led to the creation of the Student Experience Rating Criteria (SERC), which was a traffic-light system to assess applications and identify learners who may need additional support. It was noted the use of this criteria would improve equity, enhance the learner experience and ensure more efficient use of staff and programme resources.
- Through clarification, the education provider confirmed the SERC would be used as a tool to highlight those learners who may require additional support when they start the programme. This would enable the team to be prepared and provide the necessary support for learners to progress. It was noted this criteria would be used as a supportive tool and would not be used to exclude potential learners.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.

- **Resourcing, including financial stability –**

- The education provider acknowledged the wider financial challenges currently affecting the higher education sector, particularly due to a decline in international learner numbers. Despite these pressures, the prescribing programmes have remained stable and are viewed as a growth area. Its intercollegiate status has played a key role in safeguarding resources and minimising the risk of staffing cuts, providing a level of resilience not seen across all institutions.
- The education provider highlighted some changes had taken place since the last review, with one staff member leaving and several new

members of staff joining. They acknowledged the experience the existing staff had and the support that was provided to the new staff members. This included probationary supervision, a mentor for teaching, regular appraisals and peer reviews. The support provided enabled staff to deliver programmes effectively and ensured their ongoing professional development.

- The prescribing programmes are recognised as a key priority within the School of Pharmacy and are supported with dedicated resources. This includes access to larger teaching spaces and purpose-built clinical skills facilities, such as laboratories, consultation rooms, and advanced simulation equipment. These environments provide learners with hands-on learning opportunities that enhance their clinical competence. In addition to physical resources, learners benefit from a wide range of digital tools and remote access to library materials, ensuring comprehensive support for their academic and professional development.
- The education provider has prioritised inclusivity by offering tailored support for learners with learning needs throughout the programme. Adjustments are made in collaboration with the Disability and Dyslexia team and include measures such as extended exam time, alternative formats, and personalised timetables. These ensure learners can meet academic and professional standards. The appointment of a learning technologist has further strengthened digital accessibility, with enhancements to Moodle that support learner engagement and independent learning.
- It was noted the number of learners on the programme had contributed significantly to its stability and long-term sustainability. This reflected the programme's relevance and positioned it as a key area for future growth. The education provider recognised this potential and demonstrated a clear commitment to supporting and investing in its continued development.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider had well established relationships with the associated universities and external stakeholders. They highlighted how they maintained relationships with stakeholders through twice yearly programme board meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to share updates, discuss practice-based learning demands, and gather feedback from practice partners. It was also an opportunity to address ongoing challenges, such as the support available to learners within placements, and ensure the learner voices were heard through learner representation.
 - The education provider demonstrated a commitment to professional development and collaborative learning with the increased support for the Experience Exchange Project. This project was aimed at pharmacists who were interested in becoming consultant pharmacists and encouraged knowledge sharing between clinicians and the education provider.

- It was noted the partnership with the University of Greenwich has enabled the education provider to increase the number of learners on the programme. This was through the integration of learners from the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice programme. This collaboration has been carefully managed to ensure smooth delivery and alignment with regulatory standards, with positive outcomes already observed in learner performance. This reflects a responsive approach to programme development and growth and enhances both academic quality and clinical relevance.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Staff development –**
 - The education provider reflected they had not experienced any significant challenges apart from the increased pressure on practice educators within the NHS. A key development has been the implementation of peer-supported teaching reviews with the University of Greenwich, offering valuable external feedback and promoting professional growth.
 - The education provider acknowledged the HCPC lead's successful completion of their PhD viva. This achievement positively influenced the programme, with elements of the research being embedded into teaching. A dedicated session explores the emotional impact of learning and the professional transition experienced by learners, which contributes to their understanding of role identity within clinical practice.
 - Innovation within the prescribing programme continues through the establishment of a UK-wide multiprofessional working group, led by the prescribing programme lead for nurses. This group aims to promote equality for Allied Health Professional (AHPs) by advocating for regulatory changes that address current limitations faced by HCPC prescribing professionals.
 - Visitors acknowledged the programme's focus on quality assurance and staff development. The use of intra-professional peer review demonstrated a reflective and collaborative teaching approach. There was also clear support provided for staff to gain teaching qualifications, which highlighted a commitment to continuous improvement.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider is governed through a structured and collaborative approach with clear leadership roles. The Head of School and Director of Taught Graduate Studies oversee standards and reports to Academic Council and Senate. This is supported by institutional oversight from University of Greenwich and University of Kent. Quality assurance processes and procedures align with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) frameworks, with annual monitoring addressing feedback, learner experience, and performance to ensure continuous improvement.
 - The education provider functions as an independent joint school between the Universities of Greenwich and Kent. Programme validation and any changes are agreed collaboratively. There is a

memorandum of understanding, which states the University of Greenwich take the lead on teaching and professional qualifications and the University of Kent focus on research. Staff recruitment is a joint responsibility and academic contracts are managed through a joint arrangement to meet both legal and institutional needs. This shared structure promotes accountability and helps maintain academic and professional standards.

- The prescribing programme demonstrates a strong commitment to maintaining high-quality, current teaching materials and resources. Regular annual reviews by module convenors ensure content remains accurate and relevant, while input from healthcare professionals allows them to respond to changes in clinical practice, legislation, and NHS structures. These updates are tracked through team meetings and the 'You said – we did' log, which promotes transparency and accountability.
- The inclusion of feedback from the Programme Planning Board and external reviewers, particularly those with expertise in learning needs, enhances the accessibility and inclusivity of the learning materials. The use of external examiners further strengthens quality assurance through moderation and learner engagement, with their feedback integrated into programme development. Overall, the programme reflects a proactive, collaborative approach to curriculum management, ensuring that teaching remains current to professional developments and learner needs.
- [Quality theme 1](#) provided additional reflections from the education provider, particularly regarding the increase in learner feedback and the implementation of a new assessment model. They reported minimal changes overall, suggesting that the quality of the provision has remained consistent.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Quality of practice-based learning –**
 - The education provider reflected on the challenges they had experienced previously to gather feedback. To address this issue and improve the consistency of feedback across the programme, several measures were introduced. A key development was the implementation of a compulsory reflective diary entry (RDE), allowing learners to provide structured feedback on their placement experience. This feedback is reviewed by academic staff and integrated into the "You said – We did" process, ensuring learner voices are considered when making improvements to the programme. Alongside this there is also a two-way feedback system embedded in the portfolio, enabling both practice educators and tutors to comment on learner progress, which is then discussed during the three Prescribing Portfolio Review (PPR) meetings. It is noted the PPR process has successfully increased feedback from practice educators, which has been recognised as a positive development. The reflective diary entry is a new addition, and its impact is yet to be evaluated.

- Visitors acknowledged the quality assurance processes in practice settings were clearly outlined. They viewed the introduction of the reflective diary and embedded review meetings as valuable additions.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Learner support –**
 - To ensure learners have access to appropriate support they are allocated an academic tutor with relevant clinical experience. As part of the role, tutors engage with learners and practice educators and understand the practice environment. This enables more meaningful assessment of practice-based assignments such as the PPRs, Practice Assessment of Prescribing Practice (PAPP), and the portfolio. They also provide further support to learners through feedback and regular communication through the PPRs and informal review meetings, which ensures consistent guidance and helps address issues promptly, enhancing the overall learning experience. In addition, academic tutors play a vital role in providing pastoral care for learners and signposting them to wellbeing services.
 - Recent developments within the programme have enhanced learner support and feedback. The PPR meeting involving the learner, tutor, and practice educator provides learners with the opportunity to raise any concerns that may affect their learning.
 - Additionally, the University of Greenwich's revised extenuating circumstances policy, has reduced stress for learners by allowing them to self-certify without evidence up to three times per academic year. Collaboration with the education providers wellbeing team ensures learners with learning needs are identified early and supported with individual learning plans.
 - A recent challenge involving the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle Direct) highlighted the importance of inclusive design. This was in response to feedback from a neurodivergent learner which resulted in some adjustments being made. These adjustments highlighted the importance of balancing individual accessibility needs with the overall learning experience of the wider cohort and emphasised the value of listening and responding to feedback and having a flexible approach to change.
 - Visitors acknowledged reflections on how standard support mechanisms were not always well-suited to the needs of learners on professional programmes. They also valued the use of real, practical examples showing how adjustments were made to support individual learners, which demonstrated a responsive approach.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - Reflections were provided on how the programme brings together learners from a wide range of healthcare backgrounds. This collaborative approach provides a diverse learning environment and enables learners to actively share experiences and gain an understanding across professions.

- Ongoing evaluation and development of lecture sessions, including group work has encouraged engagement across the professions. The scope of practice session, in particular, has demonstrated how learners benefit from working outside their own professional areas and have promoted skill-sharing among learners from different professions. The academic team itself models this interprofessional ethos, which highlights the importance of collaborative learning and teaching to prepare learners for clinical practice settings.
- Visitors noted the reflections were positive and demonstrated how this diversity supports interprofessional learning (IPL).
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - This area was highlighted as an area of concern and potential risk in the previous review. In response to this, the education provider engaged with our focused review process and took appropriate action to address the concerns and develop this area further. They developed a dedicated service user strategy which has helped establish and support the service user and carer role. Alongside this their involvement across various elements of the programme has expanded, which includes reviewing documentation, chairing programme boards, and assessing the accessibility of our virtual learning environment. These developments have addressed the concerns raised and demonstrated the value of meaningful service user engagement in enhancing programme quality and inclusivity.
 - Visitors recognised the clear developments in service user and carer involvement, including the implementation of a strategic approach and meaningful participation, such as chairing review meetings. They particularly valued the commitment to include a patient and carer on the Programme Planning Board, with a dedicated space for their feedback, reflecting an evolving engagement strategy.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider highlighted their commitment to supporting all learners, which included those with protected characteristics. Recently they undertook an analysis of learner outcomes, which identified a gap with learners from a specific background not achieving a distinction. This led to the education provider looking at outcomes across all professions, which has resulted in the development of a research protocol aimed at better understanding and addressing these gaps.
 - Their commitment to equity and inclusion is further reflected in the integration of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) focused sessions. The dedicated EDI session explores unconscious bias and identity theory, which has helped learners reflect on how these factors influence clinical decision-making. Additionally, the inclusion of a lecture on role identity change, which is led by the AHP lead has provided valuable insight into the emotional impact of this when adapting to new responsibilities.

- Visitors noted the research undertaken into differential attainment and recognised a thoughtful balance between understanding the learner experience and supporting learners to deliver culturally competent care.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - Some of the challenges facing the healthcare sector, such as financial pressures, industrial action, and post-pandemic instability continue to affect the learner experience on the programme. The education provider recognises many of these issues are outside of their control, however they continue to provide support to learners to manage factors that may impact them emotionally and logistically. For example, they have adapted delivery methods by moving PAPP exams online and moving the study days to virtual formats when unexpected disruptions occur. These changes reflect their commitment to maintaining accessibility and continuity in learning, even during challenging times.
 - The reflections offered an insight into a range of relevant issues impacting education providers.
 - We were satisfied with 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: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics across professions –**
 - The programme is designed with the understanding that all learners are already HCPC registered professionals, familiar with regulatory standards. The curriculum actively supports these standards through a range of embedded tools and learning activities, including the use of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Prescribing Framework, structured placement experiences, and upskilling opportunities.
 - Communication skills are developed through consultation training, with emphasis on clarity, documentation, and safeguarding. The duty of candour is reinforced through reflective practice and portfolio assessment. Learners are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, supported by resources on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and guidance on building professional networks.
 - The EDI themes are integrated into teaching, with specific sessions addressing disability, tokenism, and neurodiversity. The programmes also promote sustainability and ensures learners are aware of their responsibilities regarding health conditions and social media use. Overall, the programmes promote safe, inclusive, and accountable practice aligned with professional standards.

- Throughout the programmes there are mechanisms to support learners with an understanding of their responsibilities as professionals. This includes a study day session on legal aspects of prescribing, which highlights the need for ongoing awareness of professional standards. Additionally, the Clinical Review assignment requires learners to reflect on their accountability and responsibility, which helps them develop in their prescribing role.
- This reflective and developmental approach is continuously reviewed through regular team meetings, assessment boards, and planning sessions involving external examiners, quality assurance staff, and stakeholders, including service users and carers. These collaborative efforts ensure that the programmes remain current and align with professional expectations.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Impact of workforce planning –**
 - The lack of direct control on national healthcare service developments and workforce planning is challenging for the education provider. To address this, they engage with the programme planning board and the programme lead is also involved with a wider network. This ensures they are able to stay up to date with any emerging trends and challenges that may impact them and also supports their strategic planning.
 - The use of Effective Educational Practitioners (EEPs) has been a positive contribution to the programmes due to the specialist knowledge they offer. This has enhanced the programmes and demonstrated the impact and importance of practitioner experience and knowledge on the learning experience for learners.
 - Visitors recognised the reflections provided were appropriately contextualised within the scope of the post-registration programmes. Given that the provider does not deliver Initial Education and Training programmes, the focus and depth of the reflections were considered suitable and relevant to the nature of the provision.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The education provider reflected on some of the challenges they had experienced with the learner demographic moving to a younger cohort and learners where English was not a first language. These changes have led them to think about how they can support the diverse learning needs and maintain academic integrity at the same time.
 - The increase in the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT has introduced new challenges regarding assessments. To address this, they have made changes to the assessment strategy and reduced the number of essays required within the assessments and included other assessment strategies. This includes components such as audio clinical reviews, evidence-based viva assessments, and reflective diary entries. The aim of these changes is to promote and encourage

learners to think critically and develop safe practice and reduce the possibility of assessments being generated via AI.

- Visitors found the reflections demonstrated a broad and thoughtful awareness of current challenges and developments. They particularly noted the programme team's consideration of AI and its potential impact on the learner experience and academic practices. The curriculum's responsiveness to the increasing use of digital systems in clinical settings was seen as a positive development, showing alignment with current practice.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**
 - Collaboration with the University of Greenwich's MSc Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) programme, has expanded to include AHPs alongside nurses. The apprenticeship route into the ACP pathway is delivered by the University of Greenwich and has introduced new opportunities for learners and new ways of working with shared responsibilities across the academic team. It was noted how the integration of learners across disciplines has enhanced the learning experience.
 - Visitors recognised how the programme aligns with the ACP apprenticeship pathway, noting a clear understanding of its integration and relevance across professions.
 - We were satisfied with 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 –**
 - All module and assessment changes were reviewed and approved by the University of Greenwich Quality Committee, which ensured they were aligned to academic standards and credit levels. To help learners understand the expectations, marking grids were included in the module handbooks.
 - The education provider also highlighted the challenges with anonymous marking and reflected on the benefits of non-anonymised marking, such as personalised feedback. This approach supported a two-way feedback process that enhanced learning and supported learners with their development.
 - Visitors acknowledged how institutional quality assurance processes contributed to the assessment design and applied to the programmes.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Office for Students (OfS) –**

- The education provider demonstrated a commitment to ensuring the performance of the programmes was regularly monitored against OfS metrics. This enabled them to identify issues relating to performance and implement appropriate action plans. Alongside this annual and periodic reviews by internal auditors, the executive, and governance committees ensured continued alignment with OfS conditions across the education provider. It was noted there had been no investigations by the OfS during this review period.
- Visitors noted an awareness of institutional quality assurance processes and how they inform assessment design and standards within the programmes.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - There was a clear commitment to working closely with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). During this period, they engaged with the reaccreditation process with the GPhC where they successfully received no conditions. Ongoing accreditation was also maintained with the NMC through annual monitoring, which ensured continued compliance and quality assurance.
 - Visitors acknowledged the work with other regulators and considered the recent successful GPhC reaccreditation as a reliable indicator of quality assurance across the programmes.
 - We were satisfied with 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: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development –**
 - The recent GPhC reaccreditation demonstrates the quality of the programme and the changes made to assessment design. In the previous review the HCPC highlighted some gaps with learner feedback and service user and carer strategies. These gaps were addressed through the HCPC focused review process and since then these areas have been developed further as indicated in sections above.
 - Visitors noted reflections on the changes and developments to the curriculum were provided throughout the submission. They recognised the successful reaccreditation, assessment changes and the actions taken to improve learner and service user feedback.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**

- Due to the nature of the programmes, at the admissions stage learners were required to provide details of their practice-based learning, which was normally their main place of work. This approach resulted in availability and capacity not being an issue and did not pose any specific challenges. Appropriate support was offered to learners via the academic tutors who were also the key link between the education provider and practice-based learning sites.
- The education provider invested in simulation resources, including the AI model Alex, who was used for consultation scenarios. It was noted learners on the programmes were not currently using these resources, however the availability of these resources did offer the potential for future integration into clinical education and reflected a commitment to innovation.
- Visitors recognised the programme was focused solely on post-registration prescribing for registered practitioners. They found the assurance of practice-based learning through the admissions process to be well considered.
- We were satisfied with 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:

- **Strategic approach to feedback –**
 - In the previous review the HCPC highlighted some gaps with learner feedback. These gaps were addressed through the HCPC focused review process and since then further developments have taken place, such as the introduction of a formal strategy document and the creation of a new feedback collection tool. Other developments have included embedding a reflective diary entry within the learner portfolio, which requires learners to provide feedback on the programme, practice educator, and placement experience. These measures have enhanced the feedback process and complemented the existing channels such as the “How are we doing” feedback point and the “You said, we did” log.
 - The education provider reflected on the implementation of the feedback point on the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle Direct), which has led to increased learner engagement and a satisfaction rate of over 80%. This demonstrates the positive impact the enhanced feedback process had had on the programmes and their commitment to continuous improvement.
 - The visitors acknowledged there was clear evidence of a strategic and reflective approach to enhancing feedback mechanisms. The new strategy document was seen as a positive development, demonstrating that the education provider had taken meaningful action in response to

previous HCPC concerns in February 2024, which were addressed through the focused review process.

- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Learners –**
 - The education provider recognised the value of involving learner representatives in programme planning board meetings. These meetings offered a formal platform for sharing and responding to feedback, which contributed meaningfully to programme development. It also created a space for collaborative discussions around teaching, assessment, and programme structure with key stakeholders. This approach helped future planning and supported ongoing improvements in programme delivery.
 - As referenced in the section above, learner feedback is gathered from multiple sources and centrally logged through the “You said, We did” system, ensuring it is regularly reviewed and discussed in team meetings. In response to feedback, programme developments have been made, including collaboration with external practitioners and adjustments to teaching and assessment strategies. Dedicated sessions throughout the programme have supported learners in understanding feedback processes and preparing for assessments, all of which have contributed to a more engaging and supportive learning environment.
 - Visitors noted the continued reference to the strategy document, which demonstrated a structured approach. The reflective diary component was also highlighted as an innovative method for gaining deeper insight into the learner experience, particularly in relation to practice-based learning.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Practice educators –**
 - Reflections were provided on how challenging it has been to engage with practice educators. The education provider recognised this was an area for further development, which required further attention.
 - To enhance feedback and communication with practice educators (PEs), a feedback process has been embedded within the PPR documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit. The reflective diary has also been introduced, which allows learners to reflect on their experience with their PE and time in practice. It is noted this new approach will be reviewed annually and discussed in fortnightly team meetings, with actions agreed upon as needed.
 - Visitors acknowledged the implementation of new processes aimed at improving the connection between academic tutors and practice educators. They recognised these positive developments, however, noted it was too early to evaluate their impact. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.
- **External examiners –**
 - Reflections were provided on how the move to online exam boards during the Covid pandemic raised concerns with the external

examiners (EEs), particularly in relation to the lack of physical access to portfolios. However, the move to Moodle Direct has proven to be beneficial, as it has allowed EEs to review a wider range of work and engage directly with teaching staff when needed. These changes have enabled a more thorough and focused evaluation process. EEs have also acknowledged the standards being maintained by teaching staff and the consistency and quality of feedback being provided to learners. It was also recognised how the support mechanisms, such as moderation of failed work, one-to-one tuition, draft submissions, and access to academic resources further enhanced the learner experience.

- Visitors noted the external examiner feedback mechanisms were well established and have received positive responses.
- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: New processes have recently been introduced, such as the feedback process within the prescribing portfolio review (PPR) documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit and the new reflective diary. It was noted these new processes were aimed at improving connections between academic tutors and practice educators. We recognised these developments were positive, however they were still in the early stages of implementation and had not yet been fully evaluated. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learner non continuation:**
 - Based on the information submitted by the education provider the total number of learners who did not continue with the programme was 15 learners. The reasons provided for these learners not continuing was because they had failed or withdrew for various reasons.
 - Visitors acknowledged the 5.5% discontinuation rate for learners but noted there was no differentiation between HCPC registrants on the programme. They noted the HCPC would work with the education provider to develop a clearer approach with recording this information.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - Due to the nature of the post registration programmes this data point was 100%, as all learners will be in employment upon enrolment.
 - Visitors confirmed they were satisfied with this data point and had no concerns.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - Due to the nature of their provision the education provider did not engage with the National Student Survey (NSS). They did, however, evaluate data relating to learner satisfaction through their own

programme feedback questionnaire, which is completed at the end of the programme. The data related to 2023-24 academic year and indicated an overall learner satisfaction score of 83.75%, which was verified by the external examiner. This satisfaction score was based on feedback provided by 21 learners on the Independent and Supplementary prescribing programmes. Overall, the feedback was positive, with 90% of learners being satisfied with the feedback turnaround times, however it was noted this data was captured from a small number of learners on the programmes.

- Visitors confirmed they were satisfied with this data point and had no concerns.
- **Proposal for supplying data points to the HCPC:**
 - We received data relating to learner satisfaction, outcomes for those who complete programmes and learner non continuation rates. We recognised this was an internal data source and noted the learner satisfaction and outcomes for those who complete programmes data had been externally verified, however the learner non continuation data had not been verified. We were therefore unable to accept this data as equivalent to the data we receive from HESA and the NSS and will continue to work with the education provider to establish a regular supply of data points.
- **Programme level data:**
 - The education provider delivers three HCPC-approved programmes and initially provided an overall learner figure of 220, which made it difficult to determine how many learners were HCPC registrants. We noted the method for recording this data was unclear, which explained why the benchmark figure was significantly higher than the figure supplied by the education provider. Discussions with the education provider highlighted significant variation in learner numbers and the need for a clearer mechanism to identify HCPC-registered learners. While sustainability was not a concern, we recognised the need to improve our approach and work with the education provider to develop a more consistent and transparent method of recording this data.
 - Visitors confirmed they were satisfied with the information provided and acknowledged the difficulty with separating out the learners who were HCPC registrants from other professions. They noted the HCPC would collaborate with the education provider to develop a process for identifying these learners and to establish a clearer method for recording the learner number data.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

- **Outstanding issues for follow up:** We recognise the education provider have supplied two data points that have been externally verified, however there is still one data point that is not externally verified. We were therefore unable to accept this data as equivalent to the data we receive from HESA and the NSS. The HCPC will continue to work with the education provider to develop a regular supply of data points. Alongside this, the HCPC will also work with them to develop a process for identifying the number of HCPC registrants completing the

programme and establish a clearer method for recording these learner numbers.

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).

Referrals to next scheduled performance review

Practice educators

Summary of issue: New processes have recently been introduced, such as the feedback process within the prescribing portfolio review (PPR) documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit and the new reflective diary. It was noted these new processes were aimed at improving connections between academic tutors and practice educators. We recognised these developments were positive, however they were still in the early stages of implementation and had not yet been fully evaluated. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.

Programme level data

Summary of issue: Through this review the education provider worked with the HCPC to establish data points, however due to the way the education provider gathered the programme level data it was not clear how many learners were HCPC registrants. It was therefore recommended the HCPC should work with the education provider to establish a process by which these learners could be identified.

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
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report

Reason for next engagement recommendation

- Internal stakeholder engagement
 - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were learners, service users, practice educators, partner organisations, external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement

- The education provider engaged with a number of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
- The education provider engaged with the NMC, GPhC and RPS. They considered their findings in improving their provision
- The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way
- Data supply
 - Through this review, the education provider supplied two data points that have been externally verified, however there is still one data point that is not externally verified. We were therefore unable to accept this data as equivalent to the data we receive from HESA and the NSS and will continue to work with the education provider to establish a regular supply of data. Alongside this, the HCPC will also work with them to develop a process for identifying the number of HCPC registrants completing the programme and establish a clearer method for recording these learner numbers.
- The education provider noted the new processes introduced to increase the volume of feedback which will impact on their provision from the 2024-25 academic year. We will need to review the impact of this when the provider can reflect on implementation, which will be in the 2027-28 academic year
- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a 2 year monitoring period is:
 - New processes have recently been introduced, such as the feedback process within the prescribing portfolio review (PPR) documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit and the new reflective diary. It was noted these new processes were aimed at improving connections between academic tutors and practice educators. We recognised these developments were positive, however they were still in the early stages of implementation and had not yet been fully evaluated. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.
 - Through this review the education provider worked with the HCPC to establish data points, however due to the way the education provider gathered the programme level data it was not clear how many learners were HCPC registrants. It was therefore recommended the HCPC should work with the education provider to establish a process by which these learners could be identified.

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

- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out through the next performance review

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period, for the reasons noted through the report.

Appendix 1 – summary report

If the education provider does not provide observations, only this summary report (rather than the whole report) will be provided to the Education and Training Committee (Panel) to enable their decision on the next steps for the provider. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation (including their reasons) and any referrals.

Education provider	Medway School of Pharmacy		
Case reference	CAS-01549-L6J1F9	Lead visitors	Jennifer Caldwell Nicholas Haddington
Review period recommended	Two years		
Reason for recommendation			
The education provider should next engage with monitoring in two years, the 2027-28 academic year, because: ○ 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. ○ The education provider engaged with a number of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision ○ The education provider engaged with the NMC, GPhC and RPS. They considered their findings in improving their provision ○ The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way ○ The education provider highlighted new processes introduced to increase the volume of feedback, which will begin to affect their provision from the 2024–25 academic year. We will need to assess the impact of these changes once the education provider has had time to reflect on their implementation, which will be in the 2027–28 academic year. ○ Through this review, the education provider supplied two data points that have been externally verified, however there is still one data point that is not externally verified. We were therefore unable to accept this data as equivalent to the data we receive from HESA and the NSS and will continue to work with the education provider to establish a regular supply of data. Alongside this, the HCPC will also work with them to develop a process for identifying the number of HCPC registrants completing the programme and establish a clearer method for recording these learner numbers.			
Referrals			

- New processes have recently been introduced, such as the feedback process within the prescribing portfolio review (PPR) documentation in the learner portfolio, alongside the initial tutor visit and the new reflective diary. It was noted these new processes were aimed at improving connections between academic tutors and practice educators. We recognised these developments were positive, however they were still in the early stages of implementation and had not yet been fully evaluated. It was therefore recommended that this area and processes be reviewed further during the next performance review to assess their effectiveness and impact.
- Through this review the education provider worked with the HCPC to establish data points, however due to the way the education provider gathered the programme level data it was not clear how many learners were HCPC registrants. It was therefore recommended the HCPC should work with the education provider to establish a process by which these learners could be identified.

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
Non-Medical Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/10/2020
Postgraduate Certificate in Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	DL (Distance learning)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014
Postgraduate Certificate in Supplementary Prescribing	DL (Distance learning)			Supplementary prescribing	01/05/2006