
Approval process report

University of Central Lancashire, Occupational therapy, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the approval process to approve the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship) programme at the University of Central Lancashire. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programme against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programme 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 programme against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programme should be approved.

In the quality activity we explored how the education provider will use various committees and working groups to ensure effective collaboration with practice education providers.

Through this assessment, we have noted the programme meets all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

Previous consideration	N / A as this case did not emerge from a previous process
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (the Panel) is asked to decide whether the programme is approved.
Next steps	If the Education and Training Committee (the Panel) approves the visitors' recommendation, the programme will be approved and added to the Register. The education provider will next go through performance review in 2025-26.

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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 programme detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programme 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:

Jennifer Caldwell	Lead visitor, Occupational therapist
Robert MacKinnon	Lead visitor, Clinical scientist / hearing aid dispenser
Niall Gooch	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 15 HCPC-approved programmes across 8 professions and including 2 Independent/Supplementary Prescribing programmes. It is a Higher Education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2005.

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	Biomedical scientist	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2014
	Dietitian	☐ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2022
	Hearing Aid Dispenser	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2022
	Occupational therapy	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2018
	Operating Department Practitioner	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2012
	Paramedic	☒ Undergraduate	☐ Postgraduate	2018
	Physiotherapist	☒ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2005
	Speech and language therapist	☐ Undergraduate	☒ Postgraduate	2020
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 programmes.

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

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
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Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	734	754	15 April 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. We did not consider there was any particular need to review the education provider's ability to accommodate the new learners for this programme.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	4%	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 above 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 improved by 1%.

				We did not explore this data point through this assessment because we did not consider there was a significant concern in this area.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	91%	2020-21	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 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 dropped by 7%. We explored this by considering how well the education provider was preparing its learners for future professional practice.
Learner positivity score	76.8%	82.5%	2023	This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects. The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. We did not explore this data point through this assessment because there was no reason to be

				concerned about learner experience.
HCPC performance review cycle length				The education provider was given a four-year review period during the 2018-21 process, and will next go through performance review in 2025-26.

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 –**
 - The new programme is an apprenticeship which means that it has some different requirements and characteristics from non-apprenticeship approved programmes. There is a webpage which explains the nature of the programme and highlights the additional apprenticeship-related requirements. These include the need for applicants to be employed in a relevant occupational therapy role, with an employer able to engage with the apprenticeship.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider operates. The approach is institution-wide and will apply to the proposed new programme. The relevant standards are met because the education provider has a clear mechanism for ensuring applicants have access to appropriate information.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
 - The approach for the apprenticeship programme set out in the approval request form is closely aligned to the approach already used at the education provider. It involves a specific proficiency test for English language skills, a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check, and an occupational health assessment. We know that there is alignment with

existing approaches based on a comparison with the baselining exercise and information received through the 2021-22 performance review.

- We consider that the standards in this area are met because we can be confident that the education provider has a clear process for ensuring the suitability of learners.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - There is an established mechanism at the education provider for assessing AP(E)L. They have developed a skills assessment which will form part of the process by which applicants are brought on to the programme. This skills assessment will feed into a decision about whether learners should be considered for AP(E)L routes., though other factors will be considered.
 - This is closely aligned with the education provider's existing approach, which they have set out in the baseline document and the performance review portfolio. We consider the standards in this area are met because the education provider will be able to make reasonable assessments of whether applicants with non-standard educational backgrounds are suitable for the programme.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)–**
 - The education provider stated that they have an institutional approach to EDI based on “four pillars”. By this they mean they focus on fairness in the following areas:
 - recruitment of staff and learners;
 - learner outcomes;
 - community feeling; and
 - research into EDI.
 - All programmes are required to conform with this institutional approach.
 - This approach to EDI will be applied to admissions on the new programme. The proposed approach for his programme is therefore closely aligned with the overall institutional approach.

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 –**
 - There is an existing undergraduate programme in occupational therapy at the education provider. They have existing undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in this curriculum area. The proposed new programme is closely based on this existing provisions and will incorporate many of the same modules and assessments.

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

- The education provider has the staff, and the institutional infrastructure and experience, to deliver Level 6 education in occupational therapy. We consider the standards are met because they have shown their ability to deliver the proposed provision. The 2021-22 performance review found that they were performing well in this area.
- **Sustainability of provision –**
 - The education provider have defined processes for ensuring the viability of individual programmes. Faculties are required to report their programmes' status to senior leadership and to identify possible challenges on an annual basis. The funding secured should enable the programme to be sustainable for at least three full cohorts.
 - We consider the standards in this area have been met because the arrangements for maintaining programme sustainability are appropriate. We are confident of this based on the above information and on the recent performance review.
- **Effective programme delivery –**
 - The education provider has been delivering occupational therapy programmes at Level 6 or above for twenty years. This means there is a large amount of institutional experience and expertise available, as well as the facilities to enable effective delivery of the apprenticeship programme. They have recruited a full-time “work-based educator” to support the programme by facilitating learners in the workplace. All programmes are expected to make annual reports to ensure their ongoing effectiveness and viability. These reports are used by the senior management team to drive improvement and referred to in future review processes.
 - Considering this experience, we are confident that the standards are met. The new programme can be delivered effectively and align with existing approaches.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
 - Established development and management systems at the education provider will be used for the new programme as well. These systems include annual reviews of individual staff members, and individualised career development pathways developed by mutual agreement between staff and their line managers.
These include quarterly appraisals and a university-level performance management and workload monitoring system.
 - We are already familiar with these systems from the education provider's performance review, which took place in 2021-22. The visitors who completed review found that performance in staff management and development was strong. We consider the standards to be met because the education provider has demonstrated their ability to manage and develop the programme.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
 - The education provider noted the key stakeholders for the apprenticeship will be the employer partners. The details of how these relationships will

be managed and maintained are set out in the programme specification document.

- The education provider has not determined who all the employers will be at the time of submitting their approval request form. . However, we can be satisfied from their last performance review that the mechanisms in place for managing partnerships are well established and appropriate. The visitors agreed that the education provider was well-integrated with regional consortiums and working groups and had clear internal mechanisms for managing partnerships.
- We consider the standards met because the education provider have demonstrated an ability to manage and develop strategic relationships with relevant partners.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - The proposed new programme will follow all the established procedures at the education provider for monitoring and enhancing quality. These procedures require all programmes to report on programme quality annually. This aims to, show that they have taken the required actions to address previously identified issues. They have supplied relevant internal regulations and noted a specific external examiner will be appointed for the proposed programme. This in line with their established approach.
 - The new programme has already been approved internally using the education provider's quality assurance process. This involved a working group from the senior leadership team reviewing the programme. Input was given by various stakeholders, including practice partners, employers and service users.
 - We can be confident in the education provider approach in this area as they completed performance review in 2021-22. The visitors in that review concluded that their performance was good. We consider the standards met in this area because the education provider have shown a clear ability to monitor and develop programme quality.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - Audit of employer partners will be carried out via the existing arrangements as laid out in the documentation linked to via the approval request form. The education provider will require employers to demonstrate the suitability of their settings by completing an audit form. Practice quality will also be monitored informally via staff meetings with learners and practice educators. These arrangements include an initial audit when a placement comes on stream and regular subsequent audits. They confirmed there will be regular reviews of apprenticeships. One

review mechanism is six-weekly meetings between the learner, the apprenticeships work based educator (the AWBE) and academic staff. Another is twelve-weekly tripartite reviews. Employers will also have feedback opportunities.

- These arrangements are aligned with existing quality practice at the education provider which have recently been considered appropriate through performance review. We consider the standards are met because the education provider have a clear and effective process for ensuring practice quality.
- **Learner involvement –**
 - Similar mechanisms will be used to gather and implement learner feedback on the new apprenticeship as on the existing HCPC-approved programmes. These include formal mid and end of module feedback and ongoing informal feedback.
 - We can be satisfied with the alignment of the new programme and the existing arrangements at the education provider. Those arrangements are set out in the baseline document and have been recently reviewed through their last performance review process. Learners have regular opportunities to feedback, through both informal and formal mechanisms. These include regular meetings with supervisors and tutors, and termly written surveys.
 - We consider the standards met because there are clear pathways for the education provider to ensure appropriate and useful learner involvement.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - The education provider's established service user team will be used for the new programme.
 - The last performance review considered that use of service users by the education provider was effective and appropriate. There is a University-level service user group which co-ordinates and quality assures service user involvement with all healthcare programmes. Specific individuals within faculties have responsibility for working with this group for their programmes. This includes the HCPC-approved programmes. It is clear from the ARF and the baseline document that the new programme will be aligned with these approaches.
 - We consider the standards met because the education provider has demonstrated a defined and appropriate process for ensuring service user involvement.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**

- The ARF explains how learners on the new programme will have access to all the normal pathways for support. These include study support, finance, and mental health.
- These arrangements are aligned with the existing arrangements at the provider which were considered appropriate and well-performing through performance review. We consider the standards met because the education provider have demonstrated that they will be able to support learners appropriately during the programme.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - As well as the meetings noted under ‘Practice quality’ above, learners on the programme will have access to the whole suite of support at the education provider if there are concerns about academic performance or professional suitability.
 - These arrangements have been considered as part of the 2021-22 performance review and have also been considered through previous approval processes. The new programme will be appropriately aligned with them. We therefore consider the standards met, because the education provider have a clear process for ensuring that learners continue to be suitable persons.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - The approval request form states the arrangements for IPL/E will be slightly different from those on the existing occupational therapy programme. This is because of timetabling challenges and different programme structure.
 - However, the education provider’s general approach to this area is appropriate, as shown through their last performance review. The brief description of how the apprenticeship will handle IPL/E makes it clear that it will be aligned with this approach. Additionally, the apprenticeship format will give opportunities for multi-disciplinary learning that other programmes may not offer. This is because the learners on an apprenticeship spend longer in the workplace. They are also more closely integrated with a workplace because of their existing employment.
 - We consider the standards met because the education provider has clearly set out an appropriate approach to ensuring that learners have access to IPL/E.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - As above, the new programme is intended to use the education provider’s four pillar approach. The recent performance review found that the programme had strong EDI policies in place, which were closely followed and informed the education provider’s actions.
 - We can therefore be confident that the proposed programme’s alignment will enable the relevant standards to be met.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - As far as is practical, assessment on the apprenticeship will follow the same policies and approaches as on the existing provision – the BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy. Assessments which take place in practice will not be carried out by those working directly with the apprentice, to ensure objectivity.
 - No concerns were raised around assessment in the recent performance review for the education provider. The information provided strongly suggests that the apprenticeship's alignment with current practice will be appropriate, with changes made as necessary.
 - We consider the standards met because the education provider has demonstrated that they can ensure objectivity in assessment.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - Monitoring of learner progress will involve the established mechanisms in place at the education provider. These were considered through performance review and found to be effective and appropriate.
 - Certain mechanisms will be specific to the apprenticeship, notably the six- and twelve-weekly reviews noted in 'Practice quality' above. There will also be an End Point Assessment (EPA) as required by the apprenticeship format.
 - The approach used for this area appears appropriate and is aligned closely with existing provision. We consider the relevant standards met because the education provider has an appropriate defined process for moving learners through the programme.
- **Appeals –**
 - Learners will have access to appeals through the normal pathways governed by appropriate policies. The apprenticeship will not use different approaches in this area and therefore we can be confident that there is alignment between the apprenticeship and the existing provision.
 - We consider the standards met because the policies in this area give learners access to an appropriate appeals process which will ensure that they are assessed in a fair way.

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:

- Clinical Skills suites
- Libraries and information centres open 24 hours per day
- Virtual learning environment

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	FT (Full time)	Occupational Therapy	30 learners, 1 cohort per year	09/09/2024

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. 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 met our standards.

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

Quality theme 1 – Collaboration with practice education providers

Area for further exploration: In their stage 2 documentation submission, the education provider explained how frequently they will meet and communicate with their practice education partners. They also provided evidence which outlined how they intended to use their relationships with practice partners to ensure appropriate

and effective practice-based learning. This included a document named Practice Placement Information and the Employee Handbook.

The visitors considered that this evidence was useful. However, they also noted that there was not sufficient information for them to determine what mechanism the education provider would use to ensure effective collaboration on the operational level would continue. Without such information the visitors could not determine whether the standard was met, so we explored this area further with the education provider. The perceived risk was that inadequate collaboration with partner organisations would inhibit the effective working of the programme, and prevent learners from meeting the clinical SOPs.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: To further explore this area, we undertook an email exchange with the education provider to gain additional information about how they would meet the standard. We considered this the most effective way for us to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: In their response, the education provider submitted information about recent meetings with practice education providers. They also provided information about which specific members of their staff will be attending which specific meetings, and what the remit and purpose of those meetings will be. These included:

- partnership operational meetings, involving the School of Health, Social Work and Sport and local partners;
- the Health & Care apprenticeship Partnership Operational Group Meeting;
- the local integrated care board (ICB) which oversees all clinical placements in the area.

The programme team will have representatives at these regular meetings, as well as meeting individual practice educators in regular formal and informal settings. Evidence was provided to support this, in the form of agendas and remits.

Having reviewed this evidence, the visitors considered that the standard was now met, because the education provider had demonstrated that they had a clear plan to collaborate continuously with practice partners, and a mechanism to address matters arising.

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.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before providers or programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is an issue with the education provider's approach to meeting a standard. This may mean that we have evidence that standards are not met at this time, or the education provider's planned approach is not suitable.

The visitors were satisfied that no conditions were required to satisfy them that all standards are met. The visitors' findings, including why no conditions were required, are presented below.

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 set out their admissions requirements in the mapping exercise, referring to the more detailed information available in the programme specification.
 - The programme specification noted the academic and personal requirements, including 120 UCAS points, good health, an average IELTS score of seven, and passing a Disclosure & Barring Service check. The process will involve an NHS values-based assessment, and an interview.
 - The visitors considered that the relevant standard was met. They agreed the education provider was applying appropriate academic and professional entry standards. This should enable those admitted to the programme to have a strong likelihood of completing the programme.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
 - The education provider set out their approach to this SET in their mapping document and supporting evidence.
 - Regarding collaboration with practice partners and the maintenance of placement capacity, they explained how “The Academic Placement Registry Team works in partnership with placement partners across the Northwest of England to foster effective relationships”. They gave a general overview of how the programme team would have regular meetings with practice educators and share information with them. These statements were supported by the Practice Placement Information and the Employee Handbook.
 - The visitors used [quality activity](#) to explore the detail of how manage relationships with practice education providers. The education provider

gave a full and clear response to this quality activity, after which the visitors were satisfied that the education provider would collaborate effectively with practice education providers.

- The education provider supplied curriculum vitae (CVs) and a workload planning document to demonstrate that they would have an appropriate number of qualified and experienced staff. They cited the apprenticeship programme handbook and the homepage of their library to show that they would be able to guarantee appropriate resources for their learners. The programme handbook set out the learning and teaching spaces that the programme would use and gave details of the education provider's virtual learning environment (VLE).
- The visitors requested a clarification from the education provider regarding how they would ensure that staff with limited prior experience in higher education would be appropriately supported in their roles. They also wanted to clarify whether there was a plan in place for the education provider to allocate additional staffing to the programme if necessary. The education provider clarified that there was a mentoring system for new staff, and that their Centre for Collaborative Learning offered a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice. All staff will have quarterly supervision meetings with line managers.
- The visitors considered the standards in this area were met. This was because there was sufficient evidence to show that the education provider would be able to collaborate effectively with placement providers, and to staff and resource the programme appropriately.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The education provider submitted module specifications, as well as a standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping exercise, to explain the programme structure. They mapped the programme to the standards of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists, and to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IATE) standards. This evidence supports the standard requiring alignment between learning outcomes and SOPs.
 - The visitors were satisfied that the education provider had met the other standards within SET 4. Module descriptors, the programme specification, and the apprentice handbook illustrated how learners' adherence to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs) would be monitored and ensured.
 - The education provider demonstrated that the programme would reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base of the profession. They had also shown that theory and practice would be appropriately integrated, and that there were mechanisms for ensuring that the programme continued to reflect current practice. The visitors saw evidence that a range of learning and teaching approaches would be used on the programme. The curriculum documents they reviewed demonstrated that evidence-based practice and autonomous working would be taught appropriately and integrated with the content of the programme.

- There was sufficient evidence to satisfy the visitors that all standards within this SET area have been met. This was because the education provider had submitted evidence which clearly explained the specific requirements of the programme, and which showed how its content and approach would be appropriate for the profession.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - The education provider demonstrated that practice-based learning was integral to the programme by citing the detail of the structure of the programme. Using the module descriptors, they set out how the four specific placements of the programme would be integrated with the taught components of the programme. They referred to the modules to show how the various parts of clinical learning would integrate with the teaching activities. This also addressed SET 5.2, requiring an appropriate structure, range and duration of practice-based learning.
 - The visitors requested some additional clarification of how the education provider would ensure an appropriate breadth of experience in practice-based learning. The education provider responded by noting that the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) requires all occupational therapy apprenticeships to have an Employer Agreement, which guarantees the necessary range of learning opportunities. The education provider stated that they have such an agreement in place.
 - Regarding practice educators, the education provider stated that “All learners will be supervised by a HCPC registered Occupational Therapist”. They also referred to the Practice placement information document, which sets out the requirement that all their practice educators must have completed an NHS England qualification. The education provider will also provide their own in-house preparation and training sessions for practice educators.
 - We considered there was sufficient evidence that all standards within this SET area are met. This was because the education provider had clear mechanisms to ensure that practice-based learning was fit for purpose, integrated with the other parts of the programme, and overseen by appropriate practice educators.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - The education provider submitted several pieces of evidence to support their strategy in this area. These included the programme handbook, the module specifications and the various mapping exercises they had completed which showed how different parts of the programme were integrated with each other, and how they would be assessed.
 - The mapping documents specifically outline how the education provider will ensure that the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs) are integrated with the programme content. The education provider also provided evidence of having considered assessment guidance from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT).

- Regarding the appropriateness of their assessment strategy for measuring the learning outcomes, the education provider also submitted details of how assessment would work on the existing approved BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy.
- The visitors considered that the evidence provided showed that all the standards in this area were met. This was because the education provider had a defined and clear approach to ensuring that learning outcomes were linked to the SOPs and the SCPEs, and that assessment methods were appropriate to measure the learning outcomes.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

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

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. They do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

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 programme 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 programme is approved.

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

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 approval. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation, and the nature, quality and facilities of the provision.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
University of Central Lancashire	CAS-01502-D1H7Q0	Jennifer Caldwell Robert MacKinnon	Through this assessment, we have noted the programme meets all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.	- Clinical Skills suites - Libraries and information centres open 24 hours per day - Virtual learning environment
Programmes				
Programme name			Mode of study	Nature of provision
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)			FT (Full time)	Apprenticeship

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Education provider	Mode of study	First intake date	Programme status	Profession	Modality	Annotation
Advanced Certificate Non Medical Prescribing	University of Central Lancashire	PT (Part time)	01/10/2006	Open			Supplementary prescribing
Advanced Certificate Non Medical Prescribing	University of Central Lancashire	PT (Part time)	01/01/2014	Open			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	01/09/2014	Open	Biomedical scientist		
BSc (Hons) in Operating Department Practice	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	01/09/2012	Open	Operating department practitioner		
BSc (Hons) in Operating Department Practice	University of Central Lancashire	WBL (Work based learning)	01/09/2019	Open	Operating department practitioner		
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	01/09/2019	Open	Occupational therapist		
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	University of Central Lancashire	PT (Part time)	01/09/2019	Open	Occupational therapist		
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	09/09/2024	Proposed	Occupational therapist		

BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	01/09/2018	Open	Paramedic		
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	01/09/2005	Open	Physiotherapist		
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	University of Central Lancashire	FT (Full time)	04/09/2023	Open	Physiotherapist		
FdSc Hearing Aid Audiology	University of Central Lancashire	DL (Distance learning)	01/09/2022	Open	Hearing aid dispenser		
MSc Dietetics (pre-registration)	University of Central Lancashire	FTA (Full time accelerated)	01/01/2022	Open	Dietitian		
MSc Occupational Therapy	University of Central Lancashire	FTA (Full time accelerated)	01/08/2018	Open	Occupational therapist		
MSc Physiotherapy	University of Central Lancashire	FTA (Full time accelerated)	01/08/2018	Open	Physiotherapist		
MSc Speech and Language Therapy	University of Central Lancashire	FTA (Full time accelerated)	01/09/2020	Open	Speech and language therapist		