

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Chichester
Name of programme(s)	MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration), Full time BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	22 April 2020
Case reference	CAS-15794-G4F8W8

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Carol Rowe	Physiotherapist
Joanna Jackson	Physiotherapist
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Dave Cooper	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Chichester
Robert Herniman	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Chichester
Nina Paterson	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) Panel Member	CSP – Professional Body for Physiotherapists
Alison Chambers	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) Panel Member	CSP – Professional Body for Physiotherapists

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration)
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02191

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 30
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02192

We undertook this assessment of two new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programmes meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	

Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running
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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	As these are new programmes the visitors would not be able to meet physiotherapy learners. As many of their issues were very specific to the Physiotherapy programme it was not deemed necessary to meet learners from a different programme.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	In the documentary submission the education provider stated that they were currently developing their network of service users and carers. They also gave examples of their involvement in other programmes. The visitors noted in their review that this group has not been involved in the Physiotherapy programme. As many of their issues were very specific to the Physiotherapy programme it was not deemed necessary to meet service users and carers from a different programme.
Facilities and resources	No	As the panel were not visiting on site they were unable to view the facilities and resources in person but had conversations about the availability and capacity of them in the meetings with other groups.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 25 June 2020.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure there is accurate information available for learners to allow them to make an informed choice about whether to take up a place on the programmes.

Reason: Prior to the visit the visitors were able to view the information available to learners on the programme website. Within this the visitors were able to note some inaccuracies when referring to the HCPC. The education provider acknowledged this at the visit and stated they would ensure that the information would highlight that completion of an approved programme allows one to apply for registration with the HCPC. Furthermore, the information provided stated that applicants must have gained work experience in physiotherapy as an entry requirement. The visitors considered the difficulty of securing this experience for many applicants and discussed this with the programme team. The programme team stated that this was not a requirement but would be beneficial for applicants. They stated that their focus was on applicants demonstrating an understanding of the breadth of physiotherapy rather than specifically having work experience. The visitors considered that the information on the website did not state this and could dissuade potential applicant from applying. The education provider must ensure that information available for applicants is accurate of HCPC language and entry requirements for learners.

2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

Condition: The education provider must clarify the occupational health screening process and the vaccinations required to ensure learners are fully aware of the health requirements for participating in the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted that applicants will undertake an occupational health assessment at the interview stage which is carried out by an independent supplier. The visitors were also able to see that applicants will be required to pay for vaccinations prior to placements from the information available on the education providers' website. The visitors noted that this information did not detail the vaccinations that would be required or the time that would be required for a course of them to be completed. Furthermore, it was not made clear how the education provider would ensure these vaccinations are followed up with learners to ensure they are able to take part in practice-based learning. The education provider must clarify the requirements for learners and show the information they will provide to learners around these requirements so learners are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programme is sustainable by ensuring learners have access to safe and effective practice-based learning that meets their learning needs.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider highlighted the internal processes that underpin new programmes being

introduced. They also highlighted the Institute of Sports' plans for development of new programmes. This allowed visitors to understand how the programme had developed internally and the relative support for the programme. However, the visitors noted the education provider did not discuss external support in the development of the programme. At the visit the visitors explored the progress of agreements with external partners and their involvement in the programme. The practice educators stated that had been in contact with the education provider and had conversations about parts of the curriculum. They stated that they had not have an overall view of the entire programme curriculum so couldn't comment on its suitability overall. They also stated that the capacity and range of practice based learning had not been finalised. This was confirmed in the programme team meeting. The programme team also added that a practice facilitator would be recruited to ensure this is carried out.

Currently, the programme has not finalised:

- availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners
- the range of practice-based learning, the role of practice educators,
- the practice assessment document and
- the audit of practice-based learning.

These issues are brought out in further detail in conditions set for SETS 3.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5. As practice-based learning is an integral part of the programme this is currently a major risk to the sustainability of the programme. The education provider must finalise their approach to practice-based learning in this area and ensure that it is safe, effective and allows learners to meet the SOPs.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programme is fit for purpose by ensuring that the programme meets the needs of learners who will be entering the profession.

Reason: The visitors considered in their review of documentation that the programme had a lack of a physiotherapy influence as such they had concerns about the programme being fit for purpose. Firstly, in discussions around the influence of the programme it was confirmed by the programme team that many of the modules in the programmes are already being taught as part of sports and exercise programmes. At the visit it was confirmed there would be smaller group teaching to contextualise these modules for physiotherapy learners. This was not representative of the documentation and did not confirm the time that would be dedicated to this teaching. As such, the visitors could not currently see how an appropriate amount of time would be available to cover all the necessary physiotherapy teaching, to ensure learners can meet the standards of proficiency and be ready to practice as autonomous professionals.

Further to this the visitors noted that in the BSc programme that learners would take part in a Nutrition based module and only one cardio-respiratory module during the programme. While the visitors could see that the nutrition may be beneficial for the learner experience, it was not wholly relevant to the profession and was potentially at the detriment of key physiotherapy areas such as cardio-respiratory. The programmes also had a large amount of sport and exercise modules that did not display how they would be contextualised for physiotherapy learners. The visitors could not see from this information that learners would have the appropriate breadth and range of learning for

the needs of a physiotherapist. This area of concern also has led to concerns about the mapping of learning outcomes to the SOPs, mainly profession specific, and the mapping of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) framework for physiotherapy practice. Further information and specifics on these concerns can be seen in the conditions set around SETs 4.1, 4.3 and 4.4. The education provider must show that will contextualise the non-physiotherapy modules and ensure that the programme delivers the learning objectives effectively.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must clarify their own process for ensuring that the person holding overall professional responsibility has the appropriate profession specific knowledge base to lead the programme.

Reason: To evidence these standards in the documentary submission prior to the visit. The education provider highlighted the institution's levels of management and provided an overview of role profiles for members of staff within the programme structure. The visitors considered the management structure to be appropriate. The education provider stated that the person holding overall professional responsibility, the programme coordinator, would need to meet criteria for senior lecturer as a minimum. The visitors considered the criteria set out in the job profile for a senior lecturer to be sufficient for ensuring the person leading the programme would be suitable. However, when they observed the current programme coordinator's curriculum vitae (CV) they could not understand how the job profile had been met in the area of expertise.

Within the job profile the person is required to 'possess breadth and depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline to develop the curriculum, establish teaching programmes and the provision of learning support'. The programme coordinator's CV showed they were HCPC registered and were able to see sufficient teaching qualifications and experience but related very specifically to lower limb musculoskeletal (MSK) area of physiotherapy. The visitors also noted that the university level teaching experience was part of sports related programmes teaching sports injury modules and MSK modules. The visitors could not see how this constituted a breadth and depth of the discipline of physiotherapy. Therefore the visitors could not determine that the education provider had followed their own criteria for a senior lecturer in physiotherapy.

They also stated that the programme coordinator has gone through undergraduate and postgraduate learning as well as leading on a programme within the institute of sport to make them appropriate for the role. It was not clear to the visitors that the education provider has ensured that has followed its own role profile for a senior lecturer in physiotherapy as they could not determine the current programme coordinator 'possess breadth and depth of specialist knowledge to develop the curriculum, establish teaching programmes and the provision of learning support'. This standard is designed so that visitors do not comment on an individual but how the education provide ensures an

appropriate person is in place. It is not clear to the visitors that they are currently following their own process or how they are amending it in the case of this programme. The education provider must show how they have ensured the person holding overall professional responsibility is appropriately experienced to hold overall professional responsibility for the programme. They must also show how they will support this person should they consider there to be any gaps in their relevant experience.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

Reason: In the documentary submission prior to the visit the education provider highlighted a section in the placement handbook which discussed a practice-education steering group that would be formed and operating in the 2020-21 academic year. It was not stated how often this groups would meet and it was stated they would expect current clinical educators to attend. The visitors noted the plans for this group are at a very early stage and the visitors could not see how the practice partners needs would be being considered. The education provider also provided a log of external meetings and communications. The log of communications provided the visitors with an overview of how the education provider had contacted outside partners and a brief overview of their discussions. It contained members of potential practice partners and other physiotherapy education providers. The visitors noted the education provider had had discussions around practice-based learning but could not see that any decisions or plans had been finalised or how they had contributed to the programme.

The practice educators noted that the external partners present had not had oversight of the programme as a whole but had been asked for their input for parts of it. Additionally, in the programme team meeting the visitors were told that there had been discussions with other higher education institutes and practice education providers within the region. The visitors had seen these conversations logged in the documentary submission but could not see the detail of what they entailed. The visitors could not see the detail of the communications and meetings the education provider had already carried out so could not judge how effective the collaboration so far had been. The education provider must show how there will be regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers to ensure the ongoing and quality and effectiveness of the programmes. They must show that the practice education providers are involved in decision making around the plans for collaboration in the future.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is an effective process to ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning which meets their learning needs.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider highlighted that they had established a health steering group and the deputy vice chancellor was leading on the development of memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with local employers and establishing a network of practice-based learning organisations. The

visitors were provided with a MOUs, letters from two external partners and a log of external meetings and communications.

The documentary submission:

The MOUs provided did not detail the capacity of practice-based learning that was available or that would be required from the education provider. The visitors could see these documents would 'foster opportunities' for the provision of practice-based learning but did not highlight specifics around capacity or logistics of practice-based learning. The visitors noted the MOUs did not guarantee any practice-based learning but indicated an understanding between the education provider and partners about discussing the possibility of them. The letters provided from external partners demonstrated that the education provider had sought feedback around the programme but did not demonstrate how they would ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning. The log of communications provided the visitors with an overview of how the education provider had contacted outside partners and an overview of their discussions. The visitors noted the education provider had had discussion around practice-based learning but could not see that any decisions or plans had been finalised. The visitors considered that the evidence provided by the education provider showed they had been in contact with relevant external partners but the information did not show they had finalised arrangements to ensure that all learners on the programmes will have access to practice-based learning that will meet their learning needs.

The visit:

At the visit the visitors enquired about the progress being made with ensuring the capacity and availability of practice-based learning. The programme team highlighted the MOUs that were provided initially and indicated that they would be recruiting a placement facilitator to finalise agreements. The education provider also indicated they were working to include role emerging practice opportunities. However, they had not finalised how many of these there would be or their nature. The visitors considered that the education provider has not confirmed the capacity and availability of practice-based learning for the number of learners entering onto the programme. Furthermore, they stated in the programme team meeting that they had not finalised the structure of practice-based learning to ensure that learners all have opportunity to carry out an appropriate range of practice-based learning. The education provider must show how they will ensure that all learners who enter onto the programmes will have access to practice-based learning that will meet their learning needs.

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure meaningful involvement of service users and carers in the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider indicated they are networking to generate service users and carer involvement similar to that of other allied health professions at the education provider. They highlighted the student handbook and example of service user and carer involvement in the social work programme offered at the education provider, but the handbook did not discuss how service users and carers would be involved in the programme. The visitors could see relevant involvement in the social work programme but not if or how this would be adapted for physiotherapy purposes. In the programme team meeting the visitors were told that there had been the intention to involve service user focus groups

but this will not be happening. The programme team highlighted service user and carer involvement is currently a work in progress. They also stated that they are considering using an online resource that provides examples of patients giving an overview of their experiences. The education provider did not detail how these experiences would be relevant for physiotherapy or where they would be taught and so the visitors could not judge how relevant they would be to the learners' experience. This standard is about how service users and carers contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of a programme and the education provider has not shown that service users and carers are currently involved in the programme. They must show how service users and carers will be involved in the programme to ensure they can contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of the programme. The education provider must also show how they intend to monitor and evaluate this involvement to ensure it is continuously improving their programme.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Condition: The education provider must show that the placement facilitator will be in place to ensure the effective delivery of the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted their staffing resource plan for the next academic year. In conversations around practice-based learning the programme team stated that they would be appointing a placement facilitator. This placement facilitator would be required for duties such as finalising the practice audit form and formalising agreements with practice education providers. The visitors considered these duties to be essential for the successful running of the programme but could not see this member of staff had been mentioned in the documentary submission. The programme stated this person had not been appointed yet and did not state when this would occur. As the placement facilitator will have an important role in ensuring the programme is delivered effectively the visitors considered this standard to currently not be met. The education provider must show how and when they will ensure this member of staff is in place. Furthermore, they must show the duties of this member of staff to ensure that management of practice-based learning is being carried out effectively.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experience staff to deliver the parts of the programme that require specialist knowledge and expertise.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted their staffing resource plan for the next academic year. They also highlighted the staff curriculum vitae (CVs), role profiles of members of staff and staff development plan. The visitors noted from documentation there were currently two physiotherapy specific members of

staff both with a Musculoskeletal (MSK) background. As such, for the 2020/2021 year, the education provider indicated they were looking to bring in two extra Lecturer/Practitioners that would be specialists in cardio-respiratory (Cardio) and Neurological (Neuro), alongside other non-physiotherapy specific teaching staff. Both of these members of staff would be 0.2 full time equivalent (FTE). The documentation indicated that these new members of staff would be leading modules on both the MSc and BSc. In discussions with the programme team around how the programme would be taught, they indicated that lectures and some teaching would be delivered by non-physiotherapy teaching staff alongside other programmes from the institute of sports and exercise. The programme team then explained that this teaching would be contextualised for physiotherapy learners in seminars, tutorials and practical sessions by physiotherapy staff. However, the breakdown of hours and time required of the 2.4 FTE physiotherapy members of staff was not provided. The education provider has not detailed who will deliver the hours of contact for each module so the visitors were unable to see how the current staffing plans would ensure that there are an appropriate number of physiotherapy staff to deliver this teaching. Furthermore, as the Cardio and Neuro members of staff are 0.2 FTE, the education provider did not detail how they would ensure that all teaching that requires their specialist knowledge and expertise would be delivered within the time they are available. The education provider must show their physiotherapy specific staff will be sufficient for the required teaching time. Furthermore, they must show how their relative specialities and expertise will be utilised to deliver this teaching effectively.

3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that educators will be guaranteed the time to complete professional and academic development as it is required.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted their institution wide approach for staff development. This highlighted how they supported and funded relevant areas for professional and academic development of staff. However, this information did not detail how the education provider ensures this can be carried out alongside the effective delivery of the programmes. During the programme team meeting the education provider indicated that they had not finalised the teaching time that would be required of the physiotherapy members of staff. As such the visitors could not determine there would be sufficient time for members of staff to carry out personal development alongside their responsibilities for delivering the programmes. The education provider must show how they will ensure that the physiotherapy teaching staff for the programmes will have sufficient time for appropriate development should it be required.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that learners will have access to resources that meet their learning needs.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission education provider highlighted the student commitment charter, the library services website and information

about the Tudor Hale Centre for Sport facilities. The visitors could see that the institute has a multitude of facilities available for various programmes of study. However, the education provider was not clear how the physiotherapy programme would use these facilities to support learning. The senior team stated that they were able to develop the physiotherapy programme within the bounds of the institute of sport that many of the teaching resources would be drawn from. However, the visitors were not able to see how these resources would be used to support the teaching and learning needs of the programme. While the visitors could understand that the education provider would likely already have many of the resources required, they could not see that some physiotherapy specific equipment (such as that used in electro therapy, for example) would be present. As such they could not confirm that the resources would meet the learning needs of the programmes. The education provider must clarify all the equipment and resources that will be used specifically for the physiotherapy programmes. They must also show if this equipment is shared and how this will be timetabled effectively to ensure physiotherapy learners have appropriate access, to ensure effective support of their learning.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the learning outcomes ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the following standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists:

- 1.1: Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional
- 4.5: Be able to make and receive appropriate referrals
- 13.6: Understand the following aspects of biological science:
 - normal human anatomy and physiology, including the dynamic relationships of human structure and function as related to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems
 - patterns of human growth and development across the lifespan
 - factors influencing individual variations in human ability and health status
 - how the application of physiotherapy can cause physiological and structural change
- 13.7: Understand the following aspects of physical science:
 - the principles and theories from physics, biomechanics, applied exercise science and ergonomics that can be applied to physiotherapy
 - the means by which the physical sciences can inform the understanding and analysis of movement and function
 - the principles and application of measurement techniques based on biomechanics or electrophysiology
 - the application of anthropometric and ergonomic principles
- 13.8: Understand the following aspects of clinical science:
 - pathological changes and related clinical features commonly encountered in physiotherapy practice
 - physiological, structural, behavioural and functional changes that can result from physiotherapy intervention and disease progression
 - the specific contribution that physiotherapy can potentially make to enhancing individuals' functional ability, together with the evidence base for this
 - the different concepts and approaches that inform the development of physiotherapy intervention
- 13.9: Understand the following aspects of behavioural science:

- psychological, social and cultural factors that influence an individual in health and illness, including their responses to the management of their health status and related physiotherapy interventions
- how psychology, sociology and cultural diversity inform an understanding of health, illness and health care in the context of physiotherapy and the incorporation of this knowledge into physiotherapy practice
- theories of communication relevant to effective interaction with service users, carers, colleagues, managers and other health and social care professionals
- theories of team working
- 14: Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice (This includes all of the standards in this area)
- 15.2: know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques
- 15.3: be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures in force at the workplace, such as incident reporting, and be able to act in accordance with these
- 15.4: be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner and in accordance with health and safety legislation
- 15.5: be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly
- 15.6: be able to establish safe environments for practice, which minimise risks to service users, those treating them and others, including the use of hazard control and particularly infection control

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider submitted a standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping documents for each programme. The visitors could see the education provider had mapped the SOPs to learning outcomes (LOs) and some to the handbooks. In reviewing the mapping the visitors could not determine how the indicative content of the modules would allow the learning objectives and SOPs to be met. The visitors considered the following generic SOPs to not be met:

- **SOP 1.1: Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional.**

BSc: This SOP is mapped to 5 LOs from 5 different modules. Each learning objective requires the learner to describe and acknowledge rather than explicitly demonstrate the competency. The mapping to the handbook does not show learning outcome that will highlight this SOP is met.

MSc: This SOP is mapped to 5 LOs from 5 different modules. Each learning objective requires the learner to describe and value rather than explicitly demonstrate the competency. The mapping to the handbook does not show learning outcome that will highlight this SOP is met.

- **SOP 4.5: Be able to make and receive appropriate referrals.**

BSc: This SOP is mapped to 6 LOs from 5 different modules. These LOs require the student to describe, discuss, acknowledge, show awareness, evaluate – they do not directly appear to provide evidence that the student will demonstrate SOP 4.5 and answer the question, “Can the student make and receive appropriate referrals?” In addition, the SOP is mapped to the placement and student handbook, neither of which can evidence that a specific area is delivered and then assessed.

MSc: This SOP is mapped to 2 LOs from 1 module. These LOs require the students to describe and discuss evaluate – they do not directly appear to provide evidence that the student will demonstrate SOP 4.5 and answer the question, “Can the student make and receive appropriate referrals?” In addition,

the SOP is mapped to the placement and student handbook, neither of which can evidence that a specific area is delivered and then assessed.

At the visit, the visitors enquired further about the physiotherapy related nature of the curriculum as a whole. The programme team stated that the overall theme of the programme was exercise and health and the visitors considered that the curriculum was heavily influenced by sport and exercise rather than physiotherapy. This was further displayed as the programme team had indicated that many of the modules are co-taught with the institute of sports' other programmes. The programme team also indicated that the shared modules will be contextualised for physiotherapy learners in practicals and smaller group teaching. The module descriptors were not reflective of this. It is not clear that the learning outcomes and indicative content of the modules currently allow learners to meet the profession specific SOPs. The visitors considered the following profession specific SOPs to not be met:

- **SOPs 13.6, 13.7, 13.8 (both MSc & BSc)**
It is not possible to be reassured that students completing the programme would demonstrate achievement of these LOs as the curriculum does not reflect patient groups frequently encountered in physiotherapy practice, for example older people, mental health service users, and children. There is little time allotted for learning about the application of physiotherapy including a range of interventions. In addition, the SOP is mapped to the student handbook, which cannot evidence that a specific area is delivered and then assessed.
- **SOP 13.9 Understand the following aspects of behavioural science**
The education provider has mapped this SOP to various modules throughout the programme. The visitors noted learners would discuss behavioural science in the physiotherapy and society module. However, this was not clearly followed up and applied to other modules to show an understanding in practice. The visitors also noted there appears to be an absence of behavioural science within both the indicative content and learning objectives. As such they could not discern the programme was including learning around this SOP.
- **SOPs 14 (14.1. – 14.23)**
For both programmes all these SOPs are mapped to university-based modules. They were not mapped to any practice-based learning modules. Reassurance about achievement of these modules needs to be mapped to placement learning particularly in a programme where the content of modules is limited in relation to the breadth and scope of physiotherapy practice. Mapping to the student and/or placement handbook does not provide evidence of achievement of these SOPs.
- **SOPs 15.2, 15.3, 15.4 15.5, 15.6**
For both programmes all these SOPs are mapped to university-based modules. They were not mapped to any practice-based learning modules. Reassurance about achievement of these modules needs to be mapped to placement learning particularly in a programme where the content of modules is limited in relation to the breadth and scope of physiotherapy practice. Mapping to the student and/or placement handbook does not provide evidence of achievement of these SOPs.

The education provider must ensure that learners are able to meet the SOPs listed above to ensure that learners are able to meet the SOPs for physiotherapists.

4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base for current physiotherapy practice.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider indicated in their documentary submission that the programmes are closely matched to meet universal conventions, statements and standards on ethics, values and knowledge acquisition. They also stated that modules are designed to ensure that global ideas can be applied to organisational aims which local needs of service users. To evidence this the education provider highlighted the handbook and modules descriptors of each programme. The education provider also mapped the module titles to the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) Physiotherapy Framework that describes the behaviours, underpinning values, knowledge and skills expected by the CSP for contemporary physiotherapy practice. The visitors were able to see some areas were being reflected in the curriculum, for example the structure and function of the human body. However, the visitors were unable to see how the curriculum was addressing some other areas articulated in the guidance. For instance the framework states that one must have an understanding of the scientific bases of physiotherapy including behavioural science. When reviewing the module descriptors the visitors were unable to see any mention of behavioural science or psychology being brought out in the teaching. The visitors also noted this when looking at standards of proficiency as noted in the condition around SET 4.1. Furthermore, the visitors were unable to see how certain person specific practical skills were being included in the curriculum such as electrophysical modalities, as this was not mentioned in the curriculum.

The visitors queried how the programme would reflect contemporary physiotherapy practice at the visit. The programme team stated that health and exercise was the theme running through the programme. The visitors, as an example, then questioned how this would ensure learners are prepared to apply their practice across the lifespan and the relative challenges that come with it. The programme team stated that this can be seen in the Fundamentals of Human Physiology module in which learners will be measuring movement. The visitors had noted in their review of this module that the learning outcomes were based around measuring human physical performance in relation to exercise intensity. The visitors considered this learning to be very specific to exercise physiotherapy and questioned how this movement would be contextualised for practice outside exercise or for different parts of the lifespan. The programme team stated that physiotherapy learners would be taught separately within the bounds of the module to ensure this is covered. They also stated that practical sessions will be tailored towards the needs of physiotherapy learners to ensure it is contextualised for them. The visitors were not shown the nature of these sessions or how long they would last within the documentation and so could not judge they would be effective to contextualise this learning for modern physiotherapy practice. Currently the visitors are unclear how the modular content of the programmes reflects guidance set out by the CSP that determines the underpinning values, knowledge and skills they expect for contemporary physiotherapy practice. The education provider has indicated there is teaching to ensure this but this is not currently reflected in the module descriptors. The education provider must show how the programmes are reflective of the CSP's

framework for Physiotherapy practice to show they are current with regard to the philosophy, core values, knowledge and skills of a contemporary physiotherapist.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice for both programmes.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider stated that the initial physiotherapy teaching team are experienced professionals with ample experience of expert and specialised practice. They also stated that future appointments will be similarly experienced. They highlighted the programme handbooks, module descriptors and recruitment process to evidence this. The visitors were able to see the two current members of the physiotherapy teaching team were specialised in Musculoskeletal (MSK) and sports related application. They could not determine how this team would reflect and apply the breadth of current physiotherapy practice within the programme. At the visit the programme team stated that they intend to run a practice-education steering group that would be formed and operating in 2020-21. But this had not been finalised and the visitors were unaware of the mechanism for ensuring input from current clinical members of the profession. The education provider must show how the programme takes account of and reflects the range of current practice, so that it remains relevant and effective in preparing learners for practice.

4.5 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that integration of theory and practice is central to the programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider stated that all learning outcomes had been written to ensure that theory can be tested in the classroom and applied in practice. They also stated that they were developing their practice based learning to ensure that links to theory would be equally rigorous. The visitors noted in the documentation that many of the modules did not include aspects of modern physiotherapy practice that the visitors would expect to see, such as mental health and the lifespan. The programme team stated that the modules would be contextualised for physiotherapy learners within practical sessions for the module. The visitors were unable to see nature of these practical sessions within the module descriptors and so could not judge how learners would be ready to apply physiotherapy specific skills and knowledge to their practice-based learning. Furthermore, the education provider stated they had not finalised their approach to practice based learning so could not confirm how they would link the theoretical parts of the programmes to practice-based learning. The education provider must show how all the practical parts of the programme ensure learners are acquiring the appropriate physiotherapy skills to allow them to be applied in practice. They must also ensure that learners will have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that the range of teaching approaches used are appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider stated that the learning and teaching methods within the institute can be seen in the assessment methods. The education provider highlighted the module descriptors, university regulations and the programme handbooks to evidence this. Upon review of the modules the visitors noted that many of the modules stated there would be various teaching methods used but did not state how the learning objectives would be delivered within these sessions. At the visit, the visitors enquired how teaching would be contextualised in some joint modules for physiotherapy learners, for instance how the shared sports related modules would be applied to physiotherapy practice. The programme team stated that practical sessions and seminars would ensure that teaching from the lectures in Fundamentals of Human Physiology is appropriately contextualised for physiotherapists, rather than focusing on the sport aspect of the learning. The module descriptor does not reflect this information and does not break down the learning or teaching methods to show how this will be achieved, or that there will be sufficient time given to the contextualisation for physiotherapy learners. The education provider indicated there would be more physiotherapy specific teaching sessions than appeared in the module descriptors in many modules. The visitors deemed the contextualisation teaching sessions to be essential for learners and would provide an important indicator to how learners would be gaining physiotherapy specific skills and knowledge. As such the visitors are unable to determine the nature of and time spent on gaining the appropriate theoretical knowledge and the practical skills needed for professional practice. The education provider must clarify all the teaching methods for the programme to ensure that learners are given sufficient time and support to meet the learning outcomes. Furthermore, they must show that adequate time is dedicated to contextualising shared, non-physiotherapy specific modules for learners.

4.7 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Condition: The education provider must show how the delivery of the programme will ensure learners are ready to practice as autonomous professionals on completion of the programme.

Reason: In the documentary submission prior to the visit the education provider indicated that the teaching and assessment methods are varied and promote autonomy and reflection. The visitors were able to see in some modules that the education provider had stated differing teaching methods but did not state what would be covered in these sessions or the time spent in them. The visitors also considered the learning objectives stated in the practice education module descriptors. The education provider had split the 6 modules into two descriptors, practice education 1-2 and practice education 3-6. Each descriptor had the same set of learning outcomes for all the differing practice education modules they covered. This standard is designed to develop autonomous a reflective thinking throughout the programme rather than teaching at one point. As the learning outcomes do not progress from practice education module 3 the visitors could not see how the delivery of practice education would develop learners' autonomous thinking and prepare them to practise as autonomous professionals at the end of the programme. The education provider must show they will develop learners' autonomous and reflective thinking throughout the programme, to ensure they are ready to practice as independent practitioners.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider indicated that as programmes in health develop they intend to offer opportunities for learners from interprofesional backgrounds to be taught together. They also stated they had established links with the Institute of Sport where experienced professionals contribute to the teaching and learning experience. The visitors were unable to determine from the documentation that learners would be undertaking interprofesional education (IPE) in any of the modules. As such they asked the education provider to clarify their strategy and to explain how they would ensure that learners would be able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions. The programme team indicated they have spoken at length with colleagues involved in the social care programme but also stated this is a work in progress. They also stated that learners will carry out IPE while out on placement. However, they have not finalised the practice-based learning settings for all learners so could not state that all learners would be consistent to an acceptable level. The programme team also indicated they would be looking to include guest lecturers but stated that some of these sessions may be voluntary so some learners may not access them. The education provider has not finalised their approach to IPE and with the information provide the visitors could not confirm that this standard is met. The education provider must show they will ensure that all learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

5.1 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must show that practice-based learning is central to the programme in ensuring learners are prepared for future practice.

Reason: : Upon reviewing the documentation the visitors were able to see that areas related to practice-based learning were in the early stages of development, such as:

- ongoing partnership arrangements with practice education providers;
- the practice assessment tool;
- the availability and capacity of practice based learning;
- the timetabling of practice based learning (all ensure all learners have the appropriate range);
- identification and training of appropriate practice educators; and
- audit of practice based learning environments.

The education provider had split the 6 modules into two descriptors, practice education 1-2 and practice education 3-6. Each descriptor had the same set of learning outcomes for all the differing practice education modules they covered. The visitors noted that the learning objectives for practice education modules did not develop beyond module 3. So the same expectations were being made of learners at practice education module 3 and the end of the programme. This standard is about how practice-based learning is used effectively, as a key part of the programme, to prepare learners for future practice. From the documentary submission the visitors could only determine that learners would have 6 blocks of practice based learning. At the visit the programme team confirmed that many areas related to practice based learning were still to be finalised. The

education provider must show how practice-based learning is central part of the programme, for example:

- how practice-based learning outcomes and progression are in line with learning outcomes for the programme as a whole
- the ongoing partnership arrangements with practice education providers
- the reasons for the design of practice-based learning on the programme and how this ensures learners meet the standards of proficiency.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure there is an appropriate range of practice-based learning to support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider indicated they are making agreements with local employers who would provide appropriate learning opportunities which meet their requirements on number and range of opportunities. The visitors were also able to see memoranda of understanding with various partners. However, these did disclose decisions or plans around an appropriate range of practice-based learning. In the programme team meeting the visitors were told that the education provider has not finalised agreements with practice education providers to ensure that all learners have access to the appropriate range of practice based learning. The education provider must show that all learners will have access to appropriate range of practice-based learning experiences which reflect the nature of modern practice, reflects the range of settings of the profession they are about to enter and supports the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider indicated they would be drawing on their social work colleagues' experience to develop an audit process for practice based learning. At the visit the visitors enquired about the progress being made with the process. The programme team stated that it had not been finished at the time of the visit and was a work in progress. They also stated that the practice placement facilitator would be developing an audit form to be used. The education provider has not finalised their system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning so the visitors could not determine that the standard was met. The education provider must finalise their audit process and show how this will make sure that the programmes deliver continued quality of practice-based learning for all learners.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all practice-based learning will provide a safe and supportive environment for learners and service users.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider indicated they would be drawing on their social work colleague's experience to develop an audit process for practice based learning. At the visit the visitors enquired about the progress being made with the process. The programme team stated that it had not been finished at the time of the visit and was a work in progress. They also stated that the practice placement facilitator would be developing an audit form to be used. The education provider has not finalised their system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning so the visitors could not determine that the standard was met. The education provider must finalise their audit process and show how this will make sure that practice-based learning settings are suitable and that they support safe and effective learning.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate there will be an appropriate number of appropriately qualified and experienced practice educators in place with the relevant skills and knowledge to effectively support learners in practice-based learning.

Reason: In the documentary submission the education provider stated they would ensure the standards are met as they develop their practice educator network, and will draw on experience from other HCPC approved programmes at the education provider. To evidence these statements the education provider submitted the student handbook, placement handbook, memorandum of understanding and overview of student development process. The visitors could not see from this evidence that the education provider had ensured an appropriate number of practice-based learning staff. Nor did the evidence show the education provider had audited or had plans to audit the members of staff to ensure they had the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to ensure staff can meet the learning needs of learners.

At the visit the visitors enquired about the progress being made with practice based learning and agreements being finalised with external partners. In the practice educators meeting the visitors were told that there are a large number of clinicians who have previously been practice educators for learners from other education providers could be involved for this programme. However, they also stated that agreements have not yet been finalised and the education provider has not used their own quality processes to consider whether these members of staff are suitable as practice educators for this programme. The visitors were also told in this meeting there had been some discussion around expectations for practice educators but this had not been finalised. It was also confirmed in the programme team meeting that agreements had not been finalised around relationship between the practice educators and the

education provider. Therefore the visitors considered the standards related to this were not currently met. The education provider must finalise how they will ensure that practice educators are appropriately experienced and qualified to support effective learning. They must also show how practice educators will be supported with refresher training in the future. The education provider must ensure they oversee and are responsible for all practice-based learning and ensure they have appropriate quality assurance of the staffing involved.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education must demonstrate that the assessment strategy and methods ensure that learner are able to meet the learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider highlighted the programme handbook which gave an overview of the assessments logistics for learners. The visitors were able to view the assessments within the module descriptors that were associated with the relative teaching. The visitors were able to see the learning outcomes were linked to the assessments within the module. However, the visitors considered the nature of the assessments to be vague. For example in the module descriptor for Applied Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy the assessment are stated at examinations but not did not confirm their length or type (such as multiple choice). This level of detail was the same for all module descriptors. The visitors therefore questioned the programme team about the nature of the examinations and if they could provide more information around how the assessments would be carried out to ensure that learners are meeting the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists (SOPs). The programme team stated that the assessments in the module descriptors had not been finalised and they intended to finalise the assessments after the visit with some input from lecture practitioners. As the visitors have not seen the finalised assessment strategy for the programme in both the theoretical and practice setting, they cannot confirm that the programme currently meets the standard. The education provider must show how the assessment strategy and design will ensure that learners who complete the programme have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practice physiotherapy safely and effectively.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that assessments will provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider highlighted the programme handbook which gave an overview of the

assessments logistics for learners. The visitors were able to view the assessments within the module descriptors that were associated with the relative teaching. The visitors were able to see the learning outcomes were linked to the assessments within the module. However, the visitors considered the nature of the assessments to be vague. For example in the module descriptor for Applied Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy the assessment are stated at examinations but not did not confirm their length or type (such as multiple choice). This level of detail was the same for all module descriptors. Furthermore, the visitors noted in the Functional anatomy of the Upper-Quadrant module that one assessment looked at disease within tissues but the indicative content did not cover this. The visitors therefore questioned the programme team about the nature of the examinations and if they could provide more information around how the assessments would be carried out to ensure that learners are meeting the standards of proficiency for physiotherapists (SOPs). The programme team stated that the assessments in the module descriptors had not been finalised and they intended to finalise the assessments after the visit with some input from lecture practitioners. As the visitors have not seen the finalised assessment strategy for the programme in both the theoretical and practice setting, they cannot confirm that the programme currently meets the standard. The education provider must show that assessments are effective at deciding whether a learner is fit to practice by the end of the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Plymouth
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science, Full time
Approval visit date	28 April 2020
Case reference	CAS-15792-T8Z4J2

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Stephen McDonald	Biomedical scientist
Pradeep Agrawal	Biomedical scientist
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Hannah Wisdom	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Plymouth
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Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Applied Biomedical Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)

Profession	Biomedical scientist
First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 24
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02190

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Yes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	The visitors were able to determine that many of the standards were met prior to the visit. They determined it was not necessary to meet this group in order to understand how the other standards would be met.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	The visitors were able to determine that many of the standards were met prior to the visit. They determined it was not necessary to meet this group in order to understand how the other standards would be met.
Facilities and resources	No	The visitors were able to determine that many of the standards were met prior to the visit. They

		determined it was not necessary to meet this group in order to understand how the other standards would be met.
Senior staff	No	The visitors were able to determine that many of the standards were met prior to the visit. They determined it was not necessary to meet this group in order to understand how the other standards would be met.
Practice educators	No	The visitors were able to determine that many of the standards were met prior to the visit. They determined it was not necessary to meet this group in order to understand how the other standards would be met.
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 10 June 2020.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider highlighted that the programme sits within the Faculty of Health: Medicine, Dentistry and Human Sciences. As such they stated there is opportunity for interprofessional education (IPE) across the faculty. They highlighted that learners will experience a range of professions when working in multidisciplinary teams in practice-based learning. However they did not state how they would ensure that learners' experiences would be consistent to meet the standard. The education provider highlighted a module that would provide learners an interprofessional opportunity in the theoretical part of the programme. When the visitors reviewed this module they could

not see how learners would learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

At the visit the visitors explored the IPE opportunities within the programme. The programme team explained that they were exploring developing IPE opportunities with Nurses, Dentists, Doctors and other allied health professionals. However, these opportunities were at an early stage of development and were not implemented into the programme yet. The programme team explained that that learners would take part in IPE in stage 1 and 2 of the programme. They discussed working with Physiologists and working alongside other learners to as part of their learning around Pathology. The programme team did not confirm the nature of these sessions and the professions that would be involved in them. This standard is designed to ensure that learners take part in meaningful IPE to ensure that they are prepared to work with other professionals and across professions for the benefit of service users and carers. Currently the education provider has not detailed how they will ensure all learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions. The education provider must detail the activities in the IPE sessions and confirm the other professions that they deem relevant that take part in these activities, to show learners are taking part in meaningful IPE.

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should formalise information around criminal conviction checks, health requirements and the assessment of prior learning process to be available for potential applicants.

Reason: In the documentary submission the visitors were able to see that there was a programme webpage which is available for potential applicants. The visitors were able to see standard information available for learners to make an informed choice. However, they did not see specific information around criminal conviction checks, health requirements and assessment of prior experience and learning (APEL) on this page. The visitors were able to confirm that there were the relevant procedures and process in place for these areas. The programme team confirmed that they would be updating the information for learners in line with this information. Therefore the visitors recommend formalising the information provided to learners and including the information around criminal conviction checks, health requirements and the APEL process.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Recommendation: The education provider should ensure that learners are appropriately informed about management and lines of responsibility within the programme.

Reason: In the SETs mapping document it was stated that a programme leader would be professionally responsible for the programme and that they were in the process of employing a new head of school. At the visit the visitors enquired about the progress being made in the new appointment and how they would be involved in the management of the programme. The information they provided and the named person holding professional responsibility for the programme differed from the documentation. The visitors considered the information provided in the meeting was sufficient to meet the standard, but they recommend that the education provider formalises this information to ensure that learners have a clear understanding of the lines of responsibility within the programme.

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should continue to develop and formalise further opportunities for service users and carers involvement in the programme.

Reason: In the documentary submission the education provider indicated that they were currently developing further opportunities for their Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) within the programme. They also detailed how this PPI were currently involved in the interview stage for the programme and in a workshop for one of the modules. Therefore the visitors considered the standard to be met at a threshold level. However, the visitors recommend that the education provider continues to develop opportunities for this group to be involved in the programme beyond the interview stage. This would allow them to contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of the programme and make sure that learners completing it are fit to practice.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Queen Margaret University
Name of programme(s)	BSc Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	13-14 May 2020
Case reference	CAS-14918-H0L7T2

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John Donaghy	Paramedic
Matthew Catterall	Paramedic
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Richard Bent	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Queen Margaret University
Alison Basford-Thomson	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Queen Margaret University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 70
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02141

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	As this was a virtual visit and, given the current situation around the Covid-19 pandemic, we decided that it was unnecessary to meet with this group
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	As above
Facilities and resources	No	As above
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 30 June 2020.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they have adequate effective paramedic-specific equipment, and other resources, appropriate to the delivery of the programme and the number of learners.

Reason: Through their documentary review and from discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that learners would benefit from an "extensive range of facilities to enhance learning and teaching." The visitors saw within the programme documentation, that clinical simulation suites with manikins and other laboratory facilities are currently used by nursing, physiotherapy, podiatry and radiography learners. The visitors understood that the paramedic learners and educators would have access to these resources. However, the visitors saw no evidence of the paramedic profession-specific equipment which they would expect to be used to deliver learning on this programme in the academic setting. In discussions with the programme

team, the visitors heard that paramedic equipment would be sourced from the ambulance service when required and that they would be able to order their own equipment through the education provider's procurement process. The visitors considered that they would need to see evidence of these profession-specific resources before they can determine their effectiveness and appropriateness to the delivery of the programme.

The visitors also noted that paramedic learners would be utilising learning and teaching spaces with learners from nursing and other Allied Health Professions (AHP) programmes. The visitors were unclear how the paramedic learners would have access to such physical space resources as this was not fully addressed in the supplied documentation or through visit discussions. The visitors therefore require further details regarding what profession-specific equipment the education provider intends to purchase before the start of the programme. The visitors also require information, such as a draft plan, that shows when and where paramedic learners would be using the available spaces. This way the visitors would be able to determine whether the resources needed to support learning and teaching are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme and the number of learners.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider is required to provide clarity about the range, duration and structure of practice-based learning, to demonstrate that it supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and standards of proficiency (SOPs).

Reason: From reviewing the documentation, the visitors were unable to see information regarding the structure, duration and range of placements for this programme. The visitors noted that the programme documentation showed the placement pattern experienced by a learner per year as:

- 10 weeks of placement within the Scottish Ambulance Service;
- 5-8 weeks of placement within Health and Social care settings; and
- Up to 15 days within the third sector, voluntary or charitable organisations.

However, the visitors noted that insufficient detail about what the learners are expected to learn in practice was lacking within the programme documentation.

In discussions with the senior team and the practice education providers, the visitors understood that the education provider intends to ensure that there are practice-based learning opportunities in a variety of settings. However, the senior team acknowledged that due to late funding for the programme, there have been slight delays which meant that details of the practice-based learning design were yet to be finalised. As such, the visitors were unable to determine when, where and for how long, the practice-based learning opportunities would take place, or how their approach will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and SOPs. As such, the visitors require further evidence of the structure, duration and range of practice-based learning for learners on this programme, and how it is appropriate to support the achievement of the learning outcomes and SOPs for paramedics.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective system in place for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Reason: From their review of the documentation, the visitors were unable to determine the system used to approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning for this programme. In discussions with the practice education providers and practice educators, the visitors heard that there is an established audit process which looks at the practice-based learning environment and learners' feedback to ensure the quality of practice-based learning. The visitors noted that the representatives from practice education providers were from Scottish NHS Ambulance. However, the visitors could not see within the documentation, evidence of the clear, thorough and effective system used by the education provider which demonstrates how the quality assurance systems mentioned are applied consistently to all practice-based learning environments. For instance, the visitors were unable to see how both Scottish NHS Ambulance and non-ambulance practice-based learning are approved, and quality assured in a thorough and effective manner. As such, the visitors require further clarity around the system used to approve and ensure the quality of all practice-based learning and how the education provider ensures it is thorough and effective, to determine whether that this standard is met.

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review their staff planning to ensure that there continues to be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met at threshold level; the staff currently in place for the programme are sufficient for all the necessary curriculum areas and to meet the teaching responsibilities of the programme for all 56 learners in their first year. Although the programme team informed the visitors that an additional 0.5 FTE paramedic lecturing post will be appointed in 2021, the visitors considered that there could be a risk to the effective future delivery of the programme should the recruitment plans fail whilst the learner numbers double in year 2. As such, they considered that there was a risk that the standard may no longer be met at that time. They therefore suggest that, the education provider review staffing requirements ahead of when additional learners come onto the programme in year 2 to ensure that their staff numbers continue to be appropriate to the requirements of the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	The Robert Gordon University
Name of programme(s)	BSc Paramedic Practice, Full time
Approval visit date	27 May 2020
Case reference	CAS-14956-K6R0G8

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as ‘our standards’). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Gordon Pollard	Paramedic
Kenneth Street	Paramedic
John Archibald	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Donald Cairns	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Robert Gordon University
Jo Tait	Internal panel member	Robert Gordon University
Kim Brodie	Student member	Robert Gordon University
Lucy Jack	Quality assurance	Robert Gordon University
Tom Davidson	External panel member	University of Cumbria
Martin Berry	External panel member	Oxford Brookes University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc Paramedic Practice
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
Proposed first intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 70
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02147

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	The programme is new and has not run.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the programme has not run, the panel met with learners from the education provider's nursing and midwifery programme.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Not Required	
Facilities and resources	Not Required	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 10 July 2020.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence that learners are able to raise concerns and to ensure action is taken in response to those concerns.

Reason: To meet this standard, the visitors were informed the education provider offers ongoing support for students to raise any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users through the escalating concern process. Learners are encouraged to raise any concerns through this process and processes in practice with their practice educators and academic tutors. However, in the meeting with learners, the visitors were informed there was no mechanism for learners to raise concerns while in practice out of hours. The visitors therefore could not be sure there was an effective mechanism for learners to raise concerns so they could be sure action could be taken in this situation. The visitors need to see further information to demonstrate there is an effective process for learners to raise concerns in the practice-based learning setting outside of the practice hours.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider needs to submit further evidence of how they ensure practice educators have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to be able to assess practice-based learning in relation to the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: The visitors were informed that to meet this standard, the education provider's audit process identifies practice educators with the required knowledge, skills and experience. The visitors were also informed that learner progression and achievement of practice learning experiences will be assessed by the practice educator. The Practice Assessment Document set out the learning outcomes for each module with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each learning outcome to be met. Although the visitors were able to see examples of the circumstances in which practice educators assess, they were not able to see details of what the practice educators were asked to assess. The visitors considered they had not seen evidence that the practice educators have the specific theoretical knowledge or guidance in order to carry out these assessments to measure academic-focussed subjects objectively. The visitors therefore were unsure whether practice educators are suitable and are able to support and develop learners in a safe and effective way. The visitors need to see further evidence of how the education provider ensures practice educators have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to be able to support safe and effective practice-based learning in relation to the learning outcomes of the programme.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to show the assessments in practice-based learning are able to deliver a valid and accurate picture of a learner's progression and achievement, and are effective at deciding whether a learner is fit to practice by the end of the programme.

Reason: To meet this standard, the visitors were informed the education provider has a process in place for managing assessments and marking guidelines. The visitors were made aware learners are assessed throughout the programme, both in practice-based learning and academic settings. The visitors were also informed that learner progression and achievement of practice learning experiences will be assessed by the practice educator. The visitors were informed guidance had been provided to support practice educators with this role. The Practice Assessment Document sets out the learning outcomes for each module with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each learning outcome to be met. Although the visitors were able to see examples of the circumstances in which practice educators assess, they were not able to see details of what the practice educators were asked to assess. The visitors considered they had not seen evidence that the practice educators have the specific theoretical knowledge or guidance in order to carry out these assessments to measure academic-focussed subjects objectively. The visitors therefore were unsure whether the assessments in practice-based learning can truly be an accurate picture of a learner's progression and achievement, and are effective at deciding whether a learner is fit to practice by the end of the programme.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all assessments in practice-based learning are appropriate in assessing the learning outcomes.

Reason: From the documentation received prior to the visit, the visitors were informed the education provider uses different strategies and technologies to support the needs of adult learners. The visitors were also informed that learner progression and achievement of practice learning experiences will be assessed by the practice educator. The visitors were informed guidance had been provided to support practice educators with this role. The Practice Assessment Document sets out the learning outcomes for each module with no explanation of what needs to be seen for each learning outcome to be met. Although the visitors were able to see examples of the circumstances in which practice educators assess, they were not able to see details of what the practice educators were asked to assess. The visitors were also provided with information about the criteria that practice educators would use to make these judgements. However, the visitors were unclear how the education provider supports and enables practice educators to make judgements about learner competence based on these criteria. The visitors also considered they had not seen evidence that the practice educators have the specific theoretical knowledge or guidance in order to carry out these assessments to measure academic-focussed subjects objectively. The visitors considered that this approach could cause a conflict of opinion between the education provider and the practice educators, and could result in learners being marked as not competent in something that they have previously passed. They therefore require the education provider to show how they will ensure that all the assessment methods used on the programme are appropriate to measure the learning outcomes.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Stirling
Name of programme(s)	BSc Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	17-18 March 2020
Case reference	CAS-14942-X4P6S5

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Gemma Howlett	Paramedic
Gordon Pollard	Paramedic
Deirdre Keane	Lay
John Archibald	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Leigh Sparks	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Stirling
Alexander Griffiths	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Stirling

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 60
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02145

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	The programme has never run.

We also usually ask to meet the following groups at approval visits, although there may be some circumstances where meeting certain groups is not needed. In the table below, we have noted which groups we met, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	The programme has never run so we met with learners from BSc (Hons) and BSc Nursing (Mental Health), BSc (Hons) and BSc Nursing (Adult) programmes.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 29 April 2020.

4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs) are consistently taught and assessed throughout the entire programme and the learning outcomes.

Reason: To meet these SETs, the visitors were informed one of the programme's learning outcomes is to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries demonstrating integrity, sensitivity and respect. The visitors noted examples of where module learning outcomes ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the SCPEs. The visitors were able to see explicit reference to the SCPEs being taught and assessed in the learning outcomes for

modules 'Paramedic Practice 1' in year one and 'Paramedic Practice 4' in year two of the programme. The visitors considered the responsibility to teach and assess the SCPEs lay with the practice educators, who were undertaking this in the context of the Practice Assessment Document. The visitors considered therefore that the teaching and assessment of the SCPEs could be subjective and different for each learner.

During the meeting with the programme team, the visitors were informed in year three the SCPEs were embedded in paramedic modules. However, the visitors were not able to see clear references to the SCPEs in the learning outcomes, nor in details of the assessments on the programme in year three, and considered the SCPEs were not fully and clearly embedded throughout the programme.

The visitors therefore require further evidence which shows the learning outcomes being explicitly linked to the SCPEs across modules on the programme and how assessment of the expectations of professional behaviour, including the SCPEs, are carried out within the curriculum and modules within the university assessments throughout the programme as well as in practice-based learning.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate they have a process in place for obtaining explicit and appropriate consent from service users where appropriate.

Reason: From the documents provided prior to the visit, the visitors were informed learners have to give consent in situations where they take part as service users in practical and clinical teaching and that there is a student consent form which needs to be completed by learners. The visitors were made aware the Practice Assessment Document (PAD) stated that learners need to always seek consent from service users at all times and must respect the rights of a service user to decline their participation in care, or to decline care. In the meeting with service users and carers, the visitors were informed service users would give verbal consent when interacting with learners in practical sessions and teaching. However, the visitors did not see a way of formally documenting consent from service users and so were therefore unsure whether there was a formal process for obtaining appropriate and explicit consent from service users when interacting with learners in practical sessions and teaching. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate they have an effective and up-to-date process in place for obtaining formal consent from service users on the programme where appropriate.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must ensure learners have the appropriate time in practice-based learning to support the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme, and the SOPs.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit, the visitors were informed about the periods of practice-based learning learners have to undertake. The visitors were informed from the Practice Assessment Document (PAD) that learners will complete 20 weeks of practice-based learning in year three of the programme. The visitors could also see from further information provided by the education provider that

learners would be required to complete 832 hours of practice-based learning in year three. They also noted that 20 weeks of practice-based learning at 35 hours per week would give less than the required amount, unless learners were required to undertake overtime. The visitors considered learners would not be able to complete the required practice-based learning in the timeframe given to do so and were unclear how practice-based learning would allow learners to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme and the SOPs. The visitors therefore require the education provider to ensure learners have the appropriate time to make it feasible to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme and the SOPs by either reducing the total number of hours so it equals 20 weeks, or increase the number of weeks so learners can meet the required number of hours and ensuring the references to the duration of practice-based learning in the documentation are correct.

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Recommendation: The education provide should consider whether the information they give learners and educators contains correct references to the programme.

Reason: From the documentation provided prior to the visit and following discussions at the visit, the visitors considered the programme resources to be readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme. However, the visitors noted that there were documents which referred to nursing, for example 'UoS Example of Shortlisting Grid'. The visitors considered these references could be misleading to those involved with a paramedic programme. As such, the visitors recommend that the education provider reviews the programme documentation to ensure it contains appropriate information in regards to the programme.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing the documentation to ensure it is clear that the programme leads to eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC.

Reason: The visitors were made aware from the programme handbook that learners have to successfully complete all modules on the BSc Paramedic programme, which would result in them accruing 360 credits in order to be eligible for the award of BSc Paramedic Science from the University of Stirling. The visitors were also informed any shortfall in credits will mean learners cannot be awarded with a degree or other award with the title paramedic in it. The visitors considered it was clear about which programme leads to eligibility to apply for registration. However, the visitors were made aware of a reference to the programme in the programme specification and module

descriptors document which said the programme 'ensure[s] you are *eligible for registration* [emphasis added] with the Health & Care Professions Council as a paramedic'. As such, the visitors recommend the education provider reviews references to the programme giving learners the eligibility for registration.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 02 July 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	St Mary's University, Twickenham
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time
Approval visit date	29 April 2020
Case reference	CAS-15817-Q8Z3T6

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Anthony Power	Physiotherapist
Jo Jackson	Physiotherapist
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Iain Cross	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	St Mary's University, Twickenham
Mandhir Gill	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	St Mary's University, Twickenham
Nina Paterson	Professional body representative	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)
Heather Stewart	Professional body representative	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 40
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02194

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	No	As this was a virtual visit and, given the current situation around the Covid-19 pandemic, we decided that it was unnecessary to meet with this group
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	No	As above
Facilities and resources	No	As above
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	No	Practice educators were unable to attend this visit as they were needed as frontline workers in the current Covid-19 pandemic. Questions were sent to representatives after the visit.
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 08 July 2020.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that appropriate information about the programme is provided to potential applicants, both within the programme documentation and on the education provider's website, to allow them to make an informed decision about taking up a place on the programme.

Reason: The visitors noted from the programme documentation and, discussions with the programme team, that information about what was required of applicants before

they could take up a place on the programme was not clearly contained in the information provided to applicants. This includes information such as:

- their requirement around the enhanced criminal conviction check;
- their requirement around the occupational health check; and
- the potential cost to learners.

At the visit, the programme team told the visitors that their current process involves sending applicants information about the cost, such as costs of criminal conviction and occupational health checks and the other areas listed above, upon request. They also stated that potential applicants would have the opportunity to ask members of staff questions one-on-one on open days. However, the programme team agreed that neither the documentation nor the website had been fully updated to provide the necessary information that would assist potential applicants in their decision making to take up an offer of a place on the programme. As such, the visitors were unclear about how potential applicants would obtain the information they require to decide on taking up a place on the programme. The visitors considered that the information should be readily available to applicants before they apply and without them having to request it. The visitors therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure applicants are aware of the requirements for admission to the programme. This includes information on criminal conviction and health checks and associated costs, as well as other costs associated with the programme. The visitors would expect to see this information both within the programme documentation and on the education provider's website.

2.4 The admissions process must assess the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks.

2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the admissions process assesses the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks and ensures they are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

Reason: From the information provided in the documentation and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were clear that all learners must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as part of the admissions process to the programme. The visitors also saw in the documentation, particularly within the programme specification, information on health requirements that applicants must comply with to gain entry to the programme. However, the visitors noted that there was minimal information available on the website regarding DBS checks and health requirements. At the visit, the programme team told the visitors that the website had not yet been updated to provide details of how they will assess applicants' suitability, including criminal record checks and information on health requirements.

As the programme specification is not made available to applicants prior to applying, the visitors could not determine how applicants would know the health requirements and the process they need to engage in to determine whether they comply with these, prior

to applying. The visitors also could not ascertain how applicants will access information regarding DBS checks before applying onto the programme. For instance, they were unable to determine how or whether the practice based learning providers are involved in the decision-making process and who makes the final decision about accepting an applicant onto the programme should a health or DBS issue arise. The visitors noted that such information was not provided within the documentation or on the education provider's website. As such, the visitors require clear and specific information about the process for DBS checks at the point of admission as well as information on health requirements that applicants will need to comply with before they can be admitted onto the programme, and how they ensure applicants are aware of those requirements.

3.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate they have an effective process in place to ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified, experienced and from the relevant part of the HCPC Register, unless other arrangements are appropriate.

Reason: The visitors were referred to a list of the academic staff as well as their curriculum vitae (CVs) as evidence for this standard. The visitors noted that the individual appointed to have overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced in managing teams, as well as being on the relevant part of the HCPC Register.

However, they noted that there was no clear process in place to identify and secure a suitable person for this role if it becomes necessary to do so in the future. The senior team informed the visitors that, the current programme director was appointed because of his 'expertise' and that they are looking to appoint a deputy programme director to assist in the leadership of the programme. However, they did not provide any evidence that articulates the requirements for fulfilling this role, or the appointment process for the role.

As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider would ensure that any person hired for the role, would be appropriately qualified, experienced and unless other arrangements are appropriate, on the relevant part of the HCPC Register. The visitors therefore require further evidence that demonstrates the process in place to appoint an individual to the role. In this way, the visitors can determine whether the process is effective and subsequently determine whether this standard is met.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers.

Reason: In their mapping document, the education provider referred to the placement practice handbook, which provides a narrative of responsibilities of the education provider and practice education providers relating to collaboration for this programme. From this, the visitors were unable to determine evidence of when and how regular and

effective collaboration was being undertaken. From the programme team, the visitors received verbal reassurances that they collaborate with the different providers but they were unable to determine the nature or extent of this collaboration.

The visitors did not meet with practice educators at the visit, however, the visitors were able to send relevant questions to them following the visit, which they responded to. In their response, the majority of the practice educators informed the visitors that they do not have regular collaboration with the education provider. However, a third of those that responded said they have met with a member the programme team at least on one occasion. They also said they would be keen to set up and have regular meetings with the education provider to ensure they can best support learners. The visitors could see some level of commitment from the practice education providers to work in partnership with the education provider to support learners in practice-based learning, thereby ensuring effective delivery of the programme. However, they considered that the information received did not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate there is a partnership and ongoing relationship between the education provider and the practice education providers. The visitors could not be assured that there has been and/or, that there will, be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice education providers to ensure the ongoing quality and effectiveness of the programme. They therefore require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure regular and effective collaboration with practice education providers before they can determine whether this standard is met.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: From their review of the programme documentation, the visitors were unable to see a timetable of the practice-based learning schedule. The visitors noted that the placement handbook provided a “placement provision (sample)” and a “placement tracker”. However, there was no information to show any agreement or commitment that placement provision had been made.

At the visit, the programme team mentioned that they have secured some practice-based learning through the Placement Management Partnership (PMP) - a well-established system that manages practice-based learning for education providers in London, but they also made it clear that they anticipated sourcing many of the additional placements outside of the PMP. They explained that about 50% of practice-based learning would be provided by their in-house clinic and other local private clinics and hospitals. Although the team provided verbal reassurances that they would be able to secure the required practice-based learning capacity for all learners, prior to the commencement of the programme, there was no clear evidence provided to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

In their responses to the visitors’ questions, two of the practice educators stated that they have capacity for practice-based learning, highlighting the number of placements available. Others acknowledged that they have minimal placement opportunities or that they are unsure of what they can offer. Whilst the visitors could see a level of commitment from the practice educators to cooperate with the education provider in the

provision and supervision of practice-based learning, they considered that there was no evidence provided to demonstrate how the education provider will ensure availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

As such, the visitors could not determine that this standard was met and therefore request that the education provider demonstrates the effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will involve service users and carers in the delivery of the programme.

Reason: From the information provided in the documentary submission, the visitors noted that there were some form of service users and carers' involvement in the development of the programme. The visitors were provided with a survey from a stakeholder meeting held in February 2020 as evidence of how the education provider involves service users and carers in the programme. The visitors noted that the survey asked questions about the service users' thoughts on the programme. However, there was no explicit information provided anywhere within the documentation on how they would be involved in the programme. At the visit, the programme team informed the visitors that service users regularly take part in teaching and learning activities, as well as assessment. They also spoke about a suggestion for a café for the carers whilst their patients are with the learners. The visitors could see that that the education provider involved service users and carers in the development of the programme and is looking into different ways to involve them in the programme delivery. However, they could not see a formalised strategy of what their involvement would entail. The visitors were unable to determine:

- the process in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement;
- how their involvement takes/will take place;
- how their involvement is appropriate; and
- how their involvement will contribute to governing and continuously improving the programme.

The visitors therefore require the education provider to provide further evidence demonstrating how service users and carers will be involved in the delivery of the programme.

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure learners are aware of the process in place to support and enable them to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users and ensure that the process is readily accessible and clear to learners.

Reason: On review of the documentation, the visitors noted that the education provider referenced the 'Safeguarding Policy' in their mapping document to evidence this standard. The visitors noted that the policy itself provides information on how learners would recognise situations where service users may be at risk and supported them in raising concerns. However, the visitors noted that there was no information about this in the placement handbook, to which learners may refer should they have any issue or

concern in regard to service user safety and wellbeing in practice-based learning environment. The visitors saw no information in the handbook to demonstrate how learners are made aware of what they need to do when they believe the safety or wellbeing of service users is at risk. At the visit, the programme team acknowledged that the documentation submitted did not provide clear guidance on how learners will raise concerns in practice, should they feel that the safety or wellbeing of service users is being compromised and they committed to update the handbook with the appropriate guidance.

As the relevant information is not included in the placement handbook, the visitors were unclear how learners would know how or where to find this information easily. Therefore, in order for the visitors to make a judgement about whether this standard is met, the education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that learners are made aware of the process in place to support and enable them to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the learning outcomes (LOs) of the modules ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists.

Reason: The documentation provided prior to the visit included module descriptors, together with a mapping document, giving information about how learners who successfully complete the programme will meet the SOPs. From reviewing the module descriptors, the visitors noted that they could not identify where some of the SOPs within the curriculum for physiotherapists were covered. In particular, the visitors noted that the coverage within the curriculum related to SOPs 13 and 14 was minimal or absent. The visitors noted that there was insufficient detail for them to be confident that the following SOPs are covered:

- 9.3 understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, and therapeutic interventions to meet their needs and goals
- 13.1 recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
- 13.4 understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction, relevant to their profession
- 13.5 understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
- 13.6 understand the following aspects of biological science:
 - normal human anatomy and physiology, including the dynamic relationships of human structure and function as related to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems
 - patterns of human growth and development across the lifespan
 - factors influencing individual variations in human ability and health status
 - how the application of physiotherapy can cause physiological and structural change
- 13.7 understand the following aspects of physical science:

- the principles and theories from physics, biomechanics, applied exercise science and ergonomics that can be applied to physiotherapy
- the means by which the physical sciences can inform the understanding and analysis of movement and function
- the principles and application of measurement techniques based on biomechanics or electrophysiology
- the application of anthropometric and ergonomic principles
- 13.8 understand the following aspects of clinical science:
 - pathological changes and related clinical features commonly encountered in physiotherapy practice
 - physiological, structural, behavioural and functional changes that can result from physiotherapy intervention and disease progression
 - the specific contribution that physiotherapy can potentially make to enhancing individuals' functional ability, together with the evidence base for this
 - the different concepts and approaches that inform the development of physiotherapy intervention
- 13.9 understand the following aspects of behavioural science:
 - psychological, social and cultural factors that influence an individual in health and illness, including their responses to the management of their health status and related physiotherapy interventions
 - how psychology, sociology and cultural diversity inform an understanding of health, illness and health care in the context of physiotherapy and the incorporation of this knowledge into physiotherapy practice
 - theories of communication relevant to effective interaction with service users, carers, colleagues, managers and other health and social care professionals
 - theories of team working
- 14.2 be able to deliver and evaluate physiotherapy programmes
- 14.13 recognise the need to discuss, and be able to explain the rationale for, the use of physiotherapy interventions
- 14.15 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, interventions, therapy, or other actions safely and effectively
- 14.16 be able to select, plan, implement and manage physiotherapy interventions aimed at the facilitation and restoration of movement and function
- 14.18 be able to select and apply safe and effective physiotherapy-specific practice skills including manual therapy, exercise and movement, electrotherapeutic modalities and kindred approaches

For example, the visitors noted:

- that in PHP4003 - Introduction to Management of Musculoskeletal and Neurological Conditions, electrotherapy is mentioned in the LOs (which relate to SOP 13.7) but not in the content
- that PHP4001 - Anatomy I and Neuromusculoskeletal Assessment – Upper Quadrant, intends to address learning about injuries, but it was difficult to understand how the proposed content linked to the learning outcomes (in particular LOs III, VI & VII) as these LOs did not relate to injuries.
- that there was no mention of dementia within the module content, which the visitors would expect to address SOPs 13.4, 13.6, 13.9 amongst other SOPs
- that they were unclear how SOP 9.3 will be delivered, given the lack of service users' involvement throughout the programme.

As the visitors could not be certain that the LOs will deliver all of the SOPs, they therefore require the education provider to submit further evidence, such as the revised module descriptors and mapping document, to clearly define the link between the learning outcomes associated with all aspects of the programme. The information provided must demonstrate how the learning outcomes will ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists.

4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapping, the programme specification and the programme handbook. They also discussed with the programme team how the programme was intended to reflect the expectations and guidance for physiotherapy learners. The visitors noted that the philosophy was articulated by the programme team but this was not reflected in the programme documentation. The visitors considered that the curriculum presented in the documentation adopts a medical view of health with little reflection of the wider communities with whom physiotherapists work with, particularly in relation to mental health, learning disabilities and older people.

Therefore, the visitors considered that the education provider would need to clearly articulate within the programme handbook, evidence of how the philosophy, core values, skill and knowledge base will be reflected in the curriculum.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Condition: The programme team must demonstrate how they will ensure that the curriculum will remain relevant to current practice.

Reason: From their review of the module descriptors and through discussions at the visit, the visitors noted that the programme has minimal inclusion of mental health and other areas of relevance to contemporary physiotherapy practice. For instance, the visitors noted that there was no mention of dementia, occupational health, primary care, health promotion, fitness for work or learning disabilities which are all required to work across the population. Although public health is mentioned frequently, it remains unclear to the visitors how this is reflected in learning as there was little or no mention of the specifics - for instance, dementia or learning disabilities – in any of the modules. During the visit, the programme team informed the visitors that they are starting to introduce non-traditional aspects of the programme such as women's health and mental health into the programme. However, the visitors considered that they would need to see how these are clearly articulated in the module descriptors before they can determine whether this standard is met. As such, the visitors require the education provider to submit evidence demonstrating how they will ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

4.5 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.

Condition: The education provider must further articulate the structure of theory and practice learning to ensure learners are prepared and competent for practice.

Reason: Through the documentary review and discussions with the programme team, the visitors learnt that the education provider intended to deliver teaching in the first year, using case studies and clinical procedures. This would provide learners with sufficient knowledge to attend practice-based learning in their second year. However, the programme team mentioned the possibility of moving some of the modules in order to ensure that learners have built up knowledge sufficient for them to go into practice-based learning in their second year. The visitors understood that moving the modules might allow learners to consolidate learning and be better prepared for practice-based learning, however, they were unclear how the integration would work as this had not yet been clearly articulated in the programme documentation. The visitors considered that they would need to see the revised structure that shows how theory and practice are combined. This, they said would assure them that theory and practice are linked appropriately in a way that is relevant and meaningful to learners and that they will take place at appropriate times during the programme to make sure it is effective. The education provider must therefore articulate the structure of theory and practice learning and how the programme is designed to support it and ensure learners are prepared and competent for practice.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence to demonstrate that the learning and teaching methods used, particularly as regards the proposed numbers of practical hours, are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: Through the documentary review, the visitors understood that the learners will undertake taught elements of the programme in their first year, while in the second and third year, there will be a combination of taught and clinical placements. The visitors also noted that the education provider intends to combine the use of online materials and resources with intensive teaching weeks onsite. The face-to-face contact time will maximise the learning of clinical skills and involve seminars and group workshops. However, at the visit, the visitors heard that learners would also undertake 20 practical hours per week in some of the practice modules. The visitors were unclear how learners would be able to complete all the content identified within the proposed number of practical hours to gain the practical skills required for them to achieve the learning outcomes. As such, the visitors could not determine how the education provider will ensure that the proposed hours within modules would allow effective delivery of the learning outcomes. They therefore require further evidence of how they will ensure their method of delivering such modules, including the number of practical hours, will support learners in achieving the learning outcomes.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must articulate their strategy for ensuring that learners are able to learn with, and from professionals and learners, in other relevant professions.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence submitted for this standard, which includes module descriptors across all levels of the programme. From the information provided, the visitors were unable to determine how learners will be able to learn with, and from professionals and learners in other relevant professions as there was no clear strategy of how inter-professional education (IPE) is incorporated into the programme.

In discussions with the programme team, the visitors heard that there will be opportunities for professionals such as nurses, social workers and speech and language therapists to come and talk to the learners before they go on to practice-based learning. The team also told the visitors that IPE is currently being delivered to learners on the MSc physiotherapy programme as dietetic staff deliver teaching on the nutrition aspect of the programme. However, they acknowledged that they have not considered IPE in a formal way but were constantly trying to incorporate it into their existing physiotherapy programme. The visitors were therefore unclear about how the education provider will ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from professionals and learners from other relevant professions. The visitors require the education provider to further articulate their strategy for inter-professional learning to ensure that learners will be able to learn with, and from professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how the structure, and range of practice-based learning will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and standards of proficiency for physiotherapists.

Reason: The visitors were able to review documentation relating to practice-based learning, including the placement handbook, programme specification and module descriptors. From their review, the visitors saw a timetable that showed learners will have weekly blocks of practice-based learning in their second and third year. However, there was no detailed information provided about the structure and range of practice-based learning or how it will support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the SOPs. At the visit, the visitors heard that some practice-based learning would take place outside of the Placement Management Partnership (PMP). The programme team confirmed to the visitors that they anticipate up to 50% of practice-based learning would be provided through their in-house clinic and other local private clinics and hospitals. However, the visitors noted that there was no information provided about structure, and range of this practice-based learning either or how they are deemed to be appropriate to the design and content of the programme and the learning outcomes. The team also confirmed that details of the range of practice-based learning are yet to be finalised. As the visitors did not see details of what learners will be learning whilst on placement, they were unable to determine how the structure, and range of practice-based both within and outside of the PMP would support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the SOPs. They therefore request that the education provider provide further evidence showing the structure and range of practice-based learning in both PMP and non-PMP sites and how it supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and SOPs for physiotherapists. In this way, the visitors can determine whether this standard is met.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that they have a thorough and effective system in place for ensuring the quality of the non-PMP practice-based learning and for ensuring the environment is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Reason: From their review of the documentation and from discussions at the visit, the visitors understood that there is an audit process in place for ensuring quality in practice-based learning provided through the PMP and that there were policies in place to ensure that the environment is safe and supportive for both learners and service users. However, at the visit, it was clear that the programme team anticipated sourcing additional practice-based learning outside of the PMP. Through correspondence received from practice educators following the visit, the visitors were made aware that the quality of practice-based learning within existing the PMP settings was ensured through feedback from learners and the education provider. As such, the visitors were satisfied that there is a thorough and effective system in place for ensuring the quality of practice-based learning provided through PMP settings. The visitors however noted that there was lack of clarity around how the audit system will work in the non-PMP practice-based learning sites. The visitors were unclear if the education provider will run a separate system to monitor the quality and ensure the safety and supportiveness of the environment of practice-based learning in these types of settings. As the education provider has the overall responsibility for overseeing all practice-based learning for the programme, the visitors therefore request that the education provider submit further evidence showing that they have a thorough and effective system in place for approving and monitoring non-PMP practice-based learning. The evidence provided must also demonstrate their mechanism for ensuring that non-PMP practice-based learning environment would also be safe and supportive for all learners and service users.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in all practice-based learning settings.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence provided for this standard, including the practice placement handbook. The visitors noted that there was minimal information provided about additional practice-based learning capacity and associated staff needed in all practice-based learning setting. Although a small number of the practice educators, in their response to the visitors' questions following the visit, highlighted the numbers of practice educators available to deliver practice-based learning, the visitors considered that the responses appeared to be from practice-based learning provided through the PMP only. The visitors saw no information about the number of staff in non-PMP settings and as such, they could not base their judgement on the PMP numbers alone. They considered that they would need to see further evidence showing how the education provider will ensure there is sufficient support for all learners on the

programme before they can determine whether the standard is met. Therefore, the education provider must submit further evidence that demonstrates how they will ensure the programme is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified and experienced staff in all practice-based learning settings.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must provide further evidence demonstrating how they ensure practice educators outside of the PMP, undertake regular training required to support learning and for the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Reason: From their documentary review, discussions at the visit and through correspondence received from practice educators, the visitors were satisfied that the education provider would provide appropriate support and training to practice educators within the PMP. However, for practice educators sourced outside of the PMP, the visitors were unclear if the same applied to them, as this was not made clear within the documentation nor through discussions at the visit. At the visit, the visitors learnt that the programme team holds training and support days to encourage continuing professional development (CPD) between practice educators and the teaching staff.

Also, through correspondence received from practice educators within the PMP setting, the visitors were informed that the education provider regularly offers one-day training course to this set of practice educators. The practice educators also told the visitors that they regularly receive support from the education provider and that there is close communication between themselves and the education provider. Whilst the visitors could see that the education provider provides regular training to practice educators within the PMP arrangements, it is unclear how this will be provided for practice educators sourced outside of the PMP. As such, the visitors require the education provider to demonstrate how they will ensure that practice educators sourced outside of the PMP, also undertake the appropriate and regular training they need to be able to support learning and for the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate the following:

- how the assessment strategy and design would ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the SOPs for physiotherapists

- how the assessments provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement; and
- how they ensure the assessment methods employed are appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes.

Reason: The visitors reviewed the evidence for these standards, including the module descriptors and the programme specification. The visitors noted that the evidence provided showed how the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) and learning outcomes have been mapped to the relevant modules. Given the reasoning identified for SET 4.1 above, the visitors were unable to determine how the education provider would ensure that the assessments for those LOs listed would provide objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement. For similar reasons, they were unable to identify where some of the SOPs within the curriculum for physiotherapists were covered. The SOPs which the visitors were unable to identify in sufficient detail were:

- 9.3 understand the need to engage service users and carers in planning and evaluating diagnostics, and therapeutic interventions to meet their needs and goals
- 13.1 recognise the role of other professions in health and social care
- 13.4 understand the structure and function of the human body, together with knowledge of health, disease, disorder and dysfunction, relevant to their profession
- 13.5 understand the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
- 13.6 understand the following aspects of biological science:
 - normal human anatomy and physiology, including the dynamic relationships of human structure and function as related to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems
 - patterns of human growth and development across the lifespan
 - factors influencing individual variations in human ability and health status
 - how the application of physiotherapy can cause physiological and structural change
- 13.7 understand the following aspects of physical science:
 - the principles and theories from physics, biomechanics, applied exercise science and ergonomics that can be applied to physiotherapy
 - the means by which the physical sciences can inform the understanding and analysis of movement and function
 - the principles and application of measurement techniques based on biomechanics or electrophysiology
 - the application of anthropometric and ergonomic principles
- 13.8 understand the following aspects of clinical science:
 - pathological changes and related clinical features commonly encountered in physiotherapy practice
 - physiological, structural, behavioural and functional changes that can result from physiotherapy intervention and disease progression
 - the specific contribution that physiotherapy can potentially make to enhancing individuals' functional ability, together with the evidence base for this

- the different concepts and approaches that inform the development of physiotherapy intervention
- 13.9 understand the following aspects of behavioural science:
 - psychological, social and cultural factors that influence an individual in health and illness, including their responses to the management of their health status and related physiotherapy interventions
 - how psychology, sociology and cultural diversity inform an understanding of health, illness and health care in the context of physiotherapy and the incorporation of this knowledge into physiotherapy practice
 - theories of communication relevant to effective interaction with service users, carers, colleagues, managers and other health and social care professionals
 - theories of team working
- 14.2 be able to deliver and evaluate physiotherapy programmes
- 14.13 recognise the need to discuss, and be able to explain the rationale for, the use of physiotherapy interventions
- 14.15 be able to conduct appropriate diagnostic or monitoring procedures, interventions, therapy, or other actions safely and effectively
- 14.16 be able to select, plan, implement and manage physiotherapy interventions aimed at the facilitation and restoration of movement and function
- 14.18 be able to select and apply safe and effective physiotherapy-specific practice skills including manual therapy, exercise and movement, electrotherapeutic modalities and kindred approaches.

For example in PH4005, the visitors noted that there were nine learning outcomes all of which appear to be broad. The visitors noted that the type of assessment methods identified made it difficult to envisage how the three learning outcomes listed below would be measured as the education provider did not provide information on the actual tasks that the assessment consists of:

- LO4: Actively reflect on and lead change within their practice as needed to take account of new developments
- LO5: Demonstrate critical awareness of the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively in accordance to HCPC and CSP standards and keep up to date.
- LO9: Understand the concept of confidentiality and the principles of information governance within health and social care.

Relating to this example:

- The visitors saw that the written task (application of theory to a case study) is designed to develop learners' ability to produce an academic piece of work in a critical and succinct manner that is required at entry BSc level while also demonstrating practical application of theoretical content. However, they were unable to determine exactly what the written task was.
- The visitors noted that the poster and oral presentation will be a mini-snapshot of the written portfolio at mid-way to give the learners an opportunity for practice of professional presentation skills as well as progression of their final portfolio. Learners will be expected to answer questions on their poster to demonstrate understanding of professional practice in healthcare based on clinical application of theory. The visitors were unclear what learners would be asked to demonstrate on their poster as this information was not provided.

The above detail is provided to illustrate the shortfall in the education provider's evidence in relation to these standards. In addition to PH4005, the visitors also identified lack of clarity around the following modules:

- PHP4001, PH4003 and PH4004 – minimal practical skills teaching hours with ambitious learning outcomes and it was difficult to see how all LOs will be assessed by the proposed assessments;
- PHP4002 – unclear how the achievement of LOs V, VII and VIII be measured by the specified assessments;
- PHP4005 – the visitors considered that there was not enough detail about the assessments to see how LOs IV, V and IX are measured.
- PHP4006 – there were minimal practical skills teaching hours with ambitious learning outcomes and it was difficult to see how all LOs will be assessed by the proposed assessments. In particular LOs V & VI;
- PHP5001 – unclear how assessment of LOs IV, V and VI will be achieved.
- PHP5006 – minimal practical skills teaching hours with ambitious learning outcomes and it was difficult to see how LOs III,IV and V will be assessed by the proposed assessments;
- PHP6001 – minimal practical skills teaching hours with ambitious learning outcomes and it was difficult to see how all LOs V,VI and VII will be assessed by the proposed assessments;
- PHP6002 – minimal practical skills teaching hours with ambitious learning outcomes and it was difficult to see how LOs III, IV, V and VI will be assessed.

The visitors considered that in order for them to have a clear understanding of how the assessments measure the learning outcomes and that they are fair and reliably measure learners' progression and achievement, the education provider needs to show what the assessment tasks actually consist of. In this way, the visitors would be able to see how the assessments will actually work.

The visitors therefore require additional evidence to demonstrate how:

- the education provider ensures the assessments are objective, fair and reliably measure learners' progression and achievement; and
- the assessment methods used are appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes and the SOPs which will in turn determine whether the SOPs for physiotherapists are met.

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Recommendation: The education provider should keep under review their staff planning as it relates to their areas of specialist knowledge and expertise to ensure that there continues to be educators with a variety of specialisms, (particularly within areas of relevance to contemporary physiotherapy practice), to deliver the programme.

Reason: The visitors were satisfied that this standard was met at threshold, as the staff currently in place for the programme demonstrated to the visitors how they will cover the core aspects of the curriculum. However, the visitors noted that when it comes to other areas of contemporary physiotherapy practice, such as mental health, occupational health, primary care, health promotion, fitness for work and learning disabilities, the programme did not appear to have staff in place, who could cover these areas. Although the education provider stated that they would be inviting visiting lecturers who are specialists in their fields, to deliver specialist areas, the visitors considered that as the learner numbers grow, the education provider will need more specialist staff to ensure that there is sufficient resource to cover the demand. The visitors therefore recommend that as the number of learners increase in years 2 and 3, the education provider should take the opportunity to broaden their staff base to continue to be able to deliver some of the specialist areas of the programme.

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University of Sunderland
Name of programme(s)	Non-medical prescribing (Independent and Supplementary prescribing V300), Part time
Approval visit date	22 April 2020
Case reference	CAS-15764-W2W0B9

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards for prescribing (for education providers) (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Gemma Quinn	Independent prescriber
David Packwood	Practitioner psychologist - Counselling psychologist
Temilolu Odunaike	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

John Unsworth	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sunderland
Margaret Young	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	University of Sunderland
Susan Alexander (Observer)	Internal quality coordinator	University of Sunderland

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	Non-medical prescribing (Independent and Supplementary prescribing V300)
Mode of study	PT (Part time)
Entitlement	Independent prescribing
First intake	01 July 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02185

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Not Required	As the visit was virtual and the visitors were able to determine through the programme documentation, that many of the standards had been met, they decided it was unnecessary to meet with this group.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Not Required	As the visit was virtual and the visitors were able to determine through the programme documentation, that many of the standards had been met, they decided it was unnecessary to meet with this group.
Facilities and resources	Not Required	As the visit was virtual and the visitors were able to determine through the programme documentation, that many of the standards had been met, they decided it was unnecessary to meet with this group.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 03 June 2020.

D.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they ensure practice educators undertake regular training appropriate to the programme.

Reason: As part of their evidence for this standard, the education provider referred the visitors to the Facilitating Learning and Assessment in Practice section of their website. The visitors noted there is a PQC303 mentor training course for practice educators, however, there was no information to determine whether this was a mandatory programme for practice educators to attend, in order to be able to take on learners in practice-based learning. The visitors also could not determine whether regular refresher training and support was provided to practice educators.

At the visit, the practice educators informed the visitors that there is a “yellow book” they are required to read to prepare them for their role and that they have direct access to the programme leader if they had any questions. The visitors noted that there was no system in place to monitor whether the practice educators have read this book. The programme team also confirmed that there is currently no ongoing training available to practice educators but the programme leader is their main point of contact for any support needed.

From this information, the visitors could not determine how the education provider prepares practice educators in order for them to be able to support learning and assess learners effectively. Therefore, the visitors require the education provider to clearly articulate how they will ensure practice educators undertake regular training appropriate to the programme.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 01 June 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	Swansea University
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science, Full time
Approval visit date	25 March 2020
Case reference	CAS-15342-Q4C7Q8

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Executive Summary

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.

The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Frances Ashworth	Lay
Glyn Harding	Paramedic
Timothy Hayes	Paramedic
Niall Gooch	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the virtual approval visit

There were other groups involved with the approval process as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Michelle Lee	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	Swansea University
Nicola Rees	Secretary (supplied by the education provider)	Swansea University

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Paramedic
Proposed first intake	07 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 55
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02174

We undertook this assessment of a new programme proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involved consideration of documentary evidence and a virtual approval visit, to consider whether the programme meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes
Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Yes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider decided to move this event to a virtual (or remote) approval visit. In the table below, we have noted the meeting held, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Not Required	We determined that a learners' meeting was not necessary. Before the visit, based on their documentary review, the HCPC panel determined that they were satisfied with the learner involvement, and that other questions which would normally be

		discussed with learners could be raised with the programme team or practice educators.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Not Required	We determined that a service users and carers meeting was not necessary. Before the visit, based on their documentary review, the HCPC panel determined that they were satisfied with the service user and carer involvement, and that other questions which would normally be discussed with service users and carers could be raised with the programme team or practice educators.
Facilities and resources	Not Required	A virtual tour of facilities and discussion of available resources took place in the programme team meeting.
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the virtual approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 22 May 2020.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that Level 6 practice educators will have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise learners appropriately at that stage of the programme.

Reason: From the documentation and from discussions at the visit, the visitors were aware that the education provider was planning to ensure that all practice educators supporting the programme would have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to supervise the learners at all stages of the programme. They were satisfied that the plans in place for preparing practice educators for supervision at Levels 4 and 5 were

appropriate. However, the evidence for how the education provider would ensure the suitability of practice educators at Level 6 was not yet available, and so the visitors could not be sure the standard was met. They understood that as it was a new programme, due to start in September 2020, practice educators would not be needed to support students at Level 6 until 2022, but they considered that they needed to understand the plans that the education provider has in place to prepare for this. They therefore require further evidence of how the education provider will ensure that Level 6 learners can be appropriately supervised in placement, by staff with relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Recommendation: The education provider should consider reviewing at which stage of the admissions process they supply information about additional costs associated with the programme.

Reason: The visitors were aware that there were potentially some significant additional costs for learners, mainly because placements might be anywhere in Wales, even though the programme was based in South Wales. Information about these costs was provided at an interview and at Open Days for interested potential learners. The visitors considered that the standard was met at threshold, because applicants would have full information before they made a choice about to take up an offer. However, they noted that in materials provided to potential applicants before the interview stage, these extra costs were not laid out. There was therefore a risk that in future some applicants might not have appropriate information with which to make an informed choice. The visitors therefore suggested that it might be appropriate for the education provider to review whether they were supplying information at the most useful point.

Section 5: Visitors' recommendation

Considering the education provider's response to the conditions set out in section 4, the visitors are satisfied that the conditions are met and recommend that the programme(s) are approved.

This report, including the recommendation of the visitors, will be considered at the 02 July 2020 meeting of the ETC. Following this meeting, this report should be read alongside the ETC's decision notice, which are available [on our website](#).

HCPC approval process report

Education provider	University College Birmingham
Name of programme(s)	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, Full time BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship), Work based learning
Approval visit date	04 March 2020
Case reference	CAS-14931-S3D9N3

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Executive Summary

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The following is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that programme(s) detailed in this report meet our standards of education and training (referred to through this report as 'our standards'). The report details the process itself, the evidence considered, and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

Section 1: Our regulatory approach

Our standards

We approve programmes that meet our education standards, which ensure individuals that complete the programmes meet proficiency standards. The proficiency standards 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.

Programmes are normally [approved on an open-ended basis](#), subject to satisfactory engagement with our monitoring processes. Programmes we have approved are listed [on our website](#).

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 undertake assessment of evidence presented through our processes. The visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

HCPC panel

We always appoint at least one partner visitor from the profession (inclusive of modality and / or entitlement, where applicable) with which the assessment is concerned. We also ensure that visitors are supported in their assessment by a member of the HCPC executive team. Details of the HCPC panel for this assessment are as follows:

Roseann Connolly	Lay
Kathryn Campbell	Physiotherapist
Valerie Maehle	Physiotherapist
Patrick Armsby	HCPC executive

Other groups involved in the approval visit

There were other groups in attendance at the approval visit as follows. Although we engage in collaborative scrutiny of programmes, we come to our decisions independently.

Alex Lofthouse	Independent chair (supplied by the education provider)	University College Birmingham – Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Helen Sharma	Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) panel member	CSP – Professional Body
Gill Rawlinson	CSP panel member	CSP – Professional Body
Helen Frank	CSP panel member	CSP – Professional Body

Section 2: Programme details

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy
Mode of study	FT (Full time)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 20
Intakes per year	1
Assessment reference	APP02142

Programme name	BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)
Mode of study	WBL (Work based learning)
Profession	Physiotherapist
Proposed First intake	01 September 2020
Maximum learner cohort	Up to 15
Intakes per year	2
Assessment reference	APP02143

We undertook this assessment of two new programmes proposed by the education provider via the approval process. This involves consideration of documentary evidence and an onsite approval visit, to consider whether the programmes meet our standards for the first time.

Section 3: Requirements to commence assessment

In order for us to progress with approval and monitoring assessments, we ask for certain evidence and information from education providers. The following is a list of evidence that we asked for through this process, and whether that evidence was provided. Education providers are also given the opportunity to include any further supporting evidence as part of their submission. Without a sufficient level of evidence, we need to consider whether we can proceed with the assessment. In this case, we decided that we were able to undertake our assessment with the evidence provided.

Type of evidence	Submitted	Comments
Completed education standards mapping document	Yes	
Information about the programme, including relevant policies and procedures, and contractual agreements	Yes	
Descriptions of how the programme delivers and assesses learning	Yes	
Proficiency standards mapping	Yes	
Information provided to applicants and learners	Yes	
Information for those involved with practice-based learning	Yes	

Information that shows how staff resources are sufficient for the delivery of the programme	Yes	
Internal quality monitoring documentation	Not Required	Only requested if the programme (or a previous version) is currently running

We also usually ask to meet the following groups at approval visits, although there may be some circumstances where meeting certain groups is not needed. In the table below, we have noted which groups we met, along with reasons for not meeting certain groups (where applicable):

Group	Met	Comments
Learners	Yes	As the programme has not run yet, the panel met learners from Sports Fitness, Sports Therapy, Health and Social Care and Youth Community Studies.
Service users and carers (and / or their representatives)	Yes	
Facilities and resources	Yes	
Senior staff	Yes	
Practice educators	Yes	
Programme team	Yes	

Section 4: Outcome from first review

Recommendation of the visitors

In considering the evidence provided by the education provider as part of the initial submission and at the approval visit, the visitors' recommend that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards are met at this time, but that the programme(s) should be approved subject to the conditions noted below being met.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is insufficient evidence that standards are met. The visitors were satisfied that a number of the standards are met at this stage. However, the visitors were not satisfied that there is evidence that demonstrates that the following standards are met, for the reasons detailed below.

We expect education providers to review the issues identified in this report, decide on any changes that they wish to make to programmes, and then provide any further evidence to demonstrate how they meet the conditions. We set a deadline for responding to the conditions of 15 May 2020.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that applicants have all the information they require about the costs and application process for each programme.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit, the education provider submitted links to the website for potential applicants, the open day presentation and an overview of the admissions process. The visitors were unable to see information about the relative additional costs for each programme from this information. In discussions around admissions in the programme team meeting the visitors were told information about the admission process that was different to the information provided prior to the visit. Firstly, in the open day presentation it suggests that applicants for both programmes apply directly to the university. However, the visitors were told in the programme team meeting that this is not the case. Secondly, the visitors were told of a group task for applicants as part of the invitation for interview. This was not included in the information provided prior to the visit. The education provider also indicated that there would be potential for additional costs to be accrued for learners when on the programmes. Therefore, information available for applicants is currently inaccurate and does not provide the correct information for them to make an informed decision about whether to take up a position on the programmes. The education provider must provide finalised, accurate information about the admissions process so that potential applicants can make an informed decision about whether to take up a place on either programme. The education provider must also ensure that the information is clear and explicit in stating the unique admissions processes for each of the programmes.

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that applicants are aware of how they will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason: In their documentary submission the education provider submitted an overview of the entry criteria and the process for admission onto the programmes. The visitors noted in the entry criteria the required International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level of 6.5. The visitors noted that this is below the required level of 7.0, with no element below 6.5, for entry onto the HCPC Register, as required by SOP 8.2. The visitors also noted that learners must meet SOP 8.2 on completion of the programme. In the programme team meeting, the education provider indicated that academic development through the programmes would ensure that learners would reach the appropriate level of English. However, the visitors considered this approach to be informal and without measuring learner's progress they could not be certain that learners would leave the programme meeting the required standard. The visitors could also not see how applicants were made aware that they must meet the required level by the completion of the programme. The education provider must show how applicants, with English proficiency lower than required for registration with the HCPC, will be informed of the requirements for completion of the programme. They must also show how applicants are informed of how the education provider will support them to meet this SOP by the end of the programme.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure the regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers for the purpose of improving and developing the programmes

Reason: To evidence this standard, the education provider stated in the documentation that a meeting with practice partners will happen three times a year and the practice educators will be invited to practice education training every year. The education provider also indicated that lecturers will visit practice partners when learners are undertaking them. The visitors were able to see from the service level agreement (SLA) draft how the collaboration would work on an operational logistical level. However, this standard is intended to ensure that the partnership is working to influence the way the programme as a whole is designed and delivered. Although some information was provided which indicated the groups involved would regularly meet, visitors were not provided with information about the nature of these meetings, or particular information about how else the education provider and practice education providers would work collaboratively for the purposes on improving and developing the programme on an ongoing basis. This means that they could not confirm how the practice education providers would effectively contribute to the ongoing improvement and development of the programmes, and require further evidence to show that the standard is met.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate that there is an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Reason: To evidence this standard prior to the visit the education provider submitted minutes from meetings with providers, letters of availability from two providers and the visitors were able to see a draft service level agreement. From these documents the visitors noted that the education provider has secured placement opportunities with the relevant practice education providers and were able to see a discussion around relevant subject areas for practice-based learning. However, the visitors were unable to see formal confirmation of the capacity of appropriately quality assured and audited practice-based learning. The visitors questioned the progress of finalising the capacity of practice-based learning with the providers and the education provider stated that they are progressing but have not finalised the capacity. The visitors considered that the relationships with the partner organisations are apparent, but currently the confirmation of capacity for practice-based learning for all learners is informal and not finalised. The education provider must show that there is a formal commitment from partner organisations to ensure the availability and capacity of appropriate practice-based learning for all learners on both programmes.

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education provider must show there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Reason: Following the approval visit the education provider has indicated change to the teaching staff by email. The original member of the teaching staff will no longer be a part of the teaching team. They have also indicated the education provider has recruited four new physiotherapists to take on the teaching responsibilities. Prior to the visit the education provider indicated they intend to have two full time staff or part equivalent to manage both the apprenticeship and direct entry programme. However, the visitors were only able to see the curriculum vitae (CV) of one physiotherapy member of staff (the member we have now been told is leaving). The visitors were unable to see the qualifications or experience of other members of staff or how the education provider has ensured the new members of staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. As the visitors were not given details around the new members of the teaching staff they could not judge there were an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. Considering this, and as the education provider has changed their approach, the education provider will need to clarify how they will ensure there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver an effective programme. They must clarify the roles of the new members of staff and how they equate to full time members of staff, as well as highlighting how they are appropriately qualified and experienced to deliver the programmes effectively. This relates to the theoretical delivery of the programme and management of the programme. The education provider must show how there will be appropriate staffing in place to highlight how they are committing appropriate resources to deliver the programme, and ensure the delivery of the programme is sustainable for the future.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Condition: The education provider must show that subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Reason: Following the approval visit the education provider has indicated change to the teaching staff by email. The original physiotherapy member of the teaching staff will no longer be a part of the teaching team. They have also indicated the education provider has recruited four new physiotherapists to take on the teaching responsibilities. Prior to the visit the education provider indicated they intend to have two full time staff or part equivalent to manage both the apprenticeship and direct entry programme. However, the visitors were only able to see the curriculum vitae (CV) of one physiotherapy member of staff (the member we have now been told is leaving). The visitors were unable to see the qualifications or experience of these members of staff or how the education provider has ensured the new members of staff had relevant specialist knowledge or expertise. As the visitors were not given details around the new members of the teaching staff they could not judge that subject areas would be delivered by educators with relevant knowledge and expertise. As the education provider has not stated which educators are delivering the programme, the visitors are not able to judge this standard is met. The education provider has changed their approach they will need

to clarify how they will ensure the subject areas are being delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

3.11 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Condition: The education provider must show how staff are given sufficient time to allow them to undertake continuing professional and academic development activities, appropriate to their role in the programme.

Reason: Prior to the visit the education provider submitted an overview of the institutional policies in regards to staff development. At the visit the visitors acknowledged that the education provider had policies and procedures in place for staff to continue their professional and academic development. However, they could not see how time was resourced for staff to carry out the relevant development activities. The senior team confirmed that staff would be granted the time but did not detail the mechanism for this alongside the effective running of both programmes. The visitors also noted that the programme structures will mean that learners are either involved in practice-based learning or theoretical teaching during all months of the year. The education provider must show how they will ensure the appropriate time is granted for staff to complete their professional and academic development, appropriate to their role in the programme, alongside the effective delivery of the programme.

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Condition: The education provider must ensure that documentation for learners is updated to include accurate information around HCPC requirements and include relevant reading lists.

Reason: In the documentary submission the visitors were able to view the student handbook and a document that gave an overview of the programmes. In the student handbook it was stated that it is necessary to complete 1000 hours in practice to be able to register with the HCPC. Furthermore in the overview document it is stated that completion of BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy will enable you to register with the HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) under the title 'Physiotherapist'. These statements are inaccurate to HCPC procedure, as such the visitors considered the resources to not be appropriate to the delivery of the programme as it displayed inaccurate information. The education provider must ensure that all documents used in the programme ensure that learners' are appropriately informed about HCPC policies and requirements. It is not limited to the two examples provided above, and as such the education provider must ensure all programme documentation reflects the appropriate information.

Additionally, the visitors noted in the documentary submission that reading lists had not been completed for the module content. During the facilities and resources meeting it was confirmed to the visitors that the reading lists had not been completed. The visitors considered the reading lists to be important in supporting required learning and teaching activities of the programmes so cannot confirm the standard is met in this area. The education provider must ensure the relevant reading lists are in place and available for

learners to support their required learning. They must also show that learners will have adequate access to the items that are detailed in the reading lists.

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

The following condition applies to the above standards. For simplicity, as the issue spans several standards, the education provider should respond to this condition as one issue

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will be able to achieve standard of proficiency (SOP) 8.2 by the time they complete the programme, if they have not demonstrated it when they enter the programme.

Reason: In their documentary submission the education provider submitted an overview of the entry criteria and the process for admission onto the programmes. The visitors noted in the entry criteria the required The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) level of 6.5. The visitors noted that this is below the required level of 7.0, with no element below 6.5, for entry onto the HCPC Register, as required by SOP 8.2. The visitors also noted that learners must meet SOP 8.2 on completion of the programme. If the education provider is enrolling learners with English proficiency that is lower than that set out in the SOPs they must show how they will ensure that these learners will have met the required level by the end of the programme. In the programme team meeting, the education provider indicated that academic development through the programmes would ensure that learners would reach the appropriate level of English. However, the visitors considered this approach to be informal and without measuring learner's progress they could not be certain that learners would leave the programme meeting the required standard. The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will be able to achieve the HCPC required level of English proficiency by the time they complete the programme.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Condition: The education provider must show that the teaching and learning methods used are appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider highlighted the institution approach to teaching and provided the programme specification. The programme specification mapped the learning outcomes to teaching methods that would be used to deliver them. From this information, the visitors were able to see:

- the module descriptors that outlined the theoretical content, contact hours and learning outcomes; and
- the various learning and teaching methods used in delivering the programme.

However, although the visitors could see the content and methods for each module, they could not see how the methods delivered the content and consequently how this would support learners to achieve the learning outcomes. At the visit the education provider indicated they had not finalised how the content of both programmes would be

delivered so the visitors could not confirm that this standard was met. The education provider must show how the teaching methods will be used to deliver the programmes and show how they are appropriate for the delivery of the learning outcomes.

4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.

Condition: The education provider must show that the modular content and learning objectives that are in place to support and develop evidence-based practice are effectively delivered to achieve this aim.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission, the education provider highlighted the module descriptor for physiotherapy placement 3, the research for physiotherapists module, and the relevant standards of proficiency (SOPs) that are mapped to learning outcomes. The visitors were able to see from these documents that the relevant learning outcomes were placed and mapped to the relevant SOPs. However, it was not made clear in the documentation how the modular content that underpins these learning outcomes would be delivered. As the visitors were unable to see how the programmes are being delivered, they are unable to confirm that it would support learners to meet the relevant learning objectives related to evidence-based practice. The education provider must show how they will ensure that the modular content and learning outcomes are delivered to support and develop evidence-based practice.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Condition: The education provider must show how learners will have the opportunity to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider indicated that interprofessional education (IPE) would take place in the practice-education setting, provided an IPE guidance document and indicated they would be inviting guest lecturers to deliver teaching. The education provider did not specify how they would ensure that learners would undertake IPE in the practice setting. The visitors could not see who the guest lecturers would be or what part of the programmes they would be delivering. The IPE guidance document highlighted the aim to implement a culture of IPE within the institution and suggested possible ways to collaborate across professions but did not highlight where in the physiotherapy programmes that IPE would occur and the activities that would be undertaken. At the visit, the programme team indicated that intended to run some practical sessions with the nursing programme for learners. However, these sessions had not yet been finalised and confirmed in the modular content. The education provider must show how they will ensure that learners will have the opportunity to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions. They will also need to explain how they have made decisions about how they define relevant professions for physiotherapy learners.

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Condition: The education provider must ensure there is an effective process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

Reason: To evidence this standard the education provider provided a consent form for learners who will be participating in teaching activities. They also highlighted the teaching of conduct and ethics for learners and provided a service user collaborative terms of reference document. The visitors considered the arrangements for obtaining learner consent is appropriate. However, the terms of reference for service users did not confirm how the education provider would obtain consent from service users involved in the teaching aspects of the programme. In the programme team meeting it was confirmed to the visitors that there was not an equivalent process to that for obtaining consent from learners. Therefore the education provider must show there is an effective process in place for obtaining appropriate consent from service users.

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will communicate to learners that attendance at the 'graduate advantage' teaching is mandatory.

Reason: At the visit the visitors were made aware of timetabled teaching called graduate advantage. This is time to develop learners' skills, particularly around employment and supporting learning and practice, and is used across all programmes at the education provider. The visitors were also able to see that some of the standards of proficiency (SOPs) were being delivered in the sessions from the SOPs mapping document. In the meeting with learners the visitors were told that these teaching sessions are not mandatory to attend. The visitors followed this up with the programme team and were told that the graduate advantage sessions for both programmes would include important teaching content and would be mandatory to attend. The documentation does not state that these sessions are mandatory and the programme specification indicated these sessions are not credit bearing. The visitors could not confirm that the education provider would communicate this to learners, and that all stakeholders would understand that attendance at these sessions is mandatory. The education provider must ensure that learners are made aware of all parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory to ensure they meet the SOPs.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Condition: The education provider must demonstrate how they will ensure that all learners have access to practice-based learning of appropriate structure, duration and range to support the achievement of the learning outcomes.

Reason: In the documentary submission the visitors were able to see that the education provider had discussed the range of practice-based learning with practice education providers. The visitors were able to see that the education provider would ensure that providers could provide a suitable range of practice based learning. However, they were not shown at what times of the year these differing areas of practice-based learning would be available, or how they would be allocated so all learners have access to the appropriate range of placement experience for an appropriate duration. At the visit, the programme team confirmed that they had not finished the timetabling of practice-based learning so that all learners would have exposure to the appropriate range of practice-based learning. The education provider must show how they will ensure that all learners have access to an appropriate range

and duration of practice-based learning that support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will approve and ensure the quality of practice-based learning before any learners are due to attend.

Reason: To evidence this standard in the documentary submission the education provider submitted learner and practice educator evaluation forms, patient feedback forms and stated that all practice-based learning sites would be subject to an audit. The education provider also indicated that all practice-based learning environments will be audited using their placement provider audit tool, unless an audit has been carried out by a neighbouring institution. The visitors noted two potential issues with the education provider's approach to meeting this standard:

- The visitors understood that common documentation would be efficient and useful for practice education providers. However, they could not see how the education provider would ensure that audits already carried out by neighbouring institutions would be used by the education provider to be satisfied with placements for this programme specifically. The education provider must show how they ensure the quality of practice-based learning for their programme when a different organisation has completed the audit.
- The education provider stated that if a site was found to be unsuitable, their service level agreement (SLA) will be terminated with the education provider. This information was also provided by the programme team when the visitors queried how the education provider has approved the quality of practice-based learning. The visitors noted that providers could have a SLA signed and agreed between the education provider and practice education provider before the education provider has determined that the quality of the practice-based learning is suitable.

This standard is intended to ensure that learners are taking part in practice-based learning that is of an appropriate quality to meet their learning needs. The education provider has indicated that they have not confirmed the quality of practice-based learning for all sites and have indicated that they will do this at a later date, potentially after agreements have been made. The visitors considered that this could lead to learners taking part in practice-based learning that has not been approved, or the education providers having to cancel practice-based learning if it is to be found inappropriate. Therefore, the education provider must clarify how it will ensure that all learners will take part in practice-based learning that is of appropriate quality. They must ensure that all practice-based learning is audited and quality-assured before learners are due to take part.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Condition: The education provider must show how they will ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff are involved in practice-based learning.

Reason: The education provider has indicated in the documentary submission that they will ensure there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning, through the service level agreement (SLA) and placement audit form that is completed by practice-education providers. The education provider submitted a draft SLA in which it was stated that the practice-education provider must ensure they make appropriate and sufficient staff available. From this, the education provider has shown that they will ask providers to ensure an appropriate number of staff to be involved in practice-based learning, and stated in the programme team meeting that they would not take on providers that cannot meet this. However, the documentation or discussions did not give specifics for how the education provider defined what they mean by 'appropriate' and 'sufficient'. Therefore, the education provider must show how they will ensure there will be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Condition: The education provider must show that all practice educators will have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register.

Reason: The education provider has indicated in the documentary submission that they will ensure there will be practice educators with relevant knowledge, skills and experience in practice-based learning, through the service level agreement (SLA) and placement audit form that is completed by practice-education providers. The education provider submitted a draft SLA in which it was stated that the practice-education provider must ensure they make appropriate and sufficient staff available. From this, the education provider has shown that they will ask providers to ensure an appropriate number of staff to be involved in practice-based learning, and stated in the programme team meeting that they would not take on providers that cannot meet this. However, the documentation or discussions did not give specifics for how the education provider defined what they mean by 'appropriate' and 'sufficient'. Therefore, the education provider must show how they will ensure that practice educators will have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are appropriate, are on the relevant part of the Register

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. Recommendations do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Recommendation: The education provider should review its approach to assessment of applicant's prior learning and experience for the degree apprenticeship programme to enhance its widening participation approach.

Reason: In the documentary submission the education provider indicated that due to the structure of practice-based learning in the programme they would not accept assessment of applicant's prior learning and expertise. This approach meets the standard at threshold and is very clear. However, as the degree apprenticeship intends to widen participation for more non-traditional learners the visitors recommend that the education provider review their position in this area.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Recommendation: The education provider should formalise their approach for ensuring the curriculum remains relevant to current practice.

Reason: The visitors were unclear of the approach in this area from the documentary submission. However, at the visit they were assured that this standard was met by the answers given in the practice educators and programme team meeting. In these meetings it was confirmed to the visitors that clinicians would be involved in delivering some teaching sessions to ensure current practice is appropriately involved in the programme. The visitors recommend making this approach and input from current practitioners more formal and regular occurring to ensure it is carried out through the lifetime of the programme.