
Performance review process report

Outreach Rescue Medic Skills, 2018-21

Executive summary

This report covers our performance review of the programmes offered by Outreach Rescue Medic Skills. During this review there were no referrals made to other processes, and no risks identified which may impact performance. Several areas of good practice were identified by the visitors with regards to service user involvement, development of equality and diversity initiatives and investment in technology in response to the pandemic.

This provider constitutes a low risk to how the approved programmes continue to be delivered. However, there is a lack of comparable data points to inform us of progress, therefore our recommendation for the performance review period is two years. This report will now be considered by our Education and Training Panel who will make the final decision on the on the review period.

Previous consideration	The provider is currently going through programme closure for both of their HCPC-approved programmes, however there are learners currently on the programmes.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be• whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how
Next steps	Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2023-24 academic year

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

This is a report on the performance review process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the institution and practice areas(s) detailed in this report continue to meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the institution and programme(s) ongoing approval.

Our standards

We approve education providers and programmes that meet our education standards. Individuals who complete approved programmes will meet proficiency standards, which set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Our regulatory approach

We are flexible, intelligent and data-led in our quality assurance of programme clusters and programmes. Through our processes, we:

- enable bespoke, proportionate and effective regulatory engagement with education providers;
- use data and intelligence to enable effective risk-based decision making; and
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards.

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

The performance review process

Once a programme institution is approved, we will take assurance it continues to meet standards through:

- regular assessment of key data points, supplied by the education provider and external organisations; and
- assessment of a self-reflective portfolio and evidence, supplied on a cyclical basis

Through monitoring, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess how an education provider is performing based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. We take this assurance at the provider level wherever possible, and will delve into programme / profession level detail where we need to.

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

Thematic areas reviewed

We normally focus on the following areas:

- Institution self-reflection, including resourcing, partnerships, quality, the input of others, and equality and diversity
- Thematic reflection, focusing on timely developments within the education sector
- Provider reflection on the assessment of other sector bodies, including professional bodies and systems regulators
- Provider reflection on developments linked to specific professions
- Stakeholder feedback and actions

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint [partner visitors](#) to design quality assurance assessments, and assess evidence and information relevant to the assessment. Visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make the decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee takes decisions through different levels depending on the routines and impact of the decision, and where appropriate meets in public. Their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

The assessment panel for this review

We appointed the following panel members to support a review of this education provider:

Gemma Howlett	Lead visitor, paramedic
Jason Comber	Lead visitor, paramedic
Hayley Hall	Service User Expert Advisor
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers two HCPC-approved programmes across one profession. It is a private education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2012.

Outreach Rescue Medic Skills (ORMS) is the medical training company of Outreach Rescue, providing hazardous medical training which allows learners to apply for registration as a paramedic. They have been providing rescue and safety training for over 25 years.

ORMS is the only HCPC-approved private provider based in Wales, and they deliver programmes for the paramedic profession. Including higher education institutes, there are currently three Wales-based providers of paramedic programmes, with a total of eight programmes being run across them all. The provider is currently delivering two HCPC programmes which are both in the process of closing.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

The provider is approved to deliver training in the following professional areas. A detailed list of approved programme awards can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2012

Institution performance data

Data is embedded into how we understand performance and risk. We capture data points in relation to provider performance, from a range of sources. We compare provider data points to benchmarks, and use this information to inform our risk based decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of institutions and programmes.

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	60	60	2022	This is in line with the intended learner numbers the programmes were approved for, therefore doesn't pose as a concern. The provider carefully managed the learner cohort size to ensure there were sufficient resources to facilitate demand.

Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	1.4%	2019-2020	The provider has supplied internally collated data in their portfolio relating to this. From September 2020 to August 2022 there is an average of 1.4% of learners leaving. This is half of the benchmark and therefore does not pose as a concern.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	N/A	2019-2020	The provider has supplied internal data relating, but not equivalent, to this data point. They have outlined 100% of their learners are continuing through to this next data set. This does not clarify the percentage in further study, however, shows learners are all employed either during or after programme completion.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	N/A	85.5%	2020-2022	The provider has supplied internally collated data in their portfolio relating to this. From September 2020 to August 2022 there is an average learner satisfaction score of 85.5%. This is a positive outcome and shows good learner satisfaction rates.
HPCP performance review cycle length	N/A	TBC	2018-2021	The visitors have recommended a review period of two years after reviewing the providers portfolio and being satisfied with their performance but limited by the number of data points available. This will be confirmed once the report has gone to the Education and Training Panel who will make the final decision

Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

The education provider was asked to provide a self-reflective portfolio submission covering the broad topics referenced in the [thematic areas reviewed](#) section of this report.

The education provider's self-reflection was focused on challenges, developments, and successes related to each thematic area. They also supplied data, supporting evidence and information.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided, and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their portfolio. Based on our understanding, we defined and undertook the following quality assurance activities linked to the quality themes

referenced below. This allowed us to consider whether the education provider was performing well against our standards.

The visitors sought out clarification on each quality theme via email communication to allow the provider to elaborate on previous information they had sent or send further evidence documents to answer the queries. During the second round of quality activities, HCPC facilitated a meeting with the visitors and the provider so further clarification could be provided over Teams.

Quality theme 1 – Ensuring quality and sustainability of placements

Area for further exploration: The provider submitted as evidence documents of local agreements with practice placements. They identified challenges they have faced communicating with placements during the pandemic and outlined how they are seeking further opportunities with local hospitals, the Fire & Rescue Service, HM Coastguard & Police Service. It was unclear if there are other agreements (service level or equivalent) in place to give further strength to the quality of their relationship with other organisations to maintain consistency for the programme and future iterations.

The visitors explored what processes are in place to secure and monitor placements to ensure sustainability for learners on the programme. The visitors agreed it would be useful to see details of partnership liaison and identification of risk and how these are managed. It is important the provider has appropriate processes in place to ensure there are suitable and safe placements for learners throughout the programme.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined how it is a pre-requisite of acceptance onto the programme for learners to have organised the required placements prior to enrolment through their employer. Placements are verified through agreements organised by the provider to ensure they can support the learner. Learners who join the programme are already working for the National Health Service (NHS) or private providers working with the NHS who have an agreement in place with the provider to support the learner. This agreement defines how the organisation will provide a placement for the learner. The provider uses an audit document to assess both the employer organisation and the placement provider to ensure they will appropriately support the learner on the programme. The provider undergoes an annual education audit which is completed by a senior member of the substantive ORMS staff.

The provider can support learners with placements when needed through their links to Countess of Chester Hospital and other hospitals around the UK. Placements are reviewed by the provider's NHS Emergency Medicine Consultant to ensure a safe, quality educational package. Additional opportunities for specialist placements are supplied via links with the North Wales Fire Rescue Service (NWFRS). Placement quality is measured by the learner's portfolio completion, reflections, and formal and informal feedback. Each learner also has their own learning agreement provided by the provider which is signed by both learner and placement provider.

The visitors reviewed examples of audit documents and learning agreements, and were satisfied they show there is a robust system in place in auditing practice

placements. They agreed the provider is offering adequate and suitable support for learners on practice placements.

Quality theme 2 – Ensuring the quality of practice educators

Area for further exploration: As mentioned above, the provider has reflected on the challenges they experienced with communicating with placement providers during the pandemic. The provider states this was partly due to re-allocation and increased workload of staff within placements, which put additional pressures on placement providers to ensure they have suitable placement educators in place to support learners. The visitors had a concern regarding the currency of the Faculty Continuous Improvement Processes, which requires all members of the faculty to maintain their registration with their own registering body. It was unclear if there is a system in place to ensure competency of the teaching team remains of the highest quality. They must also remain current with their clinical practice by ensuring clinical shifts are taken regularly, ensuring they maintain their fitness to practice.

It was unclear if the provider has a system in place to ensure competency of practice educators remains of the highest quality, post pandemic. The visitors explored if there is training of placement educators' preparation for mentoring. The visitors outlined how within a "traditional" ambulance service, a paramedic with one year post HCPC registration is deemed to have limited exposure to the profession resulting in limited experience in the field, therefore lacks the experience required to be a supportive Practice Educator. They explored how the provider is supporting these practice educators to be appropriate to work with their learners.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider has developed a course which aims to develop practice educators who can provide support, guidance and feedback on the trainee paramedic's progress. The course ensures practice educators can operate effectively in all areas of observations, assessments, feedback, planning and support. The provider supports continued professional development (CPD) for all faculty staff and holds an annual CPD week to ensure the faculty are delivering the latest content and review individual performances. The visitors were satisfied there is comprehensive and appropriate training courses available to support Practice Educators.

The provider outlined most practice educators are post registration of two years, however, they do have a small number of practice educators who are post one year. These practice educators are individuals deemed as industry experts, such as search and rescue winchman who may have 15+ years safety and clinical experience but only one year registered as a paramedic. All practice educators must be registered as a paramedic for at least one year prior to application as an ORMS practice educator. Also, all faculty staff on the teaching team are HCPC registered paramedics, registered doctors or registered nurses/ midwives with at least five years registration and considerable experience in hazardous and or remote clinical environments or advanced practice. The visitors were satisfied this ensures practice educators are suitably experienced and qualified for supporting learners. The information provided reassured visitors about their concerns regarding practice educators with limited experience as a registered paramedic.

Quality theme 3 – Effectiveness of processes used to address feedback

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined the mechanisms from which they collect feedback on the programme in the portfolio. These included external quality assurance (EQA), external examiners (EE) and service user and carer group (SU&CG). These mechanisms use external examiners, second marking, videoed evidence and service user feedback to ensure all aspects of the programmes can be reviewed and then reported on. However, there was no reflection on what these reports have concluded and how the provider has responded to them. It was unclear how the provider reviews and addresses feedback gained through these feedback mechanisms. The visitors explored what processes are in place to review and address feedback from learners, EEs, internal staff, and other feedback sources. It is important the provider has appropriate processes in place to monitor and respond to both positive and negative feedback and use this to continuously develop the programme.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider has internal quality assurance (IQA) processes using a team of IQA assessors. The reviews resulting from IQA are fed back to the education lead to assess and introduce appropriate updates. Feedback from learners is reviewed by the education lead and trends in feedback are acted on. The provider submitted examples of how they have addressed feedback from learners. They invested in six manikins and live kit to ensure learners got an improved practical experience in response to feedback. There is a Service User and Carer Group (SU&CG) whose involvement is monitored in accordance with the providers patient carer and public involvement (PCPI) policy. Within the policy, accommodation is made for bi-annual SU&CG workshops during which feedback is gathered, responded to and addressed. The visitors were satisfied there are multiple mechanisms and processes in place to receive and appropriately address feedback from the various stakeholders involved in the programme.

Quality theme 4 – Continuous integration of interprofessional education (IE)

Area for further exploration: The provider identified the challenges the pandemic presented with the practicalities of mixing learners and professional bodies in the scope of interprofessional education (IE). To mitigate this, they introduced placement workshops and virtual tabletop exercises. They initiated two projects to further develop their IE opportunities and are working on a third with external partners (Countess of Chester Hospital, Fire & Rescue and University of Chester). The visitors were unclear if these developments were purely a response to the pandemic, and if they will continue to be integrated into the learners' IE opportunities post pandemic. They explored if the provider could offer clarification on whether these developments were not simply a response to the pandemic and how they will ensure the IE developments will continue to enrich the programme. It is important the provider can reflect on positive developments they have made during the pandemic and ensure these are continuously monitored and implemented into programmes post pandemic to benefit learners.

Outcomes of exploration: During the meeting between the visitors and provider, the provider outlined how the organisations named above are just some of the partners they work with to provide their learners with IE opportunities. These are

partners who are consistently available to provide opportunities for each cohort of learners. Other partners have limited availability due to the nature, size and responsibilities of their organisations, so offer IE opportunities on an ad hoc basis. There are consistent modules on the programme which have professionals, specialists, and consultants from other professions who present and discuss topics with learners. These external professionals also provide support to the staff delivering the modules. The provider gave several examples of IE opportunities for learners, demonstrating there are ample opportunities in place during the programme. The visitors were satisfied the programme is enriched by IE opportunities. They agreed the provider puts high value on IE, ensuring they have positive relationships with external partners to provide learners with a range of IE experiences.

Quality theme 5 – Involvement of service users and carers in the programme

Area for further exploration: During the Pandemic, the provider took the opportunity to offer members of their Service Users and Carers (SU&C) panel additional support. This was to ensure they were still supported by the provider and to help look after their wellbeing. However, there was a lack of information on how SU&C contribute to the programmes in terms of, for example, recruitment, review, or assessment of the curriculum. It was unclear how SU&C are integrated into the programme post pandemic, and how they are supported in carrying out their roles on the programme. The visitors explored how SU&C are involved and used across the programmes post pandemic, and how they are supported by the provider. Furthermore, they explored if there are processes in place to monitor the impact of SU&C involvement. It is important the use of SU&C in the programme is an integral part of the programme, and this is monitored to continually develop the programmes.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlines how SU&C are utilised in several ways, described in the SU&C involvement policy which outlines how SU&C are involved with module delivery, curriculum development, recruitment and selection. This has been enhanced post pandemic by the inclusion of video conference (VC) for appropriate areas, such as, Curriculum Development Meetings, Module Lead Meetings and Student involvement meetings. The provider has several service user patient stories which are embedded in the module and discussed as case studies.

The SU&C involvement policy describes a training course, which supports SU&C in their role, as well as workshops being available. The provider monitors the SU&C group through records of their involvement with each aspect of the programme and rationales for actions to suggestions made by them. They evaluate the group through feedback collected from SU&CG representatives, teaching staff and learners. The monitoring and evaluation reports will be compiled by the module leads and reported bi-annually to the programme lead and Service User and Carer group representatives. The visitors were satisfied SU&C appear to be an integral part of the ongoing development of the programme, and there is appropriate involvement, support and monitoring of SU&Cs.

Quality theme 6 – Alternative methods to monitor the quality of provision

Area for further exploration: Due to ORMS being a private provider based in Wales they are not quality assured by bodies such as the Office for Students (OfS) or National Student Survey (NSS). Through their portfolio, it was unclear if the provider seeks or receives quality assurance from any other external bodies, and therefore how they ensure and monitor the quality of their provision. The visitors explored if the provider has equivalent ways to monitor the quality of their programmes. It is important the provider is considering alternative ways to receive robust quality assurance from external bodies to ensure the best quality provision for their learners.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider acknowledged not requiring OfS approval but stated they still adopt the guidance and help available for learners offered by OfS. The learning and teaching approaches and outcomes tie into external reference points, such as relevant subject benchmarks and occupational/ professional body standards. Although the provider is not approved by OfS, they are replacing this with internal mechanisms to ensure they receive learner feedback and satisfaction levels. In their internal feedback surveys. They ask some of the same questions which are presented to learners through the NSS, allowing them to obtain similar data independently. The visitors were satisfied the provider has alternative mechanisms in place to monitor quality and agree they are making efforts to obtain data and address it.

Quality theme 7 – Continually developing the curriculum

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined how they changed the curriculum to ensure all learners had access to the training the NHS trusts offer to newly qualified paramedics (NQPs) regardless of the working environment the learners might enter after programme completion. The visitors regarded the provider's reflections on curriculum development in the portfolio were based at a granular level. It was unclear what processes are in place to ensure the curriculum is being reviewed and developed continually. The visitors appreciated the programmes are due to close shortly, so there may not be as much curriculum development as with an ongoing continuing programme. However, the visitors explored how the provider can demonstrate they are reviewing and addressing curriculum changes which need to be implemented. It is important learners who are currently on the programme continue to receive the most relevant, up to date programme to prepare them for employment.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider outlined how there is constant review of the curriculum by experienced registered paramedics and educators. Tutors and teaching staff have responsibility for ensuring teaching materials are updated consistently with Joint Royal College of Ambulance Liaison Committee (JRCALC) or national guidelines. The provider ensures external provider's educational material is appropriate for the programme through peer-reviewed sessions. As discussed in [quality theme 3](#), the provider acts on feedback from learners regarding both content and delivery of material and presentation of this. The provider run a variety of short courses to ensure faculty staff are current with international practice, so they can keep the curriculum updated. The visitors were satisfied the provider is keeping updated with regulatory and other professional bodies guidance and appropriate changes are being made to develop the curriculum.

Quality theme 8 – Appropriately qualified external examiners

Area for further exploration: The provider outlined external examiner (EE) feedback through their reflections, identifying how they are adapting their processes for assessment moderation to address this feedback. There was no information given on the processes in place to ensure the provider has suitable EEs in place to act in this role, and it was unclear how the provider interacts with EEs to get external scrutiny. The visitors explored what processes are in place for the provider to check the robustness of the academic processes and assessments, and how they ensure EEs are appropriately qualified and experienced for the role. It is important that learner assessments have an appropriate level of examination by EEs who are suitably qualified and experienced to provide this scrutiny.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider has one primary and one back-up EE, who are both educated to a minimum Masters level, and have appropriate qualifications in teaching, auditing or assessing. They must also have experience enabling them to understand the challenges of delivering care in the particular environments they are assessing. The EE roles and expectations are outlined in guidance, as well as EEs being provided with guidance on summative instruments of assessment and external examiners. EEs are given support and familiarisation sessions to prepare them for the types of assessments needed for the programmes. The feedback of EEs is reviewed by the provider's senior team and any immediate risks are addressed. Themes identified are acted upon, whether these be contact, delivery or facilities. The visitors were satisfied the EEs are appropriately experienced and qualified for their role. They agreed there are suitable processes in place for EEs to give assessments scrutiny, and for the provider to assess the EEs feedback.

Section 4: Summary of findings

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings for each portfolio area, focusing on the approach or approaches taken, developments, what this means for performance, and why. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability** – The provider's HCPC approved programmes have been withdrawn from further registrations due to a change in the admission level of the SETs. The last intake for Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic Practice - Remote and Hazardous Environments was May 2019 and for Hazardous Environment Medicine Paramedic Award last intake was August 2021. Through their portfolio, the provider has demonstrated the continued financial stability and sufficient resources to support learners currently in the last intakes of the programmes.

The provider has identified the needs and challenges of recruiting and maintaining a quality workforce to ensure programme stability. The visitors explored this in [quality theme 2](#), and the provider has outlined the support, training and methods deployed to ensure they have appropriate staff. The programmes have had full cohorts of learners recruited, therefore demonstrated financial stability. The visitors were satisfied the provider has evidenced appropriate sustainability of finances and resources for the remaining duration of programmes.

- **Partnerships with other organisations** – The provider has several relationships with other organisations through placements, interprofessional education, staff connections and employment links. A number of these organisations have consistent involvement with the programme, whilst other organisations are involved on an availability basis. The provider highlighted the challenges faced with communication during the pandemic but has sought to develop further opportunities with local hospitals and specialist organisations. These include the Fire & Rescue Service, HM Coastguard & Police Service due to the specialist nature of its programmes.

The visitors were unclear how the provider ensures the sustainability and suitability of placement providers, so explored this through [quality theme 1](#). The provider outlined it is a pre-requisite of acceptance onto the programme for learners to have pre-arranged the required placements. The provider has a learning agreement contract between the learner, their employer and the education provider which must be completed by all parties prior to enrolment onto the course. They provide support to learners to achieve this. The provider demonstrated to the visitors there are appropriate processes, audits and agreements in place to ensure placement providers are safe, supportive and suitable. The visitors were satisfied the provider has sufficient processes in place to address the challenges and ensure they are sustaining suitable partnerships with other relevant organisations.

- **Academic and placement quality** – The provider has quality systems and a quality cycle which highlight how they engage in regular monitoring and evaluation of the programme. They highlighted challenges with securing placement opportunities for learners during the pandemic and this was explored in [quality theme 1](#) and solutions discussed in the section above. The provider ensures the quality of placements and safety of learners through placement audits and agreements. The visitors explored this in [quality theme 2](#) where they were reassured the practice educators are suitably experienced and qualified to support learners. The visitors were satisfied there is a robust system in place in auditing practice placements and providing adequate and suitable support for learners on practice placements. The visitors agreed there is comprehensive and appropriate training and support available to support practice educators.
- **Interprofessional education** – The visitors were satisfied to see evidence of the collaborative working with other specialist organisations and the use of the placement workshops as an example to explore interprofessional teaching and education. The provider identified the challenges of mixing learners with

other professionals during the pandemic, however they introduced strategies to address this.

- The provider works with multiple organisations which provide consistent opportunities for interprofessional learning, as well as additional opportunities when they arise. They highlight these relationships are highly valued by the provider and maintained well. In [quality theme 4](#), the provider has reassured the visitors the developments within the programmes interprofessional education opportunities will be maintained and integrated into the curriculum post pandemic. The visitors were satisfied there are ample opportunities for learners to experience interprofessional education during the programme and reassured these are sustainable.
- **Service users and carers** – The provider outlined how service users and carers (SU&C) are involved in recruitment and selection, course management, team meetings and modular reviews. They offered extra support to SU&Cs during the pandemic to maintain good relationships, however the visitors explored how the provider ensures there is appropriate contribution of SU&Cs into the programme. This was done through [quality theme 5](#), where it was established the provider highly values the use of SU&C in the programme. They outlined multiple areas of involvement of SU&Cs, and how they are supported through training and the Service users and carer group. The visitors were satisfied there are many opportunities for learners to interact with SU&Cs during the programme.
- **Equality and diversity** – The provider has an Equality and Diversity Policy which they ensure is compliant with the Equality Act (2010) through annual reviews. They hold stake holder meetings with international learners to ensure they are aware of their cultural needs, expectations, and beliefs, which has resulted in several actions to make the facilities more appropriate to accommodate all needs. The provider has evidenced several initiatives they have taken to improve and develop their approach to equality and diversity. The visitors were satisfied there is a well-structured offering of opportunities to develop staff, facilities, and learners with regards to equality and diversity.
- **Horizon scanning** – This area is limited for the provider considering both programmes are in the process of closing and no longer accepting learners. In their portfolio the provider has recognised the fragile nature of being a small and specialist organisation but are taking steps to ensure it holds a key and enviable place in the market for those HCPC registrants looking for specialist roles. The visitors agreed financial security appears to have been assured and the provider have sufficient resources to deliver the outgoing programme to the remaining learners.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:

- The visitors agreed the placement workshops were a positive development in response to the challenges of placements during the pandemic. They stated this sounds like an exciting initiative and a good example of interprofessional working.
- The visitors identified good practice through [quality theme 5](#), where the provider gave evidence of multiple areas of SU&C involvement in the programme. The visitors agreed SU&C appear to be an integral part of the ongoing development of the paramedic programme, and provide learners with a varied interaction with SU&Cs.
- The visitors recognised good practice through the initiatives the provider has taken to address equality and diversity needs in the facilities and on their programmes. They have made several developments through feedback to support learners and staff, to ensure inclusivity.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Impact of COVID-19** – The provider made the decision at the beginning of the pandemic to move to online learning and closed its facilities to learners. They placed all learners on a temporary suspension of studies (TSS) during the first set of lockdowns. The visitors agreed the provider encountered considerable challenges due to the pandemic, and many overcome particularly around technology and teaching. The visitors had concerns about the quality of practice placements and whether these are being continued at the current time, which were explored in [quality theme 1](#). The provider supplied evidence to reassure the visitors placement are appropriately audited and monitored for quality to ensure the safety of learners and they can meet learning objectives. The visitors were satisfied the provider has reacted in a timely and appropriate manner to the challenges posed by the pandemic.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods** – During the pandemic, the provider invested in information technology (IT) to develop a remote workforce and learning environment for learners. The provider also invested in resources such as manikins to ensure learners could get the experience through simulation which they were lacking from live casualties. The development of a simulation workshop is reported to have been positively received by all learners. The provider has returned to some face-to-face elements of the programme since the end of the pandemic but have kept the virtual elements in place for when needed. The visitors were satisfied the provider has significantly improved and reflected upon their digital capacity to support learners and staff.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: The visitors agreed there has been significant investment in the use of IT and innovative ways to provide education. This has been identified as an area of good practice.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies** – Where practice placement providers fall under the scrutiny of other bodies, the provider reviews the external reports as a part of the initial and subsequent educational audits. The provider receives alerts when each of the providers are inspected/ reinspected and will continue to review any reports at educational audits. The visitors explored this through [quality theme 1](#) and were satisfied the audits are very thorough and cover all the concerns they had. They are satisfied there is a robust system in place for auditing practice placements and providing adequate and suitable support for learners on practice placements.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies** – The provider ensures their teaching materials are consistent with the Joint Royal College of Ambulance Liaison Committee (JRCALC) or national guidelines. This was explored in more detail in [quality theme 7](#) where the visitors enquired about how the provider is ensuring the curriculum is relevant. There are also operating department practitioners and radiographers who are involved in the delivery of education in specialist areas and ensure this material is kept relevant and inline with their professional regulators. There are doctors, nurses and midwives involved in the programme who share a level of expertise and experience from their professions. Other professional bodies share the latest evidence and practice in their speciality and regularly assist in the annual review and appropriate updates of teaching materials delivered to learners. The visitors were satisfied the provider is keeping updated with regulatory and other professional bodies guidance and making changes where appropriate.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development** – The provider ensures the curriculum is developed in line with relevant professional bodies, such as JRCALC and the Resuscitation Council. They have identified where changes have been made in response to changes in guidance during the review period. Despite the current closure of the paramedic programmes run by the provider, the visitors had concerns about how they are continually reviewing and addresses curriculum changes. They explored this through [quality theme 7](#), where the provider reassured them, the curriculum is being updated in accordance with relevant guidance. The visitors were satisfied the curriculum is being appropriately reviewed and updated.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance** – The programmes were written and updated with reference to the College of Paramedics (CoP) curriculum guidance and the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) for Paramedics. They highlighted the only developments which have come about are in relation to emerging topics highlighted by the CoP. The visitors were satisfied the provider is responding to the emerging themes reflected in relevant professional body guidance.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning** – The provider has identified the challenges they faced during the pandemic with access to practice-based learning. It is discussed further how the provider put measures in place to ensure learners could achieve learning objectives through alternative teaching methods in the [thematic reflection](#) section. The provider reassured the visitors regarding their concerns about capacity of placements through [quality theme 1](#), providing evidence they have the processes in place to ensure there are sufficient, appropriate placements for learners on the programme moving forward. The visitors were satisfied the provider is ensuring there is suitable capacity of practice-based learning opportunities for learners.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: The visitors noted it was good practice to see the inclusion of more mental health and wellbeing focus in the curriculum in response to changes in the CoP guidance.

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learners** – The provider has consistently received excellent feedback regarding certain key tutors from learners. However, in their portfolio the provider supplied limited information on how they gain and address learner feedback. The visitors explored this further in [quality theme 3](#). There are several opportunities for learners to provide feedback during modules and annually, which keeps a live track of learner responses. In response to the visitors queries, they outlined areas they have developed and modified in response to learner feedback, including changes to online learning. The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate mechanism in place to obtain learner feedback, and the provider has evidenced they are addressing feedback.
- **Practice placement educators** – The provider has online resources to support practice placement educators, including a forum to discuss issues and supporting documents and materials. There is a dedicated support line between them and the provider where they can discuss issues with the senior education team. The quality of placement educators was discussed in [quality theme 2](#). The provider outlined the expected qualifications and experience of practice placement educators and how they monitor this through placement audits. The visitors were satisfied there is appropriate support, feedback

mechanisms and monitoring in place to ensure the quality of practice placement educators.

- **External examiners** – The provider has two policies covering the roles, expectations, and guidance for external examiners (EE). All feedback from EEs is reviewed by the senior team, and themes are identified and addressed appropriately. The visitors explored how the provider ensures the EEs are appropriately qualified in [quality theme 8](#) as this information was missing from the portfolio. The provider outlined the required qualifications and experience of external examiners they use, and how the primary and backup EE they employ fit this profile. The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate mechanisms in place to obtain EE feedback, support them and ensure they are appropriately placed for their role.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel: The provider was able to provide internally collated data, despite not having access to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or National Student Survey (NSS) data due to the nature of the organisation. This was explored and discussed in [quality theme 6](#) where the provider outlines how they obtain relevant feedback and data.

- The visitors agreed with the challenges brought by the pandemic to the programmes, the provider made considerable amendments including the suspension of studies. With these type of “emergency” measures taking place the figure of 3% for aggregation of percentage of learners not continuing is very encouraging.
- The visitors were satisfied with the percentage of learners completing the programme or going into further study being 100%. They agreed the pandemic brought about considerable changes and challenges to the delivery of this programme and this is reflected in the successful applicants obtaining the qualification and subsequent recruitment to the paramedic profession.
- The visitors were satisfied with the results of the internally supplied data set regarding learner satisfaction scores. From their own survey, they achieved a satisfaction score of 86%.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: Whilst the provider does not have access to some of the external data points which HCPC use as a reference, the provider has made the effort to obtain similar data points through internal mechanisms, showing good practice.

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2023-24 academic year

Reason for this recommendation: Overall, the portfolio was completed well and showed good reflections from the provider. It clearly showed their progress and performance during the review period. Due to the lack of comparable data points available for this provider, the visitors recommend the maximum review period of two years.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
Diploma of Higher Education Paramedic Practice - Remote and Hazardous Environments	PT (Part time)	Paramedic			01/05/2017
Hazardous Environment Medicine Paramedic Award	PT (Part time)	Paramedic			01/09/2021