

## Approval process report

University of Hertfordshire, Radiography, 2023-24

### Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve Diagnostic Radiography and Therapeutic Radiography programmes at the University of Hertfordshire. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programme(s) against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programme(s) are fit to practice.

We have

- Reviewed the institution against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area
- Reviewed the programme(s) against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the institution / programme(s) should be approved
- Decided that all standards are met, and that the programme(s) are approved.

Through this assessment, we have noted

- The programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

<b>Previous consideration</b>	Not applicable. The approval process was not referred from another process
<b>Decision</b>	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether the programme(s) are approved</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: The provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programmes detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programmes approval.

### Our standards

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

### Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

### The approval process

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

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

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

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

### **How we make our decisions**

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

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

### **The assessment panel for this review**

We appointed the following panel members to support this review:

Jane Day	Lead visitor, Therapeutic Radiographer
Rachel Picton	Lead visitor, Diagnostic Radiographer
Temilolu Odunaike	Education Quality Officer

## **Section 2: Institution-level assessment**

### **The education provider context**

The education provider currently delivers 15 HCPC-approved programmes across seven professions. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1993. These include two post-registration programmes for independent prescribing and supplementary prescribing annotations.

Alongside the Diagnostic and Therapeutic Radiography provision, the education provider is also seeking approval of degree apprenticeships in Dietetics, and Speech and Language Therapy provision. These are being considered in separate cases because they have different document submission dates which meant the cases could not be managed as one.

In 2023, the education provider engaged with the approval review process for the MSc Paramedic Science (Pre-registration), full time accelerated programme. We were satisfied that there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards were met, and that the programme was approved by the Education and Training Committee in June 2024.

In the 2021-22 academic year, the education provider engaged with the performance review process. The outcome of this was that the education provider was performing well across all areas and there were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process. The Education and Training Committee decided that the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process will be in the 2026-27 academic year.

The education provider also engaged with the approval process in the legacy model of quality assurance in 2021 to introduce their MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration), Full time accelerated, and the MSc Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging (Pre registration), Full time accelerated programmes. We were satisfied that there was sufficient evidence to demonstrate that our standards were met, and the programmes were approved by the Education and Training Committee in August 2021.

They engaged with the major change process in 2021 to introduce the BSc (Hons) Dietetics with a Year Abroad to their existing, approved BSc (Hons) Dietetics programme. The new programme was an opportunity given to learners to undertake a study abroad year between levels 5 and 6 and became available to learners in the 2020-21 academic year. We were satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that the standards continued to be met, and the Education and Training Committee agreed the programme remains approved in April 2021.

The education provider had completed a periodic review of the MA Art Therapy, Full time, and Part time programmes. They engaged with the major change process in 2021 to report the changes. As a result, the part time programme would be spread over four years, rather than three. Part-time versions of full-time modules would no longer be available, and learning outcomes were amended and reflected in the standards of proficiency. There were also new module learning outcomes, and changes to delivery and assessment. We were satisfied that there was sufficient evidence that the standards continued to be met, and the Education and Training Committee agreed the programme remains approved in July 2021.

### Practice areas delivered by the education provider

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

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Arts therapist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2002
	Dietitian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2006

	Occupational therapy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2004
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1993
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2000
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2000
<b>Post-registration</b>	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2018

### Institution performance data

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

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

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	1362	1422	2023/24	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision.</p> <p>We are satisfied the education provider continues to recruit learners to their programmes as expected.</p>

<p>Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing</p>	<p>3%</p>	<p>15%</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is significantly above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 9%.</p> <p>This is being explored through another approval process which the education provider is currently undergoing.</p>
<p>Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study</p>	<p>92%</p>	<p>92%</p>	<p>2021-22</p>	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects</p> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider's performance in this area is in line with sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 4%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the data shows the education provider is still performing at sector norms.</p>

Learner positivity score	77.0%	82.8%	2023	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 6%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because there is evidence that the education provider is performing well in this area.</p>
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	5 years	2026-27	<p>The education provider engaged with the performance review process in 2021-22 academic year. The outcome of this was that they were performing well across all areas and as such they received the maximum review period of five years.</p>

### The route through stage 1

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

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

#### Admissions

#### **Findings on alignment with existing provision:**

- **Information for applicants –**
  - The education provider noted that information regarding the programmes will be made available on their website. This will include a



copy of the Programme Specification and Course Factsheet documents. Details of the teaching, learning and assessment methods will be published in these documents.

- As the programmes are degree apprenticeships, information will also be available to applicants through employers, webinars and engagement events.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this because the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
  - The education provider noted that English language competency will be assessed through the attainment of relevant qualifications, for example GCSE English. Applicants will be required to provide evidence of Level 2 English and Maths before they can be offered a place on the programmes.
  - Applicants will be required to have a current Disclosure Barring service (DBS) check and an Occupational Health check. As these are degree apprenticeships, the employer will be responsible for these.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the institution functions.
  - We think this because the education provider has noted there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
  - The education provider noted they have an established process to assess Recognition of Prior Learning through their Flexible Credit Framework which provides advice in relation to application and assessment for AP(E)L. They noted this process is detailed in their Apprenticeship Policy and is delivered via their Apprenticeship management System, Aptem.
  - As part of the onboarding processes, all applicants to the programmes will have an initial needs assessment prior to the start of the programmes to assess their prior learning. This will help to ensure that all learning on the programmes is new learning.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this because the education provider has noted that there are no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
  - There is equality, diversity and inclusion information available on the education provider's website. The information demonstrates the education provider's aim to ensure that the admission and recruitment process ensures that no one receives less favourable treatment because of characteristics protected by UK legislation.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the institution runs.
  - We think this because the education provider has informed us there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

**Non-alignment requiring further assessment:** None.

Management and governance

### Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register<sup>1</sup>** –
  - The education provider's internal validation process helps to ensure all aspects of the programmes including aims, learning outcome and programme specification; curriculum design, currency of content and organisation; learner guidance and learner support etc have been considered.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Sustainability of provision** –
  - The education provider noted they have a Continuous Enhancement Planning (CEP) process that supports the quality assurance of their taught programmes and enhances the learner experience through incremental and focused improvement. The CEP supports programme teams in:
    - maintaining academic standards;
    - improving the quality of learning opportunities;
    - enhancing the learner learning experience by an ongoing, evidence informed monitoring process; and
    - allowing school and education provider oversight to identify and develop strategic improvement initiatives.
  - As part of ensuring the sustainability of provision, all programmes offered by the education provider and their collaborative partners undergo a process of periodic review every six years. Through this process, re-development and re-approval of the programme is done.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Effective programme delivery** –
  - All of the above as noted under Sustainability of provision also help to ensure effective programme delivery.
  - In addition, the education provider has a Student Performance Monitoring Group (SPMG) which is a group of academic data experts that consider all university-level and subject-level learner entry and performance-related data. This also includes data on provision delivered by its collaborative partners.
  - Programme Specifications, and Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports consider the management of the programme and support for learner learning; external examiner reports; module and programme outcomes; and learner feedback.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.

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

- We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
  - Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures ensure advice on people management issues is available from a dedicated HR Business Partner. The education provider’s appraisal policy ensures new academic staff undergo a 12-month probation period. All staff then take part in an annual appraisal process.
  - The education provider’s HR Learning and Organisational Development helps to ensure staff have access to a wide range of professional and personal development. This is done through a staff development process and access to the resources offered by the Learning and Organisational Development team and Centre for Learning, Access and Student Success (CLASS).
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
  - The education provider noted this is not applicable, meaning there are no partnerships relating to the new programmes which are managed at the institution level.
  - The education provider has structures and processes that support partnerships which are managed at institution level. These include Collaborative Partnerships, Handbook and Apprentices, Partner Approval, Placement Agreement, and National Education & Training Survey.
  - The education provider noted they have a recognised process for considering and managing collaborative partners both overseas and in the UK. Each collaborative partner has an identified University Link Tutor to provide support and guidance.
  - There is a legal signed placement agreement in place with each provider that supports learners on placements. Health and Social Care learners engage with the National Education & Training Survey providing feedback on their respective placement experience
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

**Non-alignment requiring further assessment:** None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

**Findings on alignment with existing provision:**

- **Academic quality –**
  - Continuous Enhancement Planning, Structure and assessment regulations – undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes, Programme Specifications, Student and Applicant Complaints are

some of the policies and processes that the education provider uses to ensure academic quality.

- Structure and assessment regulations – undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes are developed to give effect to a resolution by the Academic Board that Common Assessment Regulations and a Common Academic Structure should be adopted for all taught programmes, modules and credit-bearing short courses capable of leading to awards at the education provider.
- Programme staff are supported day-to-day in all matters of academic quality by an Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality). The University Centre for Academic Quality Assurance provides oversight of all academic quality matters.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
  - The Placement Audit Tool, Practice Complaints Policy and Placement Feedback surveys are the policies and procedures that the education provider uses to ensure practice quality.
  - There is a health placements team that supports the administration of placements. There is a placement agreement in place with all the Trusts and private, independent and voluntary organisations (PIVOs) that provide placements. This agreement outlines both party's responsibilities, including quality of placement and safety.
  - Monitoring of placement provision is led by the Clinical Lead with oversight from the Associate Dean (Academic Quality Assurance).
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Learner involvement –**
  - Student Representatives are appointed each year to represent learners' academic interests. They will listen to their peers' feedback on academic issues and work in partnership with academic staff to improve and enhance the programme. The representatives will be members of the Programme Committee, ensuring the learner voice is heard.
  - Health & Social Care learners use the National Education and Training survey as a mechanism to provide feedback on their practice placements and is managed at National level.
  - Programme level audit is another mechanism to collect learner feedback on their practice placement experience. Learners can also complete the Student Voice questionnaire for each module to provide their feedback.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

- **Service user and carer involvement –**
  - The education provider has a Service User and Public Involvement (SUPI) strategy. This ensures service users are engaged in the development of the programme which may include focus groups or as members of the Development Committee from the outset of the development.
  - The education provider noted that service user and carer involvement will be embedded through the programmes including appropriate teaching and learning experiences, assessments and programme monitoring and evaluation.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

**Non-alignment requiring further assessment:** None.

### Learners

#### **Findings on alignment with existing provision:**

- **Support –**
  - There is a wide range of support available to learners on these programmes. Some of these include Student wellbeing which supports learners with any emotional, mental health, disability and health related issues which they may experience throughout their time at the education provider.
  - Other support provided include accommodation support, student safety, medical centre, financial support, carer and parent support, careers and employment service, chaplaincy, and student union.
  - At programme level, learners will be supported by a Year Tutor, and a named personal tutor. Academic skills advice is available within the School and at the education provider level provided by the Student Success and Academic Skills team
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
  - The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) procedure ensures learners declare to their employer, who work in partnership with the education provider to deliver the programme. The declaration would provide information that shows if the learner has acquired a positive record related to any criminal activity which is after their initial DBS enhanced disclosure.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**

- The education provider noted their IPE strategy in the School of Health & Social Work which details the IPE provision and expectations for all programmes leading to professional registration. There is an IPE steering group that ensures adherence to the strategy, shares good practices, and develops new IPE activities within the school.
- The education provider noted that inter-professional learning will be embedded through the programmes and opportunities to learn together and about other professions will be a feature of the programme as it is developed.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
  - The education provider has an Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policy which ensures they are committed to advancing equality of opportunity, embracing and celebrating the diversity of their community, and fostering a cohesive and inclusive culture.
  - Best practice EDI principles are embedded into teaching and learning activities and learners on the programmes will be able to contact the education provider's EDI team.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

**Non-alignment requiring further assessment:** None.

### Assessment

#### **Findings on alignment with existing provision:**

- **Objectivity –**
  - The Assessments and Examinations (undergraduate and taught postgraduate) and conferment is a policy that is set at institution level and applies to all programmes. The policy provides information around the setting, review, submission, marking and moderation of examinations and assessments.
  - Regulations and Procedures relating to the setting, review, submission, marking and moderation of examinations and assessments ensure learners are “assessed effectively” in accordance with the expectations of the Office for Students Ongoing Condition of Registration B4. This means the learners are assessed in a challenging and appropriately comprehensive way, consistent with the level of study.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Progression and achievement –**

- The education provider noted that results of assessments will be considered by a Module and Programme Board of Examiners. We understood this process ratifies and confirms academic credit attained, to enable the Exam Board to determine the learner's progress to the next year of study (if appropriate), or an academic award as appropriate.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.
- **Appeals –**
  - Assessments and Examinations - Regulations for Students (including requests for the review of assessment decisions (Appeals Procedure)) (University - delivered provision) is the policy that ensures learners are made aware of the informal and formal appeals process. This information will also be provided in their Programme Handbook.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there will be no changes to how the new programmes meet this area.

**Non-alignment requiring further assessment:** None.

### **Outcomes from stage 1**

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

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

- The education provider noted that existing space will be used for the programmes and all resources will be available by January 2025.
- The education provider noted additional staff are being recruited and will be in place prior to the start of the programme.
- The education provider noted their success with the Office for Students to develop new degree apprenticeship programmes will also ensure additional funding to develop the programmes.

**Risks identified which may impact on performance:** None

**Outstanding issues for follow up:** None

### **Section 3: Programme-level assessment**

#### **Programmes considered through this assessment**

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography (Degree Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Radiographer, Diagnostic Radiographer	20 learners, 1 cohort per year	20/01/2025
BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography (Degree Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Radiographer, Therapeutic Radiographer	20 learners, 1 cohort per year	20/01/2025

## Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

The education provider was asked to demonstrate how they meet programme level standards for each programme. They supplied information about how each standard was met, including a rationale and links to supporting information via a mapping document.

## Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their submission. Based on our understanding, we defined and undertook the following quality assurance activities linked to the quality themes referenced below. This allowed us to consider whether the education provider met our standards.

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

### Quality theme 1 – process in place for ensuring availability and capacity of practice-based learning

**Area for further exploration:** The education provider submitted details about practice-based learning sites and numbers. They also provided the Placement Learning Agreement. However, there was no detail provided on the process to ensure availability and capacity for all learners. We understood diagnostic and radiotherapy departments will provide practice-based learning for the learners. However, we could not determine what impact this would have on the available places for the other radiography learners at this education provider. The visitors therefore requested to see evidence of how the education provider will ensure availability and capacity of practice-based learning other than the Society of Radiographers (SoR) proforma that was submitted. The visitors requested to know what employers have been engaged to take the learners and any impact this may have on practice-based learning for the current BSc programmes.



**Quality activities agreed to explore theme further:** We explored this through email correspondence and additional evidence as we considered these were the most appropriate ways to receive the clarification needed.

**Outcomes of exploration:** For both programmes, the education provider explained that they have engaged with individual Radiography departments regarding apprentice applications but would be unable to begin formal processes until HCPC approval is obtained. Therefore, they noted they did not have finalised partners yet. However, we were informed that during the programme validation consultations, several practice-based learning partners expressed interest in sending apprentices to the education provider. They noted the partners are committed to the programme and understand that apprentices are primarily their employees. They explained that practice providers are confident in managing their employees' experiences alongside their responsibilities for pre-registration learners.

The education provider submitted evidence to demonstrate that engagement has taken place with practice education providers to ensure their commitment to the programmes. For example, we noted evidence such as the Development Committee minutes and feedback from employers through Employer Consultations highlighting the benefits of the programmes. The education provider also submitted a list of Trusts that have shown interest including the numbers of apprentices they will be sending. They also provided several email communications between them and employers showing employers' commitment to send apprentices on to the programmes.

The diagnostic programme team also noted that through discussions, they have confirmed that no changes were needed to the practice-based learning for their existing full time BSc programme. They added that the programme design aligns apprentice practice-based learning time with the pre-registration Master's programme, avoiding clashes with undergraduate provision. Also, they noted both the pre-registration MSc, and the apprenticeship are small programmes, so practice-based learning capacity is not currently at risk. We understood practice educators from Trusts involved in the development of the proposed programme support the model as it does not impact BSc education practice-based learning patterns.

For the therapeutic programme, the education provider added that practice-based learning availability is assured through audits, Radiotherapy Clinical Liaison meetings (RTCLM) discussions, and learner feedback. We understood a new multi-professional clinical survey tool will be introduced to collect data on practice-based learning experiences and monitor their impact from a learner perspective.

The visitors were satisfied with the response and following the quality, they had no further concerns.

Quality theme 2 – ensuring adequate number of appropriately qualified staff in practice-based learning

**Area for further exploration:** We noted the practice-based learning audit document which included one blank example. We were aware additional information could be provided if required. There was no information provided to demonstrate there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning. Therefore, we could not determine how the programmes met this standard.

The visitors requested to know how the education provider will ensure adequate staffing in practice-based learning. They considered examples of completed audit from current practice providers and evidence of discussion of audits at clinical liaison meetings would help address this.

For the diagnostic programme, we requested further detail on the process that local providers use to ensure adequate practice educators to support the programme. For the therapeutic programme, we requested to know what would happen if audit criteria were not achieved. We asked for examples of completion from current practice providers on other relevant programmes and evidence of discussion of audits at clinical liaison meetings.

**Quality activities agreed to explore theme further:** We explored this through email correspondence and additional evidence as we considered these the most appropriate way to receive the clarification needed.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The diagnostic programme team explained that the employing Trust must ensure qualified and experienced Diagnostic Radiographers work alongside apprentices and appoint a Work-based Mentor (WBM) who is HCPC registered. They noted WBMs are part of the apprenticeship agreements. For both programmes, we understood the academic team collaborates with practice-based learning to meet all criteria and this is overseen by the Clinical Lead. Mentor and assessor training occurs every two years, with records maintained by the education provider's training lead via a SharePoint site. Staff due for updates are invited to training, and those who do not renew their training cannot perform assessments. They noted this structured approach ensures apprentices receive proper guidance and support throughout their training.

We were reassured by the education provider's response that there are appropriate structures in place to ensure practice -based learning staff are adequate and that they are appropriately qualified and experienced. Following the quality activity, the visitors had no further concerns.

### Quality theme 3 – ensuring practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills, and experience

**Area for further exploration:** We noted no information was provided that gave assurance the practice educators would have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. Therefore, we could not determine how the education provider will ensure this and as such we requested more information on this. We requested further details on mentor and assessor training and requirements to be appointed as a mentor / practice educator.

For the Diagnostic programme, we also requested to see evidence of training offered and any example of how this was logged.

**Quality activities agreed to explore theme further:** We explored this through email correspondence and additional evidence as we considered these the most appropriate ways to receive the clarification needed.

**Outcomes of exploration:** For diagnostic radiography, the education provider explained that all practice educators, mentors, and assessors will be registered with the HCPC and receive mentorship and assessment training every two years. We understood the placement audit will collect information on the number of assessors and mentors, whether a specific practice educator is in place, and the names of apprentice work-based mentors.

The therapeutic programme team also confirmed that employers are required to ensure their radiotherapy departments have practice educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience, who are registered with the HCPC as a therapeutic radiographer. They confirmed all mentors, assessors, and practice educators are on the relevant part of the HCPC register, with their numbers collected in the placement audit. They also noted that mentors undergo initial training with the education provider and every two years thereafter.

The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's response to the issues raised. Following the quality activity, they have no further concerns.

## Section 4: Findings

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

### Conditions

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

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

### Overall findings on how standards are met

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

### Findings of the assessment panel:

- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment
- **SET 2: Programme admissions** –
  - The education provider noted all entry criteria include both academic requirements and professional standards, ensuring they align with apprenticeship standards for entry. Additionally, they noted they meet the education provider’s degree entry requirements.
  - The programme specifications detail the entry requirements for both programmes. For example, they state applicants should have at least a minimum of English Language Grade 4 (C grade); Maths Grade 4 (C grade). As equivalence, applicants are expected to have Functional Skills Level 2 in English & Maths. 6 credits in English and Maths at a minimum of level 2 as part of an Access diploma will also be accepted. Admission guidelines are also provided on the education provider’s website.
  - The visitors were satisfied that the information provided demonstrated that the appropriate academic and professional entry standards are being applied for the programmes.
  - The visitors therefore determined this standard is met.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
  - The education provider noted collaboration between them and employers via regular Radiotherapy Clinical Liaison meetings (RTCLM) occurring every three months. There are also tripartite reviews every 12 weeks. There’s an audit process in place and employer consultation events were held to help develop the programmes. The visitors considered there is a clear structure of scheduled and unscheduled communication between the education provider and their practice education providers.
  - Detail on practice-based learning numbers for sites and who the sites were shared with, was provided along with the Placement Learning Agreement. Through [quality theme 1](#), we were able to establish that there are formal processes in place that would ensure all learners have access to practice-based learning which meets their learning needs.
  - Staff support is provided at 24.4 and 10.45 full time equivalent (FTE) for the Diagnostic and the Therapeutic Radiography programmes respectively at the education provider. This is for both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The visitors considered staffing numbers indicate sufficient resource to deliver the programmes effectively.
  - Staff curricula vitae (CVs) indicate a range of expertise is available from within the programme teams and demonstrates the programmes will be delivered with educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise. We also noted many staff on the Diagnostic Radiography programme have additional qualifications in specialist areas.
  - Regarding the resources to support learning, details were provided about the online learning platform. The education provider noted all taught resources are kept there and are accessible to all learners. We understood the Radiotherapy computer labs are being expanded to double their capacity from 16 to 32 booths, with completion expected by October 2024. The education provider noted this expansion, which

includes additional monitors, software, and furniture, was funded by a recently approved education provider investment panel bid.

- The visitors were satisfied that the evidence showed the education provider collaborates effectively with practice education providers to ensure adequate practice-based learning and that the programmes are adequately resourced.
- The visitors therefore determined that the programmes have met all relevant standards within this SET area.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
  - HCPC Standards of proficiency (SOPs) mapped across the learning outcomes for the programmes demonstrates that learners who complete the programme will be able to meet all the learning outcomes and achieve all the SOPs.
  - We understood all successful applicants will start the programme after a Values Based Recruitment process that emphasises NHS Values and these values are consistently referenced throughout the programmes. Professionalism, a key focus in both the preparation for practice and clinical modules, is outlined in the Programme Specifications and Programme Handbooks. We noted the mapping to the SOPs takes account of the revised competencies published in 2023 to ensure the programmes reflect current requirements.
  - The programme and module specifications outline the philosophy and values and how these will be taught and assessed throughout the programmes.
  - The curriculum has been mapped against the HCPC SOPs, Society of radiographers (SOR) Education and Career Framework and the Apprenticeship Standard's Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) (Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education). This demonstrates how the programmes reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base.
  - We noted engagement with current clinical practitioners and service managers and the education provider has considered current workforce strategies and requirements. Patient scenarios will be used within the modules encouraging learners to apply enquiry-based learning. This will require learners to search the current evidence base and discuss and debate the appropriate, expected or innovative ideas for patient management. We understood three of the staff team continue to work as clinicians which will also assist in the currency of materials used.
  - The programmes are designed to integrate theory and practice learning by threading practice-based learning throughout levels 4, 5 and 6. This was evidenced with timetable and organisation of the programmes.
  - The learning outcomes clearly highlight the learning and teaching methods. Blended learning approach with lecture recordings demonstrate how the programmes ensure effective delivery of the learning outcomes.
  - There is additional use of clinical skills/simulation suites to ensure wherever possible theory can be put into practice in a controlled environment.

- The visitors identified modules that relate to the development of autonomous and reflective thinking and there are learning outcomes which directly link to this. For example, for the Diagnostic Radiography programme, learning outcome B4 relates to demonstrating a clear understanding of the role of continuing professional development and to be able to reflect critically upon their performance and practice.
- Evidence of how the delivery of the programmes support and develop evidence-based practice is seen in the programme specifications and reflected in the module content. This is particularly seen in the Leadership and Autonomous Practice and Transition to Therapeutic Radiographer Apprentice modules.
- For the Therapeutic Radiography programme, learners will undertake reflective tasks in relation to their practice-based learning periods during and after their practice-based learning. This is in addition to developing an understanding of the theory and importance of reflection in academic modules.
- Further clarification was sought to understand where the skills of evidence-based practice is taught on the Diagnostic Radiography programme. We understood that at the start of the programme and during transitions to higher levels, learners will have sessions on literature searching, finding evidence sources, and critiquing evidence for validity and reliability. The education provider also noted that clinical practice modules consistently reference the evidence base for techniques and imaging modalities, incorporating current research, clinical practice, legislation, and regulations. This was also clearly outlined in some modules, for example, 5HSK2059 Evidence Based Practice for Radiography Apprentices and 5HSK2056 Legislation & Ethics for Radiography Practice.
- There was clear evidence that all the standards within this SET area have been met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
  - Information provided within the Submission Document and the Programme Specification indicates practice-based learning is integral to the programmes. The education provider noted that all learners on the Diagnostic Radiography programme must successfully complete a minimum of 1000 hours of practice-based learning. For the Therapeutic Radiography programme, the education provider noted a minimum of 1200 hours is required. We understood the majority of the practice-based learning will take place in the Trust in which the learner is employed. However, if there is a specialist radiotherapy technique or service that is not offered by that department, we understood the learner will undertake an ‘elective’ practice-based learning to meet the outcomes for the programme.
  - We understood the elective practice-based learning will have a placement agreement in place and have undergone normal audit and approval processes which ensure there is a satisfactory number of practice staff in place who have the appropriate qualifications, education and training to support learners. The education provider explained that where the elective practice-based learning is a new site, the ‘New Provider’ process will be implemented. This involves a visit to

the site by the Clinical Lead, a practice-based learning audit to check the standards and support in place to enable safe and effective learner learning, and training of staff.

- The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning are highlighted in the programme specifications and other supporting documentation. This is clearly seen in for example, module 4HSK2048 General Radiography of the Appendicular Skeleton. It is also evidenced in module 5H2058 Computed Tomography: Science and Applications and 6HSK2086 Applications of Complex Imaging alongside other modules across all levels.
- For Therapeutic Radiography, practice-based learning is designed to follow a period of theoretical learning to explore the key concepts of imaging which are then practiced in the practice-based learning setting. This is in addition to the learners' contracted workplace hours.
- As outlined in [quality theme 2](#), we were reassured that there are appropriate structures in place to ensure practice -based learning staff are adequate and that they are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- Similarly, as detailed in [quality theme 3](#), we received further evidence that demonstrated practice educators have the relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support staff in practice-based learning.
- Through the initial submission and the quality activity, the visitors were satisfied that the programmes have met all standards within this SET area.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
  - The visitors noted the assessment design. This included essays, reports, presentations, Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE), viva, posters, and authentic assessment activities (such as performing a radiological investigation in a simulated environment).
  - The education provider uses a wide range of assessment types, including individual and group work, different kinds of coursework to avoid disadvantaging individuals within a learner group that has varying ways of learning.
  - The standards of conduct, performance and ethics are clearly embedded into the learning outcomes of the modules and practice-based assessment. Professionalism and behaviour are integral to passing each practice-based learning.
  - The assessment methods used have been designed to ensure learners undertake a variety of assessment types to build transferable skills whilst ensuring the assessment method is relevant to the learning outcome.
  - The visitors were satisfied that all standards within this SET area have been met.

**Risks identified which may impact on performance:** None.

## Section 5: Referrals

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process

### **Recommendations**

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

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

## **Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes**

### **Assessment panel recommendation**

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

### **Education and Training Committee decision**

Education and Training Committee considered the assessment panel's recommendations and the findings which support these. The education provider was also provided with the opportunity to submit any observation they had on the conclusions reached.

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that the programmes are approved.

**Reason for this decision:** The panel accepted the visitors' recommendation that the programme should receive approval.



## Appendix 1 – summary report

If the education provider does not provide observations, only this summary report (rather than the whole report) will be provided to the Education and Training Committee (Panel) to enable their decision on approval. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation, and the nature, quality and facilities of the provision.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
University of Hertfordshire	CAS-01513-V9F1V4	Jane day  Rachel Picton	Through this assessment, we have noted the programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.	Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The education provider noted that existing space will be used for the programmes and all resources will be available by January 2025.</li> <li>• The education provider noted additional staff are being recruited and will be in place prior to the start of the programme.</li> <li>• The education provider noted their success with the Office for Students to develop new degree apprenticeship programmes will also ensure additional funding to develop the programmes.</li> </ul>

<b>Programmes</b>		
<b>Programme name</b>	<b>Mode of study</b>	<b>Nature of provision</b>
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging	WBL (Work based learning)	• Apprenticeship
BSc (Hons) Therapeutic Radiography	WBL (Work based learning)	• Apprenticeship

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

<b>Name</b>	<b>Mode of study</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Modality</b>	<b>Annotation</b>	<b>First intake date</b>
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging	FT (Full time)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	01/09/2000
BSc (Hons) Dietetics	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/09/2006
BSc (Hons) Dietetics with a Year Abroad	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy (Degree Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Occupational therapist			01/01/2021
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2004
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/1993
BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology	FT (Full time)	Radiographer		Therapeutic radiographer	01/09/2000
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist		Clinical psychologist	01/01/2000
MA Art Therapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Art therapy		01/09/2002
MA Art Therapy	PT (Part time)	Arts therapist	Art therapy		01/09/2002
MSc Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging (Pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Radiographer		Diagnostic radiographer	01/01/2022
MSc Paramedic Science (Pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Paramedic			20/01/2025
MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2022
Practice Certificate in Independent Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2018
Practice Certificate in Supplementary Prescribing for Diagnostic Radiographers and Dietitians	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/01/2017

