Performance review process report

University of Portsmouth, 2018-2021

Executive summary

This report covers our performance review of the programmes offered by the University of Portsmouth. During this review, the visitors explored quality themes relating to how the education provider has ensured their programmes have continued to run post-pandemic, ensured placement capacity, and addressed learner feedback and input into the programmes. The visitors also noted some areas of good practice demonstrated by the provider regarding their systems for quality assurance and feedback from external examiners.

The visitors have recommended a review period of five years. This is due to the education provider's performance indicating a low risk to the quality of their programmes and the education provider has appropriate and well-planned strategies moving forward. The visitors agreed five years is appropriate to the low risk and will ensure the education provider can reflect on new data, implementation of strategies and actions moving forward. This report has been considered by our Education and Training Panel who have agreed the final decision on the on the review period.

Previous consideration	This is the first time this education provider is going through the current performance review process; however, they have previously been through the legacy processes. Their last annual monitoring 2018-2019.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) were asked to decide: • when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: • The education provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 academic year.

Included within this report

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:

Luke Ewart	Lead visitor, Operating Department Practitioner
Gordon Pollard	Lead visitor, Paramedic
Sheba Joseph	Service User Expert Advisor
Saranjit Binning	Education Quality Officer
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers five HCPC-approved programmes across five professions. It is a Higher Education Institute (HEI) and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2015.
University of Portsmouth is in the Southeast region of England. There are no ongoing issues identified within the region that could impact on the provider's performance/ quality. There was one main theme that flowed throughout the portfolio, which is how the education provider is constantly developing new ways of enhancing the learning and teaching experience for learners.

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	Operating Department Practitioner	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2016
	Paramedic	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2015
	Physiotherapist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2022
	Practitioner psychologist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2016
	Radiographer	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2017

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	319	439	2022	The number of learners enrolled is higher than the benchmark. The education provider has reflected on this in the portfolio, showing how they determine learner numbers in response to sector demands whilst

enrolment numbers				ensuring there are appropriate resources and funding available.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	5%	2019-20	The value is significantly higher than the benchmark. The education provider has provided a narrative in the portfolio, acknowledging the impact the pandemic had on their learners. They have increased learner support to address this, and the visitors were satisfied with their response.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	95%	2018-19	The percentage in employment / further study is higher than the benchmark, which indicates graduates make good progress with securing employment opportunities and progressing to further study. The education provider has reflected on this, acknowledging their need to maintain this good outcome.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Gold	June 2017	A Gold award would indicate that the education provider is consistently delivering outstanding teaching, learning and outcomes for its learners. This is a great outcome, and the education provider has reflected on how they plan to maintain this result.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	74.1%	76.5%	2021	This is a positive score and above the benchmark. The education provider has maintained their learner satisfaction levels during the pandemic and has reflected on the challenges they have overcome. The visitors were satisfied with their performance.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	TBC	2018-21	The visitors have recommended a monitoring period of five years, appropriate to low risk and sufficient time for the education provider to implement strategies and plans in response to the visitors concerns. This will be confirmed by the Education and Training Panel (ETP).

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.

We sought out clarification on each quality theme via email communication to allow the education provider to elaborate on previous information they had sent or send further evidence documents to answer the queries.

We have reported on how the education provider is performing on all areas, including the areas below, through the Summary of findings section.

Quality theme 1 – Returning to normal practice post-pandemic.

Area for further exploration: The education provider gave an overview of each of their programmes and how they have maintained stability of them during the review period. It was unclear how the education provider's Business Continuity Planning supported programmes relating to changes influenced by the pandemic. There were regarding changes to government COVID guidance, staff and learner absence due to sickness and reduction in placements and partnerships. The visitors explored how the education provider plans to address these potential issues, and if there is an action plan in place to return to normal practice after restrictions were lifted. It is important education providers can appropriately plan for and react to sector wide issues to appropriately support learners and programme stability.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined how they introduced a Standard Operating Procedure to ensure programmes returned to normal operation post-pandemic. Programmes adjusted to a blended delivery of online and face-to-face in response to feedback from learners and staff. Extra support was put in place to support learners and staff who reported as sick during the pandemic . They ensured the teaching elements of the programme were available more flexibility to not disadvantage learners.

The education provider demonstrated awareness of the potential placement capacity issues. They are planning to broaden their network of placement opportunities to private providers, GP practices and other venues. They are also working on developing simulated placement opportunities to provide a degree of resilience and flexibility which is supported by Health Education England (HEE) funding. The education provider has grown their online learning platforms since the start of the pandemic and stated how plans and experiences from the previous lock-down can be easily re-introduced to support the programme delivery. The visitors were

satisfied there are a range of mechanisms in place to ensure programmes can continue to be delivered and developed in line with changes to the pandemic. They agreed they have demonstrated they can appropriately support learners and staff, ensure placement security and respond to emerging guidance.

Quality theme 2 – Securing practice placements for programmes.

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined there have been challenges in placement delays, extensions, and availability to ensure learners had sufficient hours and experience. The visitors noted the education provider states there are placement agreements and standards in place, however it was unclear how these are ensuring placements are secured for learners. The information in the submission suggests placement contracts are not being honoured, and it was unclear what effect this will have on placement capacity.

The visitors explored how the education provider is ensuring placement capacity at programme level, and how placement agreements are mitigating against future disruption to placement capacity. It is important there are processes in place to ensure the appropriate capacity of practice placement opportunities for learners in all cohorts.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider states how they have created positive relationships with placement providers and other HEIs. They often meet with other HEI education providers who they share placements with to discuss arising issues. They work with NHS Trusts providing placements to ensure placement numbers remain constant. For their Diagnostic Radiography & Medical Imaging (DRMI) learners, they stated how some of their placement providers have been accepting learners from different organisations. This resulted in a decrease in capacity for the education provider's learners. They have a meeting planned with HEE Southwest and other relevant stakeholders to discuss a resolution to this.

They implemented creative rosters to include contextual placements so that learners are rotated to areas outside of their programme profession to gain generic healthcare skills and an understanding of the wider organisation of the NHS. Where learners were not able to access placements, the education provider amended the year plan to provide alternative placement opportunities at different stages of the programme. Where they have experience, practice placements decrease their capacity to support learners. The education provider has met with the practice area to try to establish if there are different ways to roster the learners to increase capacity.

For their paramedic programme, the education provider has an agreed number of placements with the South-Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) which is renegotiated annually. Furthermore, they acknowledge how physiotherapy placements have been a challenge, but are addressing this through successfully sourcing NHS placements to increase capacity. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is aware of current and ongoing issues with placement capacity and have appropriate mechanisms in place to deal with these.

Quality theme 3 – Managing unconscious bias.

Area for further exploration: The education provider stated how there are several mechanisms to ensure support and training for staff relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). It was unclear if there are any approaches towards addressing unconscious bias, therefore the visitors explored how the education provider managers potential unconscious bias from staff. It is important the education provider considers all aspects of EDI and ensures staff are appropriately trained to support all learners.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider stated they are dedicated to ensuring equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity and inclusion for the benefit of staff and learners. They outlined how all staff are required to undertake training in unconscious bias awareness, as well as several other EDI related courses. They also encouraged staff to complete the Harvard Bias Implicit Analysis Test although it is not a requirement, and there is other training available to staff. They have also developed the Inclusive Leadership Programme, in conjunction with AdvanceHE. This aims to develop and embed a more inclusive approach to leadership and the overall culture of the institution for both staff and learners. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is ensuring staff are supported and trained in all aspects of EDI, including unconscious bias.

Quality theme 4 – Managing the impact of a new medical school on existing provision

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined how they are in the early stages of preparing a bid to open a new medical school. Whilst this is a positive development, it was unclear if the education provider has reflected on how this will impact on the current programmes. The visitors explored if the education provider has considered the potential impacts relating to resources, placements etc. on current provision if they open a new medical school. Is it important for the education provider to ensure they are considering the stability of current programmes alongside the development of new provisions.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider identifies how they application to the General Medical Council (GMC) must demonstrate how a new medical school provision will not negatively impact negatively on current provision. This in particular covers placement capacity, therefore the education provider states how they have focused on placement creation to increase capacity. They have reflected on the multiple positive impacts the new medical school could have on current provision, including recruitment, collaborative teaching and shared resources.

They outlined how financial budgets are managed at faculty level and therefore financial resources will be managed appropriately to sustain all programmes. They plan to source new placements from general practices (GPs) they have not previously worked with. They are supporting primary care trusts to increase capacity and be better prepared to support learners on placement. The visitors were satisfied there are processes in place to ensure the development of a new medical school will not negatively impact on the education provider's current provision.

Quality theme 5 – Learner input into the move to blended learning

Area for further exploration: The education provider stated how they underwent a major curriculum restructure in 2018-19 where all courses and modules were reviewed. From the reflections provided, it was unclear how they determined how much face-to-face delivery was appropriate on each programme, and if there was learner involvement in this decision. The visitors explored the rational for the education providers approach to face-to-face and online programme delivery, and how learner contribution was involved in the curriculum development. It is important the education provider can rationalise decisions made regarding changes to curriculum, and they are addressing learner input to develop the programmes.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined how the curriculum restructure determined the typical level of contact hours for modules on each programme. They stated how they worked extremely closely with learners on the co-creation of the curriculum framework and the Student Union ensured the learner voice was fed into the project. The education provider has attempted to return to pre-pandemic mechanisms of delivery but have taken learning and asynchronous material forward into the new delivery where learners will benefit. It has been communicated to staff to encourage learner engagement and return to face-to-face learning, in response to a drop in learner attendance on campus. Elements of the programmes which remained online have been thoroughly considered in terms of timetabling and benefits to learners. The visitors were satisfied the curriculum, restructure has appropriately considered the needs for face-to-face compared to online programme delivery, and this is to benefit learners. They agreed there is clear input and consideration of learner feedback in these decisions.

Quality theme 6 – Addressing concerning learner failure on a module

Area for further exploration: The education provider receives and addresses external examiner (EE) reports on the competition of assessments, which are sent to each faculty for initial review. The education provider noted several fails in one module on the Professional Doctorate in Sport and Exercise Psychology programme. It was unclear what issues were discussed and addressed by the education provider relating to this. The visitors explored what issues were identified and how these were resolved. It is important there is a process to investigate anomalous results to ensure any issues can be addressed in an appropriate way.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained how the module's assessments were doubled marked and verified independently. This was by teaching staff and then by another suitably experienced team members. The institutional moderation process was used to resolve any discrepancies in the marks allocated to learners, where both markers met to discuss the issue and agree on the final mark. This was submitted to the EE with a moderation form and sample of the work. They met virtually with the EE, and it was discovered how only learners who did not submit any item or had incomplete submissions failed the module, and a resit was recommended. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has sufficiently addressed the anomalous result for this module and had appropriate processes in place to address any issues.

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 education provider has reflected on their history of running and appropriately developing programmes in collaboration with relevant professional bodies and other regulators. Annually they complete strategic and financial planning for all faculties. The faculty of Science and Health is the largest within the education provider. Its scale of operation and ability to generate positive contributions evidences its long-term sustainability and value to the education provider.
  - They outlined how as an education provider they have managed the inflationary cost which is increasing annually by making efficiency savings in overall cost based alongside increasing income from other sources. At departmental level, they reflected how they have achieved the second highest financial contribution to the faculty. This is whilst maintaining a consistent level of investment in their facilities and equipment. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has evidenced a financial surplus and is investing money into infrastructure, equipment, and their programmes. They agreed they have demonstrated financial and resourcing stability.

- **Partnerships with other organisations:**
  - The education provider has worked with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHT) for over 20 years. This was formalised by a Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2019. They state the relationship enhances joint clinical and academic excellence to improve the health and wellbeing of the people in the local community. They state they are developing their broader health and care partnerships with NHS Trusts which have provided access to expertise, funding, patient groups and data. It has also enabled them to make significant and scientifically diverse contributions to the national response to the pandemic.
  - The education provider outlined several different partnerships with external organisations which provide opportunities and experiences to their learners. These were used to develop learners during their programmes and prepare them for the working environment post-study. The education provider outlined how each faculty also has its own placement office that works closely with learners and academic staff to manage work placements, exchanges, and other activities. The visitors were satisfied there is appropriate reflection of the education provider

networking, maintaining relevant partnerships and collaborative working.

- **Academic and placement quality:**
  - o The education provider introduced a new, risk-based system of quality assurance. This is based around institutional supplied data for different aspects of the programmes, learner performance and feedback. They have institutional level policies used to regularly monitor and review their academic quality. They hold meetings with senior staff to review quality reports, in particular the action plan components, for further development and enhancement.
  - o Excellence and Quality Improvement Plans (EQuIPs) are produced by programme leaders. The EQuIP reports are live documents and progress with action plans is reported to the University Quality Assurance Committee through the year to ensure that actions are being completed suitably. There are a range of mechanisms to ensure quality of programmes, including:
    - range of committees looking at course development,
    - learner voice,
    - assessment reviews,
    - reviews of feedback (internal and external),
    - surveying of learners at module and programme level
  - o They have reflected how the pandemic has impacted on the capacity and therefore quality of learner placements. They are working with placements to ensure more formal commitments are made, as well as developing new relationships to increase capacity. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately monitoring and ensuring continued quality of teaching and placements.

- **Interprofessional education:**
  - o The education provider outlined how they have several examples of interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities for learners. In year 2 of their programmes groups of healthcare professional learners work together to solve problems and compare roles in a facilitated group tutorial setting.
  - o The education provider outlined how they have developed an IPE tutorial programme has been launched across several of their programmes. Learners have the opportunity to learn from other professionals in years two and three. The education provider outlines the IPE opportunities across their programmes, which includes events, training, scenarios, group work and teaching activities which involve working across professions. They outlined how there are learning objectives and outcomes for learners to meet, and how this structure will continue, increasing opportunities across programmes where applicable.
  - o The education provider reflected on the drop in IPE opportunities for learners during the pandemic and how they have ensured this has returned post-pandemic. They aim to continue developing these opportunities with local stakeholders and staff support.

- o The visitors were satisfied the education provider performed well in this area as all programmes have a good range of profession mixes, and relevant ranges of problem-solving scenarios. They agreed feedback on the multidisciplinary aspects of the programmes and placement activities is consistently good.

- **Service users and carers:**
  - o The education provider's faculty of Health and Care Professions has recently drafted a Service user and carer (SU&C) strategy document which other programmes have adopted. They also have a Service User and Patient Participation and Advisory Group who help develop a collaborative culture between academic staff and SU&Cs. All programmes have SU&Cs who are involved in learner admissions and interviews. Any programme changes go through SU&C consultation.
  - o The education provider outlined how they received feedback from the SU&C group Health Watch Portsmouth during one of the service user group meetings. This feedback indicated the group would like to engage in some way with assessment of Operating Department Practice (ODP) learners in the clinical practice area. The education provider responded by creating a form with collaboration with the group which is now part of the learners' practice assessment document for all years of the programme. They developed formative and summative assessment to be completed by SU&C who are assessing the learners. This is used to aid the practice assessor in assessing the learner with their interaction with SU&Cs.
  - o The visitors were satisfied the education provider supplied good examples of engagement with SU&Cs on their programmes. They agreed the education provider reflected well on how they are developing SU&C involvement in response to feedback.

- **Equality and diversity:**
  - o The education provider holds an Athena Swan Bronze award, is a Race Equality Charter member, Stonewall diversity champion and mindful employer. They have a number of mechanisms in place to support learners relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) including:
    - EDI steering group
    - EDI committee at institutional, faculty and school levels
    - External provider surveys
  - o The education provider reflected on the challenges of gathering appropriate data to help evidence and support effective measures around issues such as learner attainment and awarding gaps. To overcome this, they have analysed institution level data and each school is gathering data on their learners.
  - o The education provider has reflected on their management of unconscious bias in quality theme 3.
  - o They assured the visitors they were appropriate processes in place to support staff and learners. The visitors agreed the institutional level work shows good performance and values EDI. They were satisfied the education provider is appropriately making reasonable adjustments for

social, cultural, religious needs and ensuring the programmes are becoming more accessible.

- **Horizon scanning:**
    - o The education provider reflected on two new strategic projects which could impact on their HCPC-approved programmes. They are in the early stages of preparing a bid to open a new medical school. They have also announced they intend to open a London Campus in 2023. They have reflected on the impact of the new provision on current provision in quality theme 4. They emphasised on how approval of the new programmes will be dependent on their ability to resource this on top of current provision, including placement capacity, staffing and facilities. Furthermore, they identified several benefits of the new provision, including increased IPE, programme recruitment and research ability.
    - o They have identified potential challenges with maintaining and increasing placement capacity in the future. This was explored in quality theme 2. They have recognised this is an ongoing issue, and they are working on building relationships with placement providers to ensure capacity is suitable. They are trying to relieve pressures on placements by proposing contextual placements and changing placement timetables.
    - o The visitors were satisfied the education provider has the structures and systems in place to effectively manage horizon scanning, which they are using to support and inform the business model of the university efficiently and effectively. They are also supporting the professionalism and collegiate relationships and are working hard to resolve issues posed by the pandemic.

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 the education provider's introduction of a new, risk-based quality assurance system was an example of good practice with their information technology (IT) systems.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Impact of COVID-19**:
    - o The education provider has reflected on how the pandemic had significant effects on learners and staff on their programmes. They have had to transition to remote learning and where necessary make exceptions for learners in person. It also caused a reduction in placements and clinic time for learners. They have reflected on how they managed the transition to remote learning to ensure the programmes remained at the same quality and learner achievement stayed constant. They introduced a range of no-detriment practices to

be used at Examination boards, but these were used less than initially expected due to good results being achieved.

- o They reflected on several mitigations they put in place, such as term time adjustments and virtual assessments. They analysed learner and staff progression, support and continuity. They have implemented a Digital Plan to ensure they are prepared for future eventualities of this type, as well as to enhance how learners are taught. They have introduced hybrid working to build on the benefits seen for staff and learners as well as greater uptake of existing flexible working arrangements. They have also demonstrated there are suitable processes in place for returning to normal practice post-pandemic through quality theme 1. The visitors were satisfied with the developments the education provider has made during the pandemic, and the processes they have put in place to continue to improve their programmes.

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods:**
  - o The education provider explained how they are trialling new online platforms and technologies to increase usability and accessibility for learners. This is through a small pilot trial involving one other faculty within the education provider and in the early stages. The education provider is running training sessions for those who are participating in the pilot study. They state how if the trials are successful, and they plan to adopt the new technologies more widely. They will develop extended training programmes to support staff and learners.
  - o The education provider summarised other examples of how they have used technology during the review period:
    - establishment of a joint Technology Trials Unit with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHT)
    - to support learners during the pandemic with faculty wide IPE online sessions
    - to further equality and diversity and help ensure social and cultural needs are catered for through online sessions and handouts
    - increase accessibility of learning on programmes with recorded sessions
  - o The visitors were satisfied the education provider has appropriately reflected on the implementation of new technology. They agree the education provider has suitable plans in place to train staff should they decide to change current online platforms.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies**:

- o The education provider reflected on their knowledge of each of their placement providers Care Quality Commission (CQC) report outcomes. They noted that South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS), where they place the majority of their paramedic learners received an 'inadequate' outcome. To address this, they are reviewed the report internally and planned to meet with SCAS to discuss concerns, seek reassurances and to support them in being able to deliver a high-quality placement experience for our learners. HEE have also formed a steering group to develop an action plan in response to the report and mitigate any impacts on learners.
- o Annually, the education provider collects data from placements through an audit process. There are also mechanisms within partnership agreements for monitoring and ensuring quality assessments. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is addressing potential issues with practice education providers through assessment outcomes from external bodies.

- **National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes:**
  - o The education provider acknowledged some below satisfactory NSS scores for some of their programmes and have reviewed the feedback to find the causes of this. They have identified the disruption caused by the pandemic to be an influencing factor in low learner satisfaction, relating to timetabling and accessing facilities. In response to this, the education provider reviewed timetables and invested in simulation facilities and are planning to review learner feedback on these changes.
  - o The education provider was pleased with learner satisfaction on the Operating Department Practice programme, which achieved above sector average in all but one area. They are aware they need to ensure they maintain this high learner satisfaction moving forward.
  - o The education provider demonstrated they are working with learners in response to their feedback from the NSS outcomes. They planned to hold focus groups made from learners who will help to develop the programmes moving forward. The visitors agreed the pandemic has been a big influence on NSS outcomes and the education provider is responding to learner's views and feedback. They were satisfied with the education provider's performance and reactions to the NSS outcomes, and their plans moving forward to improve performance.

- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies:**
  - o The education provider outlined how their Faculty of Science and Health offers a range of programmes that have involvement from other relevant professional bodies. They have responded to changes in the standards of proficiency (SoP) from HCPC and are internally waiting for sign-off of the completed draft of changes. In 2019 the education provider responded to changes in the Paramedic Curriculum Guidance. The programme team completed a mapping exercise highlighting the need for a review of the programme. They stated the pandemic delayed the start of the process, but they are rewriting the programme

with the view to go through an approvals process over the 2022/23 academic year.
- o The visitors were satisfied the education provider networks with a number of other professional regulators / professional bodies and key stakeholders. They appropriately provide professionals who are competent and able to meet the demands of a current and future workforce.

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:**
  - o The education provider underwent a curriculum restructure in 2018-19 during which they reviewed all programmes and modules. They reflected how this was disrupted by the pandemic, and programmes were given greater flexibility to support learners through the lockdowns. The education provider moved to remote learning techniques and online assessment methodology. They outlined how for the academic year 2021-22, the emphasis had been on getting learners back to the classroom for face-to-face teaching where appropriate. They also reviewed the lessons learned during the pandemic and are developing a university-wide Digital Success for Learning plan. They are planning to operate a blended learning approach, as explored in [quality theme 5](#). Programme teams are evaluating their programmes to decide which elements are most effective face-to-face or online.
  - o They reflected on the challenges staff face with regards to diversity within assessments. To support staff, they have used a range of software, including the enABLe programme which demonstrates other assessment opportunities and advises staff on how they can be implemented. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has appropriately responded to emerging challenges and adjusted their programmes' curriculums appropriately and in a timely manner.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance:**
  - o The education provider outlines how they closely monitored relevant guidance and changes in expectations of professional bodies. They were considering the potential impacts of the changes to Standards of Proficiency (SoPs) for operation department practitioner learners. To prepare for this, they will review their programme teams, practice placements and equipment available. They state they are confidence they will meet the new standards.
  - o The education provider is anticipating revised SoPs for Radiographers and the new Education & Career Framework by the Society and College of Radiographers. This instigated a programme review and additional modules added to ensure all standards are met. Their paramedic programme is expected to go through the approval process

in 2023-24 in response to changes in the College of Paramedic's Paramedic Curriculum Guidance.

- o The visitors were satisfied the education provider has shown they are aware of and responsive to changes in relevant professional body guidance and can address them accordingly.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning:**
  - o The education provider has reflected on the challenges they have faced ensuring appropriate placement capacity. The Operating Department Practice review their placement capacity annually and have reduced the weeks of placement and increased the weekly hours from 30 hrs to 37.5 hours in response to consultations with practice partners and learners. They state how feedback so far has been positive in response to this, and they will continue to monitor the impact.
  - o Their physiotherapy programme has numbers capped at 12 learners to ensure sufficient placement capacity. The education provider has been working with nearby HEIs, local NHS and private placement providers and HEE to map placement demand and provision and work to reduce periods of peak demand. They have recognised there are challenges with placements in this profession and have expressed they take a careful approach to learner recruitment due to this.
  - o They worked to increase the number of placement providers for learners on their paramedic programme. They are also exploring non-ambulance placements within primary care networks. They have recognised the limitations of having only one ambulance placement provider, so are planning to expand this model to support learners. The education providers approach to securing placements was explored in quality theme 2. They reassured the visitors they have reflected on the need to develop positive relationships with placement providers and ensuring timetables work for placements, learners and the programme. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately responding to challenges with placement capacity.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Learners:**
  - o The education provider reflected on how they obtained feedback from learners in a range of ways throughout the year, which are reported, and action plans are created. They produced a "You said, we did" document to show learners how they responded to the 2021 NSS survey. They stated this was part of their promotion to encourage learner response rates for the 2022 survey.
  - o The education provider has reflected on feedback received from learners across all programmes and shown how their actions have

addressed each issue. They identified an issue around lack of communication between learners and staff on their paramedic programme. To address this, they have worked to build a more constructive relationship between staff and learners, regular learners rep meetings, and regular one to one contact between learners and personal tutors. Informal feedback received suggests learners were satisfied with these changes, and they await the next set of NSS results.

- o There was an unusual result regarding a particular module, in which there was a higher learner failure rate than other modules. This was addressed and monitored by the education provider as explored in quality theme 6. The visitors were satisfied this is being addressed and the education provider has reflected appropriately. They were satisfied the education provided has demonstrated appropriate responses to learner feedback and are ensuring learners have an active voice.

- **Practice placement educators:**
  - o The education provider has recognised there were challenges to normal practice with placement educators during the pandemic regarding staff shortages and restrictions. They moved meetings, training, and events to online where appropriate and has resulted in issues being resolved efficiently and quickly. They have supported placement educators through revised pre-placement processes to ensure learner expectations are clear.
  - o They have improved their record keeping ensuring better information sharing between the education provider and placement providers, in response to feedback received from learners and educators. They have also introduced learners sharing feedback with placement educators and programme staff to improve communication. The visitors were satisfied there are ample examples of the education provider responding to placement educator feedback to improve working relationships and the experience for learners.

- **External examiners:**
  - o External examiner (EE) reports are received by a central admin team and sent to the Associate Dean in each faculty for an initial review. The Associate Dean will note any areas of concern or praise for their own quality reporting and highlight to programme teams the areas they may need to focus on. Assessment adjustments during the pandemic were discussed with EE and received good feedback from them.
  - o The education provider outlined some of the positive feedback received from the EEs regarding their leadership, delivering a high-quality programme and communication. One area highlighted by the visitors was an anomalous result of several fails in one module, as explored in quality theme 6. The education provider showed appropriate responses to potential issues and reassured the visitors they are monitoring performance suitably. The visitors were satisfied with the education provider performance relating to their interactions with external examiners.

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 some positive feedback from external examiners. This demonstrated areas of good practice regarding the education provider's communication and transition of assessments during the pandemic.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Aggregation of percentage of learners not continuing**:
  - The education provider has acknowledged how the percentage of learners not continuing can be high for smaller programmes, despite a small number of learners being impacted. They have outlined the reasons for learners not continuing, and despite some being out of their control they have increased the support available for learners. They have expressed how the pandemic effected many learners' continuation on their programmes. They have input improved personal tutorial support for learners and increased signposting to support. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is aware of contributing factors and developing their support for learners in response.

- **Aggregation of percentage of those who complete programmes in employment / further study**:
  - The education provider has outlined their programmes are all in areas where there is strong employment, and all involve significant levels of placement to ensure learners are ready to enter the workplace. Programmes have established networks that assist learners to gain employment. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers reflections on a positive employment/ further study rate of their learners.

- **Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award**:
  - The education provider reflects on their success of achieving a Gold award. They state this is due to offering a distinctive learner experience, outstanding support for its learners, and embedding innovative technology in programmes designed to prepare learners for successful careers. They acknowledge there is a challenge to maintain this, particularly after the impacts of the pandemic. They have an action plan in place to address this and are responding to feedback where appropriate. The visitors were satisfied they are reflecting suitably on this data point.

- **National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)**:
  - The education provider has reflected on the challenges posed by the pandemic which influenced learner satisfaction. These include:
    - transition to online delivery of teaching.
    - impact on the placements.

- impact on simulation teaching.
- communication with learners.
- maintaining quality assurance for teaching and assessment.
  - o They implemented online staff training, simulation placement training, increased learner support and action plans following consultations regarding programmes. Since these actions, they have seen a rise in learner satisfaction. They have received feedback from learners and provided several examples of addressing this. The visitors were satisfied they have evidence they are working with learners to address areas of concern or low learner satisfaction. They have already implemented several improvements and plan to continue this work.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

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 2026-27 academic year

Reason for this recommendation: The visitors have recommended a review period of five years. This is due to the education provider's performance indicating a low risk to the quality of their programmes and the education provider has appropriate and well-planned strategies moving forward. The visitors agreed five years is an appropriate review period to continue to monitor performance and have sufficient data to reflect on the outcomes.

We have come to this recommendation because we consider:
- the education provider is clearly committed to quality assurance.
- the education provider responded positively to the challenges of COVID-19.
- the education provider is high performing from a data, intelligence, and review perspective.
- the education provider responded to any immediate issues raised through the performance review process.

- the education provider does not need to address any remaining issues before a five-year review period.
- performance data and scoring show the education provider is performing well.

Education and Training Committee decision

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

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:
- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2026-27 academic year

Reason for this decision: The Education and Training Panel reviewed the evidence outlined in the report and agreed with the findings of the visitors. They were satisfied with the outcomes, and approved the review period recommended by the visitors.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Medical Imaging	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/2017
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/08/2016
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2015
Cert HE Paramedic Practice	WBL (Work based learning)	Paramedic			01/03/2016
MSc Physiotherapy (Pre-Registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2022
Professional Doctorate in Sport and Exercise Psychology	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Sports and exercise psychologist		01/09/2016