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## Performance review process report

Cardiff University, 2018-2023

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### Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of Cardiff University. This report captures the process we have undertaken to consider the performance of the institution in delivering HCPC-approved programmes. This enables us to make risk-based decisions about how to engage with this provider in the future, and to consider if there is any impact on our standards being met.

We have:

- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission against quality themes and found that we needed to undertake further exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission to consider which themes needed to be explored through quality activities.
- Undertaken quality activities to arrive at our judgement on performance, including when the institution should next be reviewed.
- Recommended when the institution should next be reviewed

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
    - Quality activity 1: The visitors explored through quality activity how learners on different professions learnt from each other. The education provider explained the needs and risks of shared teaching and revised assessments and placement paperwork to focus on working with service users.
    - Quality activity 2: The visitors explored through quality activity how learners on placements on the Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) would continue to be supported during the teach out process. The education provider submitted evidence explaining how they will continue to be supported.
  - The following are areas of best practice:
    - **Service Users and Carer's-** The education provider's approach to involving SUC's education programme adds real world perspectives. This enriches the curriculum and helps learners better understand the needs and challenges of the communities they will serve.
    - **Learners-** The education provider's use of multiple feedback channels is commendable, capturing diverse perspectives and encouraging participation.
  - The education provider should next engage with monitoring in five years, the 2028-2029 academic year, because the education provider engages a range of internal stakeholders, including learners, service users, carers, practice
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educators, partner organizations, and external examiners, to ensure quality assurance and enhancement. Externally, they collaborate with five professional bodies, including the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), incorporating their findings and sector developments to improve their provision. The education provider also utilizes data from external sources to monitor key performance areas, using insights from these data to inform and implement positive changes in their quality assurance processes.

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**Previous consideration** Not applicable. The performance review process was not referred from another process.

**Decision** 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 2028-2029 academic year

**Next steps** The education provider's next performance review will be in the 2028-29 academic year.

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## Section 1: About this assessment

### About us

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

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

### Our standards

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

### Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

### The performance review process

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

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

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

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

### **Thematic areas reviewed**

We normally focus on the following areas:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jane Day	Lead visitor, Radiographer, Therapeutic Radiographer
Julie Weir	Lead visitor, Operating Department Practitioner
Prisha Shah	Service User Expert Advisor
Beverley Ball	Advisory visitor, Radiographer, Therapeutic Radiographer

Louise Winterburn	Education Quality Officer
Kabir Kareem	Education Manager

We encourage reflections through portfolios to be made at the institution level wherever possible. The performance review process does not always require profession level scrutiny which requires all professionals to be represented in the assessment panel. Rather, the process considers how the education provider has performed at institution level, linked to the themes defined in section 1. Lead visitors have the option to appoint additional advisory partners where this will benefit the assessment, and / or where they are not able to make judgements based on their own professional knowledge.

In this assessment, we considered we did not require professional expertise across all professional areas delivered by the education provider. We considered this because the lead visitors were satisfied they could assess performance and risk without needing to consider professional areas outside of their own.

## Section 2: About the education provider

### The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 14 HCPC approved programmes across five professions. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1993. This includes two post-registration programmes for independent prescribing and supplementary prescribing annotations.

### 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
<b>Pre-registration</b>	Occupational therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2007
	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2007
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2007
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	1993
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2007
<b>Post-registration</b>	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing		2009	

## 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<sup>1</sup>.

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	689	590	2024	<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 was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners below the benchmark.</p> <p>We explored this by considering how well the education provider was maintaining the sustainability of the programme.</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	1%	2020-21	<p>This Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 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 below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p>

<sup>1</sup> An explanation of the data we use, and how we use this data, is available [here](#)

				<p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has been maintained.</p> <p>We explored this by considering how well the learners were supported on the programme and given appropriate help to continue their studies.</p>
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	93%	92%	2020-21	<p>This HESA 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 below 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 3%.</p> <p>We explored this by considering how well the programmes at the education provider were preparing learners for next professional or academic steps.</p>
Learner Satisfaction	77.4%	73.4%	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 below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms</p> <p>We explored this by considering what opportunities the learners had</p>



				for feedback and how well their suggestions and perspectives were considered by the education provider.
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### 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.

#### Quality theme 1 – how different profession learn from each other and how this benefits service users and carers

**Area for further exploration:** The visitors noted the education provider gave a summary description of their approach to interprofessional education (IPE). These explanations were descriptive rather than reflective. As a result, the visitors did not understand how learners from different professions across the allied health professions learn with and from each other. They also requested for the education provider to explain how service users benefit interprofessional learning. This is important because learners being able to effectively learn with and from others from different professions would help them prepare for future practice.

**Quality activities agreed to explore theme further:** We decided to explore this by requesting an email response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme and to seek clarification of our understanding on the above query.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider explained how they have had to reflect on interprofessional learning as part of their accreditation for professional bodies and Higher Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) tender requirements. They reflected on the need and risks associated with sharing teaching between

programmes and have created some additional teaching for some specific programmes. They noted how assessments and placement paperwork have been revised to specifically address working with service users.

They further reflected on how HEIW has contributed to supporting and highlighting the importance of IPE across the curricula. The integration of 'scaffolding sessions' has enabled them to focus on IPE specific sessions on team working with learners working together on a variety of area. This has enabled them to map appropriate sessions to the relevant parts of the curricula and link them to assessment with an IPE focus. They explained how the IPE champions, supported by the IPE Lead and Deputy, are effectively creating relevant scenarios for all student groups. The IPE Lead and Deputy have been actively driving the IPE agenda and engaging with external stakeholders to achieve this.

The visitors are satisfied with the further reflections the education provider presented in this area. This is because they have shown how they considered the shared teaching needs, revised assessments and introduced specific programme teaching.

#### Quality theme 2 – how the education provider ensures placement capacity for the ODP programme in teach out

**Area for further exploration:** The visitors noted the education provider reflected on the capacity of practice-based learning for all current programmes, except the phasing-out Operating Department Practice (ODP) programme. It is important for the education provider to explain how they will or have ensured the processes in place for this programme continue to be effective. The visitors wanted to ensure there is no risks to the levels and quality of support provided to learners still on the programme during their placements.

**Quality activities agreed to explore theme further:** We decided to explore this by requesting an email response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme and to seek clarification of our understanding on the above query.

**Outcomes of exploration:** The education provider submitted detailed information about their teach out plan for the ODP programme. The visitors reviewed evidence of the plan to discontinue the programme. They explained how they have held three town hall meetings per year for learners with staff from the ODP team, the School Senior team, and learner support service. A Frequently Asked Questions document was shared with learners, submitted as evidence, and reviewed by the visitors. The evidence reviewed by the visitors set out how learners on placements would continue to be supported. The visitor agreed the education provider had satisfactorily addressed the concerns they had in this area.

## Section 4: 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 reflected on the outcome of their strategic plan in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. They explained how their review had enabled them to perform well against their strategic goals while adhering to their values. Their largest investment during the review period was a £22 million building refit, which included clinical learning and simulation facilities for the School of Healthcare Sciences
  - They explained how the main challenges during the review period were related to the financial challenges in the UK university sector, NHS/Social care settings and the impact of rising cost of living on learners. The education provider explained how they have remained financially resilient. They implemented a three-year planning and budgeting cycle to ensure adequate resources for schools, aligning with Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. They maintain programme quality and financial viability through revalidation and portfolio reviews, and enhances the learner experience via annual reviews
  - The education provider reflected on the success of the move of the School of Health CAREs' (HCARE) relocation of all programmes to the new Heath Park West Campus after the £22 million investment. They noted how the move had enhanced the educational environment and offered new opportunities for interprofessional education. The impact on learners and staff experience continues to be reviewed, but the development has been positive.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area because they have demonstrated a secure business plan including capital investment into infrastructure.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
  - The education provider reflected on how the challenges with UK and Welsh economy had impacted them and their partners. This has resulted in a Welsh Government prioritising investments in areas of developing health professions and maintaining its 'workforce pipelines'. Despite this, they continue to maintain a relationship with the Government at ministerial level.
  - The education provider reflected on the success of working with the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB) to develop business cases to the Welsh Government for investments in buildings. They explained how Academic Heads of School participated in strategic discussions about the future clinical delivery and a joint programme board reports to both organisations. They noted how their inclusion as a key partner for CAVUHB in its new hospital plans highlights the value they bring to their partners.
  - They also reflected on the relationships which have been developed with professional contact with clinical psychologist colleagues in Wales,

the School of Psychology. This was based on their analysis changing needs of the Welsh mental health workforce. By collaborating with HEIW, the Schools, and CAVUHB leads, they agreed on approximate numbers for commissioning/placement and estimated cohort sizes to enhance the health workforce.

- The visitors agreed the education is performing well in this area. This is because they effectively outlined their challenges and highlighted their ongoing partnership with CAVUHB, which has led to project work and plans for a new hospital site.
- **Academic quality –**
  - The education provider reflected on the challenges which were identified through their annual review and enhance process. In order to enhance learner experience:
    - they needed consistent governance structures,
    - clear expectations for student voice in shaping enhancement plans, and
    - better linkage between school, college, and university governance.
  - They explained how in response to the findings of the annual review, they rolled out new aligned governance and committee structures during the 2021/22 academic year. They reflected on how the new structure has ensured key school committees are interconnected. They have also established clear mechanisms for sharing data and action plans with various committees for annual review and enhancement.
  - They reviewed the Data Futures project, launched to provide schools with the necessary data to analyse programme outcomes. This has led to the improvement of the recruitment, admissions and learner progression data available. It also resulted in allowing staff to analyse the impacts of interventions and detect issues in a more efficient way.
  - They visitors are satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area. They have given examples of how quality monitoring processes work including the development of a data futures project and use of Power BI to enhance, manage and evaluate data.
- **Placement quality –**
  - The education provider has reflected on the outcomes of general areas identified as needing improvements through their HCARE (Health Care programmes) Placement evaluations process. The analysis concluded the placement process was administratively burdensome and that improvement in institutional support quality for learners in placement was required. As a result, the education provider purchased a new placement management system to improve the quality of the learner experience. They noted that the single system supports the quality and consistency of learner experiences.
  - The education provider submitted information to demonstrate the positive impact of the new system. Staff on the HCPC-approved programmes reported how it has significantly assisted with the placement selection process. The education provider concluded the impact on learners and staff across all programmes has been positive.

- The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They effectively demonstrated how they successfully addressed the concerns with placement quality and implemented improvements.
- **Interprofessional education –**
  - The education provider explained how the approach to Interprofessional Education (IPE) has developed significantly since 2020. This has enabled learners from Nursing, Midwifery, and Allied Health Professions learners to learn with, from, and about each other. The approach to ensuring learners from different professions learnt from each other was explored through [quality activity 1](#). A robust IPE strategy ensures all requirements are met, including 20% of programmes and 150 hours of practice-based IPE. Additionally, informal opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, such as simulated case events with other HEIs in Wales, further enhance learning.
  - They explained how the IPE induction day offers learners from various disciplines a valuable chance to deepen their understanding of IPE and its impact on practice. Through keynote lectures and mixed-discipline group activities at the start of semester 1, learners meet peers from other fields, explore team dynamics, and reflect on their roles in new teams. They explained how this experience fosters a sense of collaboration and self-awareness which is crucial to learner's future professional practice.
  - Learners on HCPC approved programmes are encouraged to apply for the Interprofessional Student Leadership Academy (ISLA) which is offered as an extra-curricular activity to all students in their final year of study alongside colleagues in the Dental School.
  - The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area.
- **Service users and carers –**
  - The education provider reflected on how monitoring service user involvement has led to a more diverse group of service users supporting school activities. This was achieved through community engagement and staff support. Feedback from staff, learners, and service users, along with a refined engagement process during the review period which captured the benefits of these interactions.
  - In response to service user feedback, the School of Healthcare Sciences updated the Terms of Reference for its Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) and Engagement Group and established a separate PPI Research Advisory Group for student research. Feedback led to changes in recruitment and admissions processes, including interview questions and patient case scenarios. Additionally, specific support and training were provided, such as an online seminar on PPI in research, which boosted service users' confidence in understanding PPI.
  - The lead visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area because they submitted on initiatives and policies and how these were implemented at school level.
  - The Service User Advisor stated that the education provider has shown examples of good practice in service user and carer (SUC) involvement across all programmes. They engage people in various activities, have

identified and are addressing current challenges, and are evolving based on feedback, recognising the need to appropriately support those they involve.

- **Equality and diversity –**

- The education provider explained how education, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are embedded in all aspects of University life, including learner experience policies, staff recruitment, and career development. An EDI HUB, linked with college and school committees, addresses challenges and shares successes as good practice.
- They provided reflections on their commitment to success for all learners. They routinely examine recruitment, progression, and differential attainment across cohorts. Their widening participation group and inclusive education project are key components of this effort. They continued to invest in data capabilities to ensure enhancements are data informed. Each school reviews learner progress and outcomes, identifying differential attainment and preparing action plans. During the review period, they reflected on how inclusive education projects has enhanced reporting and analysis. This was achieved through working with schools to review data and support targeted interventions.
- The education provider reflected on how they were planning to submit for the AdvanceHE Race Equality Charter bronze award in 2024. A summary of their initiatives includes developing cultural awareness, diversifying curricula, and engaging with Diverse Cymru for cultural competency accreditation.
- The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area. They have effectively implemented initiatives and policies at the school level, ensuring risk monitoring and enhancing the learner experience.

- **Horizon scanning –**

- The education provider identified risks and opportunities through their horizon scanning which included the following areas. They reflected on the challenges the HCPC approved Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DEdPsy) programme has faced in respect of funding and staff during the review period. The staff challenges were resolved but funding for trainees continued to be a concern. Despite the challenges, the explained how tutor teams have been able to effectively support, teach and supervise all trainees. They highlighted the consistently high quality of research undertaken by learners despite these challenges.
- They explained that how their strong relationships with HEIW contributed to them securing a new 10-year contract during the review period. They also reflected on the impact the financial challenges across the Higher Education Institutions and NHS sectors made resourcing staff and equipment a constant issue. The close ties between academic professions and the NHS meant NHS challenges often impact staff and learner, with NHS placements being particularly strained. They noted how instability in training numbers has yet to impact the NHS workforce fully and may extend the sector's challenges. Consequently, these issues are likely to affect their educational provision as well.

- The reflected on how the £22 million pound investment should result in opportunities for the development of new simulation and teaching spaces. There will also be opportunities for modernising, teaching and enhancing learner experiences further. They plan to explore opportunities to create meaningful time and space opportunities to explore informal and formal IPE opportunities.
- The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area. They have effectively reflected on the long-term opportunities and challenges for the HCPC approved programmes.

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

**Outstanding issues for follow up:** None

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

- **Service Users and Carer's-** The education provider's approach to involving SUC's education programme adds real world perspectives. This enriches the curriculum and helps learners better understand the needs and challenges of the communities they will serve. This enhances learners' empathy, communication, and professionalism. The provider's proactive approach to addressing challenges and adapting based on feedback ensures meaningful SUC involvement while supporting those engaged. This commitment to continuous improvement strengthens community ties, keeps programs relevant, and fosters inclusivity and reflective learning, producing well-rounded professionals.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
  - The education provider submitted detailed reflections on the integration and impact of the updated SOP across all HCARE programmes. They explained how curriculum documents were reviewed and updated to meet the revised SOPs. Induction sessions ensured all learners were introduced to these standards, which are integrated across all modules. The Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy) programme specifically covers HCPC standards in year one induction. There is a focus on professional practice, ethical guidelines, and processes for raising concerns, reinforced through ethics and governance research teaching and placement preparation.
  - They stated the EDI is a fundamental theme across all HCARE HCPC programme, focusing on cultural competence, dignity, respect, and equality. It is integrated into both formal teaching and practice-based learning. All programmes align with professional body standards and the HEIW contract in Wales. Support systems were established across all HCARE programmes, with induction sessions and personal tutors ensuring learners were aware of available resources.
  - They noted how Compassionate leadership is a core theme integrated into teaching and staff interactions across all programmes, supported

by a resource hub and a bespoke website. Learners complete the Foundations in Improvement e-learning module and develop leadership skills through personal development plans, professional portfolios, and mentorship. Reflective practice is addressed through sessions and personal development planning. This ensures learners continuously review their fitness to practice, manage difficulties, and are aware of available support and coping mechanisms.

- They concluded their reflection on how the integration of these updated SOPS and themes across HCARE programmes ensures a comprehensive and supportive learning environment. Continuous review and adaptation of curricula, along with robust support systems and leadership development should prepare students to meet professional standards and excel in their respective fields.
- The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area. They provided specific updates about where the updated SOPs have been updated and why.
- **Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic –**
  - The education provider reflected on the challenges the experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. These included ensuring the safety of learners and staff, supporting those affected by illness or isolation and adapting processes for Doctoral thesis submission and remote vivas. Key actions included implementing policies like the Safety Net Policy, enhancing digital infrastructure, and training staff and students in digital education.
  - Their technology teams collaborated with the Learning and Teaching Academy to ensure proper infrastructure and Continuous Personal Development for online delivery, overcoming initial reluctance towards blended learning. Additionally School leadership teams innovated to maintain programme and assessment delivery.
  - The education provider prioritised health, safety, and wellbeing, enhancing support measures for staff and students, including facilitating work from home (WFH) and expanded the staff assistance programme. Learner support was bolstered with practical aid for isolating students and financial assistance.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider performed well in this area. They noted how the education provider had provided an honest reflection of the challenges and what they did to address these. They then considered lessons learnt and how this has changed ways of working post Covid.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
  - The education provider reflected on how the integration of technology during the Covid-19 pandemic has led to several positive outcomes. Examples include a broader inclusion of international and experience-based experts in teaching, increased diversity in the doctoral examiner pool through remote viva accessibility, and a rapid transition to remote teaching and assessment. This has enhanced digital infrastructure and Continuous Personal Development. Additionally, innovative learning opportunities, such as high-fidelity simulations and virtual ward tours,



have provided learners with realistic practice before clinical placements.

- They are also monitoring the potential uses and risks of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and healthcare. The developed guidance for staff and students to uphold academic integrity, and they are broadening their considerations of Fitness to Practice and plagiarism.
- They explained how staff have received professional development in educational technology, benefiting from recorded lectures and remote assessments. Simulation-based education has increased, including interprofessional scenarios and the use of 360-degree video. They described their ongoing awareness of AI's impact on healthcare and education, with ongoing analysis of its influence. Blended learning in the MSc pre-registration Physiotherapy programme offers flexible scheduling and reduced commuting costs.
- The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They provided very detailed reflective summary across all their courses, including creative uses in simulation and beneficial uses of AI. The benefits of digital platforms, remote webcasting and meetings has been discussed in relation to their programmes.

**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:**

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
  - The education provider explained how The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) would be replaced by the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) in August 2024. The new body will oversee promoting, funding, and regulating tertiary education and research in Wales.
  - Under HEFCW's Quality Assessment Framework for Wales, regulated institutions must undergo external quality assurance reviews. CTER will continue this practice, utilising the Quality Enhancement Review developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The HEFCW made the following judgment of the education provider following their last review. The review team has judged that Cardiff University meets the requirements of Part 1 standards for internal quality assurance and complies with the Quality Assessment Framework for Wales.
  - The education provider stated how this positive assessment indicates that they have strong systems in place for maintaining academic standards, managing quality, and enhancing the student experience. Additionally, they maintain a regular review cycle to ensure ongoing adherence to HEFCW's baseline requirements.
  - The visitors were satisfied with the information the education provider submitted for this area.

- **Performance of newly commissioned Allied Health Professional (AHP) provision in Wales –**
  - The education provider explained how they report performance and quality annually to HEIW under requested themes for that year. Performance for the new pre-registration MSc programmes in Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy has been very good, with no issues of concern. Some challenges have been overcome, particularly with the programme build, as the 45-week/year structure, including practice-based learning, falls outside the University template. They continue to work to address this.
  - Their reflections highlighted the strengths in education and interprofessional learning, while also adding challenges in recruiting and placement logistics. They noted how the MSc programmes in Occupational Therapy emphasised problem-solving, research, evidence-based practice, and critical reflection. Leadership and management skills are developed through the Interprofessional Student Leadership Academy (ISLA). Additionally, learning is enhanced with simulation, virtual reality, and mock teaching environments. However, the programme faced recruitment challenges due to late interview processes and misunderstandings about its structure, particularly the term “blended learning.”
  - The MSc Physiotherapy programme, aligned with Welsh Government’s tender requirements, has received positive feedback from learners and placement partners. Despite ongoing challenges in timely placement provision, efforts were being made to innovate supervision models and develop a comprehensive placement masterplan.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They noted the honest reflection on the difficulties faced during the first intake of the MSc Occupational Therapy pre-registration programme. They also highlighted the detailed actions taken to resolve these issues, particularly in managing student expectations of contact time and delivery modes.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
  - The education provider stated that a challenge for all their HCPC approved programmes was ensuring their provisions aligned with HCPC requirements and the other specific professional regulators and professional bodies. They provided reflections on how the programmes have integrated the various requirements.
  - Their Occupational Therapy programme has been mapped against the Royal College of Occupational Therapy (RCOT) 2019 standards and the revised 2023 HCPC SoPs in preparation for internal 2024 re-accreditation. The programme has shifted from a four placement to a three placement model, addressing challenges in meeting the required 1000 hours. The RCOT’s recent accreditation review was successful, with recommendations for re-accreditation.
  - Engagement with professional bodies like Society and College of Radiographers (ScoR) was continuous, with efforts to align their curriculum with the latest frameworks and standards. Minor curriculum changes and updates to simulated learning equipment are planned to meet evolving service needs and technological advances. The

DClinPsy and DEdPsy programmes have also received ongoing accreditation, with commendations and recommendations addressed to ensure continuous improvement and alignment with professional standards.

- The education provider also submitted reflections in their PG Cert Independent/Supplementary Prescribing for Nurses, Midwives, and Allied Health Professionals was approved by the NMC in July 2021. Following the 2021 update of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) Competency Framework, the programme's prescribing element was revised, including updated terminology in the Practice Assessment Document (PAD), revised links in the prescribing pack, communication of updates to practice partners, and updated learning materials.
- The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. This is because they provided detailed programme level commentary on their other professional bodies and how this is integrated with the HCPC requirements.

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

**Outstanding issues for follow up:** None

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

**Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Curriculum development –**
  - The education provider submitted detailed reflections on each of their HCPC approved programmes for this area. They explained how the programmes had undergone 'thoughtful' updates to align with the latest HCPC standards and address feedback from various stakeholders. Minor changes were made to module descriptors and content to meet HIEW contract requirements. These emphasised Compassionate Leadership; Digital Learning and Simulation; and Practice Based Learning. The updated 2023 HCPC SOPs were mapped against the pre-registration curricula, supported by a collaboratively developed Practice-Based Learning Objective Guidance document.
  - They explained how placement educator training was refined, with resources moved online and new content introduced. Learners' workshops were held to address feedback and improve satisfaction. Active learner participation in providing feedback and engaging in learning activities is encouraged, with their input respected and acted upon. These themes highlighted the ongoing efforts to enhance the curriculum, support students and educators, and ensure alignment with professional standards.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They provided good examples of where curriculum development has been considered across various programmes.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
  - The education provider submitted reflections on the changes they have made to their HCPC approved programmes based on professional body guidance. The key changes were related to their BSc

Physiotherapy and MSc pre-registration Physiotherapy programmes. The explained how the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) introduced the Four Pillars of Practice in 2020 which aim to challenge the concept of fixed core knowledge. The programme's blended learning structure improves access and attracts a diverse student cohort. CSP has expanded its guidance over the past three years, driven by the pandemic, and future programmes need flexibility for updates and new guidance. CSP's 2022 strategy focuses on Programme Innovation, Health Inequities, Equity Diversity and Belonging, and Health & Wellbeing.

- They explained how they provided feedback on the first consultation for the ongoing revision of the BPS Standards of Accreditation for Doctoral Programmes in Clinical Psychology.
- Other professional bodies have not made any significant changes which would impact their HCPC approved programmes. For example, the new 2022 MSc pre-reg curriculum was designed and mapped against the RCOT 2019 Learning and Development Standards. The 2019 BSc (Hons) pre-registration curriculum has been mapped against the RCOT 2019 Learning and Development Standards in readiness for internal re-accreditation for September 2024.
- The visitor agreed the education is performing well in this area. They had provided a detailed reflection for all the programmes and the changes for their HCPC approved programmes.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
  - The education provider reflected on the challenges in providing placements across services in Wales. This is primarily due to capacity issues, staffing challenges, industrial and equipment and estate issues in some areas. They worked with HEIW to find solutions and review commissioning numbers to ensure placement learning continues. Programme teams monitor placement quality through placement leads, and HCARE holds monthly meetings to address issues.
  - The education provider presented detailed reflection of the developments for each HCPC approved programme. They explained how they continuously refine placement processes, ensuring support for learners with carer responsibilities and reasonable adjustments. They monitor key elements of like summer resits and address competency challenges. Effective Collaboration with placement providers supports learners and address changing needs through open communication. Their plans to support learners on the ODP programmes which is in teach-out was explored throughout [quality activity 2](#).
  - They faced challenges in placement capacity and timely offers from health boards, striving to match learner number with capacity and manage shortages. Through identification of these challenges, they take appropriate actions such as revised timeline and providing alternative placements. Learners actively provide feedback on placement quality which are considered and acted upon. Their focus remains on long term-solutions, improving efficiency and understanding between other education provider and health boards.

- The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They had provided comprehensive commentary on placement capacity issues and plans to meet learners needs.

**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 –**
  - The education provider reflected on their actions to ensure learners can effectively give feedback on programme quality and areas for improvement or good practice. They explained how they worked with the student union to create a student voice framework. They have embedded learners across institutional governance structures. This approach aims to ensure there are mechanisms at programme level to enable learner feedback to shape enhancement plans.
  - They noted how the mechanisms they have in place ensured representation of the wide learner experience. They determined that surveys like National Student Survey (NSS) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) often resulted in low engagement. To combat survey fatigue, their survey management group vets and reduces survey volume, ensuring well-designed surveys and shared data to minimise repetition.
  - The education provider explained how embedding learners in governance structures has been a success. This is because this approach ensures they play an active role in developing action plan to improve their programmes. Transparency in these processes keeps all stakeholder informed of developments, issues, and successes, with incomplete actions carried forward. They stated the learner-staff panels build trust, addressing most challenges swiftly, while complex issues are managed through school action plans with regular updates.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area because they have a broad range of mechanisms for learners to provide feedback. This is an area they education provider demonstrated good practice. They provided good examples provided of the student voice and the impact that this has on the programmes they deliver.
- **Practice placement educators –**
  - The education provider reflected on how despite the challenges with accessing placements, they have positive relationships with placement education provider. There is an escalation process which enables effective engagement between practice leads and service managers. They noted how they work collaboratively to address challenges which has resulted in all learners accessing required placement during the review period.
  - The education provider explained how during the review period, they had engaged with placement providers and educators and incorporated

feedback from meetings. Key improvements included the creation of quick reference guides, online training for educators, and enhanced communication about placements. New clinical supervisors receive support to ensure fair and consistent assessments, while ongoing reviews aim to balance educator roles across Wales. Positive feedback from Health Boards has led to process improvements and better understanding of placement requests.

- They also highlighted the success of the All-Wales Practice Education Facilitators forum which enables practice educators collaborate to discuss challenges and successes.
- The visitors are satisfied with the performance of the education provider in this area. They agreed the reflections had effectively demonstrated how practice educators are developed managed and supported.
- **External examiners –**
  - The education provider reflected on how external examiners have commented positively across the range of HCPC approved programmes. They stated that they have highlighted good practices in programme design, delivery, and assessment, noting strong academic standards and degree outcomes.
  - The education provider gave examples of challenges identified by external examiners and the actions taken to address them. These included working with their IT department to improve the clarity of audio recording and improving methods for recording learner attending and engagement with taught sessions. Their reflections indicate external examiners are satisfied with their innovative assessment and the quality of feedback provided to learners.
  - The visitors agreed the education provider is performing well in this area. They noted the analysis and actions which were reflected upon which made it clear how the issues identified were effectively addressed.

**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 education provider's approach to offering multiple channels for learners to provide feedback as good practice. This diverse approach captures a wide range of perspectives, including those less likely to participate in traditional formats. By actively responding to feedback and showing its impact on programs, the provider demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement, fostering a culture of openness and trust, and ultimately enhancing the quality of education.

### Data and reflections

#### **Findings of the assessment panel:**

- **Learner non continuation:**
  - The education stated that their admissions process and learner support facilitate high levels of completion and keep withdrawal levels generally

low. They reflected on how they aim to recruit candidates with the right qualifications, attitudes, and motivations to prepare them for their chosen professions. They noted how their recruitment process is fair and transparent, emphasising equality of access, inclusive criteria, and selection processes to increase diversity.

- Applicants receive clear information about the programme structure, requirements, and restrictions at the pre-application stage. Once enrolled, learners are well-supported, with early identification and assistance for those facing health, personal, or academic difficulties. Consequently, they maintain low levels of non-continuation and withdrawal across our programmes.
- Despite this, the school of HCARE saw an overall increase during the 2022/23 academic year. They consider this an important area which they aim to address urgently to support learner's success.
- The visitors agreed good progress was in place to ensure learner non-continuous rates are generally kept low. They are satisfied with their response to a slight increase in in withdrawals.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
  - The education provider explained how for DClinPsy and DEdPsy, awards are pass or fail with no categorical data. The pass rate is 100% for those who complete the programme, submit their thesis, and pass the viva voce examination. This success is due to the robust selection process and in-programme support.
  - They stated that in 22/23,
    - Occupational Therapy awarded 53.42% 1st class degrees, down from over 70% in 19/20, which is typical for the sector.
    - Diagnostic Radiography & Imaging saw a significant drop in good degrees, with 5.33% 1st and 50.67% 2:1, and an increase in 2:2 degrees to 41.33%.
    - Radiotherapy & Oncology awarded 29.41% 1st class degrees, up from 26.67% in 21/22, while Physiotherapy awarded 41.53% 1st class degrees, down from over 60% in previous years.
    - Overall, degree outcomes and academic standards remain sound and in line with HE standards, as confirmed by external examiners.
  - The visitors noted how a high percentage of those awarded specific grades is spread across the classifications, except for OT and this has been discussed in the commentary. They agreed the education had presented clear progression data and effectively demonstrated the process in place.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
  - The education provider's reflections highlighted challenges, developments, and successes in overall satisfaction data. The analysis of their reflections indicates that while have achieved notable successes, particularly in postgraduate programmes with 100% satisfaction for MSc pre-reg Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, there are significant challenges in undergraduate programmes. Satisfaction levels vary widely, with some programmes like Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging, Operating Department Practice, and Physiotherapy showing declines. However, improvements in

Occupational Therapy and Radiotherapy and Oncology suggest positive developments. Overall, the education provider demonstrated a commitment to addressing these challenges through targeted action plans and continuous improvement efforts.

- Action plans addresses key areas: improving timetable communication, enhancing placement preparation and support, better assessment and feedback communication, and increasing student voice visibility. Key actions include supporting the InPlace software stabilising timetabling and staffing, enhancing practice preparation, collaborating with placement partners, regular student visits, communicating assessment strategies, reviewing leadership structures, and developing a school-wide plan to improve student voice. Regular student-staff panel meetings, module evaluations, and the 'Closing the feedback loop' project are also implemented.
- The visitors are satisfied the education provider have performed well in this area. They identified both successes and challenge in satisfaction data. They are focused on addressing the challenges through targeted action plans.
- **Programme level data:**
  - The education did not provide many reflections in this area, but the visitors are satisfied with the data presented in the table provided. They noted the following "The PGDip Occupational Therapy (accelerated) pre-registration has been taught out, the final cohort completed in December 2023. The Postgraduate Certificate in Non-Medical Prescribing has been taught out, with the final cohort completing in July 2022. The BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice is being taught out. The final intake commenced in September 2021 and are due to complete by July 2024.

**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 decision**

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:  
The education provider's next engagement with the performance review in the 2028-2029 academic year.



## Reason for next engagement recommendation

- Internal stakeholder engagement
  - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were:
    - learners,
    - service users and carers,
    - practice educators,
    - partner organisations; and
    - external examiners.
  - External input into quality assurance and enhancement
    - The education provider engaged with five professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
    - The education provider engaged with the professional. Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). They considered the findings of NMC in improving their provision
    - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way
  - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. Regular supply of this data will enable us to actively monitor changes to key performance areas within the review period.
  - What the data is telling us:
    - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes and acts on data to inform positive change.

## 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 the next steps for the provider. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation (including their reasons) and any referrals.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Review period recommendation	Reason for recommendation	Referrals
Cardiff University	CAS-01404-D8F0J3	Jane Day Julie Weir	5 years	<p><b>Reason for next engagement recommendation</b></p> <p>The education provider engages a range of internal stakeholders, including learners, service users, carers, practice educators, partner organizations, and external examiners, to ensure quality assurance and enhancement. Externally, they collaborate with five professional bodies, including the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), incorporating their findings and sector developments to improve their provision. The provider also utilizes data from external sources to monitor key performance areas, using insights from these data to inform and implement positive</p>	There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process.

				changes in their quality assurance processes.	
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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) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2007
Pg Dip Occupational Therapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2007
MSc pre-registration Occupational Therapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			19/09/2022
Postgraduate Diploma Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			19/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2014
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2007
MSc pre-registration Physiotherapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			19/09/2022
Postgraduate Diploma Physiotherapy (pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			19/09/2022
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Clinical psychologist		01/01/1993
Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DEdPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Educational psychologist		01/01/2005
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and Imaging	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/2007
BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy and Oncology	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Therapeutic radiographer		01/09/2007
Postgraduate Certificate in Non-Medical Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/09/2009

