Approval process report

University of Derby, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes at the University of Derby. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programmes against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programmes are fit to practice.

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

Through this assessment, we have noted the programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This approval process was not referred from another process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: • whether the programme(s) are approved • whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: • The 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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programme(s) detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programme(s) approval / 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 approval process

Institutions and programmes must be approved by us before they can run. The approval process is formed of two stages:
- Stage 1 – we take assurance that institution level standards are met by the institution delivering the proposed programme(s)

- Stage 2 – we assess to be assured that programme level standards are met by each proposed programme

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

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

How we make our decisions

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

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

The assessment panel for this review

We appointed the following panel members to support this review:

Jennifer Caldwell	Lead visitor, Occupational Therapist
Jo Jackson	Lead visitor, Physiotherapist
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer
Temilolu Odunaike	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 21 HCPC-approved programmes across eight professions plus five independent and supplementary prescribing programmes. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1992. The programme will sit within the College of Health, Psychology and

Social Care. Apart from the Arts Therapy provision which sit in the College of Arts, Humanities and Education, all other approved programmes at the education provider sit in the College of Health, Psychology and Social Care. The education provider already runs existing approved degree apprenticeship programmes across multiple professions within the college, so are experienced in this area.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

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

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Arts therapist	☐ Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2002
	Occupational therapy	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	1995
	Operating Department Practitioner	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2019
	Paramedic	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2024
	Physiotherapist	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2024
	Practitioner psychologist	☐ Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2022
	Prosthetist / Orthotist	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2022
	Radiographer	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	1992
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2005

Institution performance data

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

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

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date	Commentary

Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	1008	1368	2023 / 24	The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision. We are satisfied the education provider is resourcing to their programmes as expected.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	4%	2020 / 21	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 3%. We did not explore this data point through this assessment because it is clear the education provider

				is taking steps to improve in this area.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	96%	2020 / 21	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has been maintained. We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing above sector norms.
Learner positivity score	76.8%	88.2%	2023	This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects. The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 10.1%. We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is

				performing above sector norms.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	5 years	2021-22	The education provider received the maximum review period at their last performance review. Their next review is in 2026-27.

The route through stage 1

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

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

Admissions

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Information for applicants** –
  - The education provider will ensure information related to admissions will be on their website. This will include entry requirements and information about the process to apply to study on the programme.
  - There will be a dual admission procedure for the apprenticeship programmes so both the employer's recruitment requirements as well as the education provider's minimum entry requirements for the academic programme are satisfied. Additional information will be provided on education provider open days where applicants can speak to the programme team. The programme specification documents and programme website will provide information about the admission process.
  - Information sessions will be held jointly by the education provider and employer prior to applicants applying to the programme.
  - All apprenticeship applicants will undertake a 'skills scan', as part of the admissions process. This will demonstrate the current academic and practical skills of the applicant.
  - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health** –

- o The education provider requires applicants to demonstrate evidence of 6.5 in all elements of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) as part of the admissions criteria.
  - o All applicants will also be required to undergo checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and are subject to an occupational health assessment. This information will be in programme specification and clearly outlined in marketing information.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L)** –
  - o The education provider has a recognition of prior learning policy within their academic regulations. The education provider will require all applications for prior learning and experience for entry onto HCPC approved programmes to comply with this.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - o The education provider has an equality, diversity, and inclusion policy which is available on their website. They are committed to providing an environment which is open and diverse. The education provider will work to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all stakeholders. The aims and objectives of this policy will be addressed through the equality and diversity strategy and action plan, quality processes, annual monitoring, business planning, policies, and guidelines.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Management and governance

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register[1]** –
  - o The education provider has several policies which ensure the programmes meet the threshold level of entry. These are the Procedures for Validation and Approval; External Examiner processes;

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

Academic Regulations; and Oversight and Governance by Academic Board and Academic Development and Quality Committee (ADQC).
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Sustainability of provision** –
  - o The education provider has several policies which ensure the programme is sustainable and fit for purpose. These are the procedures for validation and approval; continual monitoring procedures and processes; and oversight and governance by Academic Board and Academic Development and Quality Committee (ADQC).
  - o The education provider has structures to work with programme partners, so they are reassured of workforce development.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective programme delivery** –
  - o The education provider has procedures for the validation, approval and continual monitoring of programmes. These processes are overseen by the Academic Development and Quality Committee (ADQC).
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective staff management and development** –
  - o The education provider informed us they will have responsibility for the day-to-day delivery of the programmes and associated staff and physical resources.
  - o Individual discipline areas will be the focus for professional specific management of the curriculum and learner experience. Staff training and continuous professional development will be centred around either School, discipline, or individual development needs. These will be further centred to curriculum and pedagogy, learner experience and outcomes, scholarship and research, and business development. Staff development and support is provided to ensure high quality teaching and learning. For example, peer observed teaching and a Programme Leader development programme.
  - o The education provider stated that due to the nature of the environment in which they work, staff will be required to understand regulations and policies which apply to day-to-day job responsibilities. The education provider therefore will ensure training is in place in accordance with those roles and responsibilities. As part of the appraisal and interim

review process, all staff will ensure their mandatory training is complete.
- o Module reviews and programme evaluations are undertaken annually to highlight areas of good practice and areas for improvement.
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level** –
  - o The education provider explained that oversight and governance by the collaborative partnerships sub-committee, reporting to Academic Development and Quality Committee (ADQC) and Academic Board, underpins partnership working.
  - o The education provider works closely with employers and NHS England to manage effective partnerships.
  - o There will be formal contracts in place between the education provider and employers as part of the programmes. Apprenticeship contracting processes and commitment statements assure the education provider that employers understand their role and are engaged with the delivery and compliance of the apprenticeship programmes via regular meetings.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Academic quality** –
  - o There are several processes which ensure academic quality of programmes is maintained and improved. These include the:
    - validation and approval process - a rigorous process undertaken with academic staff, learners, independent subject experts and employers will ensure the programme is current, of high quality, and able to prepare learners well for their future employment or further study;
    - continual monitoring - the primary means by which the education provider assures itself on an on-going basis academic standards and quality will be maintained;
    - external examining - a key element of the education provider's system of quality assurance and enhancement; and
    - quality standards assessment - monitoring and review of the programme and partner collaborative arrangements will follow

the education provider's quality and standards assessment review procedures.
- o The education provider meets regulatory compliance via the Office for Students.
- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments** –
  - o The education provider informed us the direct entry programme will operate a system of practice education audit prior to learners being allocated to those areas. These will be reviewed on a two-year cycle as a minimum. There are also educator forums in all disciplines. All employers will be expected to complete or provide a satisfactory employer audit detailing the support available to learners and confirming the suitability of the learning environment.
  - o The placement provider or employer will be expected to complete an audit. This will detail the support available to learners and confirm the suitability of the learning environment. This is also supported by the contract and commitment processes for apprenticeship programmes. New and existing practice educators will receive an induction.
  - o Learners can use the Raising Concerns process to identify concerns in relation to factors such as practice-based learning, members of staff, and other learners.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learner involvement** –
  - o Learners will have multiple ways of giving feedback and feeding into the development of programmes. There will be learner surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), and the education provider survey and module evaluations.
  - o There are four officer trustees who lead the Students Union and represent learners. The Students Union is responsible for the academic representation structure at the education provider. Learners elect over 800 representatives and Student Officers each year to represent them. Their job is to work closely with the union's Vice-President (Education) to identify any issues or needs and represent the learner voice at the highest meetings at the education provider.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

- **Service user and carer involvement** –
  - o Service user and carer involvement is key to many aspects of programme development, delivery, and evaluation and is an intrinsic element of programme development and review / re-approval.
  - o Service user and carer representatives are full members of the college Programme Planning Group and their involvement takes place in forms such as programme committees and learner interviews.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

<u>Learners</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Support** –
  - o The education provider will support learners through different avenues, such as college learner centres, health and wellbeing support, support with English language skills, and careers and employability support.
  - o There will also be support from resources such as virtual learning environment, programme and module handbooks, and personal academic tutors.
  - o The academic regulations will provide support for learners. For instance, the Student Charter, which is a clear statement of the responsibilities of the education provider and Student Union to provide a quality academic experience for every learner. It sets out the expectations and responsibilities for learners to get the most from their experience at the education provider.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Ongoing suitability** –
  - o The education provider explained the professional conduct and professional suitability procedure will ensure learners are fit to practice and comply with the education provider's learner code of conduct.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E)** –
  - o The College of Health, Psychology and Social Care has an interprofessional learning strategy which applies to all learners in health and social care related programmes. The education provider

informed us they encourage it in the on the job learning through suggestions in the high-level plan.

- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - o The education provider has overarching equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) monitoring and compliance.
  - o EDI will be monitored within programme level performance and is supported by overarching institutional monitoring. Annual reporting will be used to drive actions and interventions.
  - o The education provider is compliant with the required accessibility statement related to their website and Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). They will support learners to develop digital wellbeing skills, ensuring learning spaces are safe and secure for all users.
  - o The education provider considers learning design which serves the needs of all learners and incorporates equality, diversity, and access. They will create learning activities which engage learners and enable them to consider real-world application of their learning in an appropriate structure and flexible format. The education provider considers an inclusive curriculum to be central to the design of the programme.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

<u>Assessment</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Objectivity** –
  - o The education provider applies anonymous marking. This is applied to ensure objectivity, except for practical assessments and dissertation. This will be contained within the internal moderation policy as part of academic regulations.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Progression and achievement** –
  - o The education provider uses internal and external moderation of learners' work, and this will be overseen by the internal moderation process.

- o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Appeals** –
  - o The education provider has an academic appeals policy. This underpins what constitutes a valid ground for appeal and how to make an appeal.
  - o This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
  - o We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Outcomes from stage 1

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

Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:
- The education provider is developing a business plan which will detail staffing resource requirements. They have a number of physiotherapists already employed and are advertising a post to provide curriculum development support. The education provider will be drawing on the current occupational therapy (OT) workforce to deliver and manage the new OT programme.
- Office for Student (OfS) funding will support staffing resourcing for both programmes. Interviews for physiotherapy staff were to be held in early 2024.
- The education provider has occupational therapy and physiotherapy facilities which will be used to deliver specialist teaching. Some existing equipment as part of our health and sports provision is in place. The business plan will also include provision for consumables and further specialist equipment.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including	Proposed learner	Proposed start date

		modality) / entitlement	number, and frequency	
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	WBL (Work based learning)	Occupational Therapist	10 learners, 1 cohort per year	20/01/2025
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	WBL (Work based learning)	Physiotherapist	15 learners, 1 cohort per year	20/01/2025

Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

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

Quality theme 1 – evidence of meetings to demonstrate effective collaboration between the education provider and their practice education providers

Area for further exploration: We noted evidence provided around collaboration with various stakeholders including service users and practice education providers regarding the new programmes. In the Programme Proposal Form (October 2023) the education provider stated "This development is in direct response to employer demand: identified local need in Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Nottinghamshire as evidenced in respective workforce plans for local Integrated Care Systems. Expressed desire by Derbyshire Allied Health Professions Council & Faculty to work with UoD on development of this apprenticeship route". However, there was no evidence of meetings / discussions presented to support this statement. The visitors therefore requested for evidence of meetings or discussions supporting the development and indicating the ability of the practice education providers to commit to the programmes.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this through email response and additional evidence. We considered these would allow the education provider to fully address the issue raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined the series of regular meetings they have held and continue to hold to demonstrate collaboration between them and practice providers is effective. We understood the Head of School meets monthly with Allied Health Professions (AHP) strategic leads across Derbyshire via the Derbyshire AHP Council and faculty. They also noted that the College Lead for practice-based learning meets with the Derbyshire Practice Learning Group (DPLG) (AHP) Physio and Occupational Therapy bi-monthly. There are monthly meetings with Nottingham Integrated Care System (ICS) in relation to Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy practice-based learning. Scheduled stakeholder meetings are held as well as scheduled meetings with other potential employers (e.g. Nuffield Health, NHS Trusts, Councils, Social Care). Presentation slides and minutes of some of the meetings were shared.

The visitors considered that the additional information provided evidenced that meetings take place with a range of stakeholders including practice education providers. This includes those with strategic responsibilities for practice-based learning and those supporting learners directly in practice-based learning.
The visitors were satisfied that the quality activity had adequately addressed their concerns.

Quality theme 2 – ensuring the process for ensuring availability and capacity of practice-based learning is effective

Area for further exploration: The education provider noted a number of processes to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning but there was no evidence of how these will impact on existing programmes. There was no evidence provided to suggest that the capacity is there for the new development therefore we could not determine that the processes were effective. As such, we requested that the education provider submit further evidence to reassure us that their process is effective in ensuring capacity and availability of practice-based learning for all learners and that any effect on existing programmes is well managed.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this through email response. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issue raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained how the College Lead for practice-based learning collaborates with profession-specific teams to determine practice-based learning needs for each stage and year of the programmes. We understood this is managed centrally to ensure other programmes are not affected. There is a Head of Discipline who works with service leads across all practice education providers to ensure effective communication and address any issues or risks. The education provider further explained that recent audits in the East and

West Midlands revealed under-utilisation of physiotherapy and occupational therapy practice-based learning. They noted a fair share model has been successfully implemented across the region which has led to an increase in the capacity of practice-based learning. We understood this approach aims to optimise practice-based learning opportunities and ensure fair distribution.

The visitors were satisfied that the additional information confirms that processes are in place and are effective to ensure sufficient capacity and availability of practice-based learning for all learners. We are satisfied that the use of the fair share model across the region is being utilised successfully and has generated additional capacity. We are therefore satisfied that the quality activity has addressed the issues raised.

Quality theme 3 – how the breath of the physiotherapy curriculum will be covered and time frames for occupational therapy staff recruitment

Area for further exploration: We noted a clear staff strategy for the physiotherapy programme with planning for future staff clearly mapped. We noted a number of the physiotherapy team hold substantive posts supporting other programmes at the education provider. We also noted the teams experience was focussed on musculoskeletal (MSK). Therefore, we requested further clarity around how roles will be distributed and the breath of the curriculum covered within physiotherapy. We requested further clarification that explained which staff will be supporting particular modules.

For the occupational therapy programme, we noted there were plans for additional staff to be appointed to ensure a range of expertise within the team as numbers increase. Therefore, we requested time frame for staff recruitment to the programme.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore these through email response. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issues raised.

Outcomes of exploration: In addition to the staff CVs provided, we understood further recruitment was ongoing and will continue until each programme covers all levels and areas of study. The education provider explained that the next recruitment phase for physiotherapy will focus on hiring neurological and community physiotherapists.

Further details showed one additional Senior Lecturer in physiotherapy started in September 2024 with three more physiotherapy educators, and two more occupational therapy educators, due to start in January 2025. We understood these staff have a range of experience and expertise, the majority with significant prior higher education experience as well as Fellow of the Higher Education Academy /Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA/SFHEA) status.

The education provider also noted that level 4 neurological and respiratory content is delivered by experienced physiotherapy educators. We understood all educators are prepared to teach the Professional Skills and Practice Module, with new appointees and guest lecturers covering specific primary and secondary care topics. The education provider added that the first year focuses on basic skills such as history taking, assessment, biomechanics, movement analysis, problem identification, and designing and delivering rehabilitation classes. They noted all staff have experience in these areas and that this will ensure a strong foundational knowledge for learners.

The visitors were satisfied that clarity around roles and coverage of the breadth of the curriculum had been provided. We were reassured that the education provider was aware of the need to use additional staff to ensure the breadth of the curriculum in physiotherapy can be supported. The use of guest lecturers also provides additional support to the team. We noted a timeframe for appointment of staff has been outlined. The visitors considered that ongoing monitoring of staffing is advised to confirm that planned appointments are made as the programmes progress. This has been referred as a recommendation although the visitors are satisfied that the relevant standard is met at threshold following the quality activity.

Quality theme 4 – access to the reading lists for both programmes to determine their appropriateness

Area for further exploration: There was some evidence of resources available to support learning. However, we were unable to access reading list information which was required to confirm appropriateness of resources to be used by staff. We therefore requested access to the reading list to ensure they are appropriate to the delivery of the programme.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We explored this through additional evidence. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issue raised.

Outcomes of exploration: We noted reading lists were submitted for all modules. We understood a high-level plan of each programme has been shared with all employers, detailing the weekly off-the-job learning content. The education provider explained that this ensures educators know what learners need to do and the resources available to support their learning.

The visitors were reassured that the reading lists provide reassurance that learners are directed to appropriate resources and that they are accessible. The visitors were therefore satisfied that the quality activity has adequately addressed their concerns.

Quality theme 5 – ensuring adequate staff in practice-based learning

Area for further exploration: There was no indication of numbers of staff in practice-based learning or agreement for practice-based staff available to support the learners on both programmes. Therefore, we could not determine how the

education provider would ensure adequate staff will be involved with the learners' practice-based learning. There were no agreements indicating the required commitment to support the learners. As such, we requested further evidence of how staffing in practice-based learning is adequate and how it is being monitored by the education provider.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore these through email response. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issues raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained that as the programmes are degree apprenticeships, all staff teaching on the programmes will support practice-based learning both on the job and during practice-based learning blocks. They noted each month, programme teams will provide a newsletter for workplace mentors, detailing the on-the-job learning needed to support off-the-job learning. The team will also handle the induction and education of new employers and offer monthly drop-ins for workplace mentors.

We understood 12-weekly progress reviews will be conducted with the learner, their workplace supervisor, and a programme team member to ensure the learner gains the necessary experience and opportunities to meet the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs). They added that the Therapy and Rehabilitation discipline has a dedicated placement team to oversee practice-based learning provision, quality, and experience across occupational therapy and physiotherapy. This team is supported by the College Lead and Assistant Lead for practice-based learning. The education provider added that a registry team is dedicated to allocating learners to practice-based learning and ensuring sufficient capacity with service providers.

We were satisfied there is comprehensive support in place to ensure adequacy of staff in practice-based learning. We were reassured that the dedicated placement team works with practice education providers to ensure there is sufficient staff to provide support to learners in practice. Plans for a web-based resource will also enhance the availability of information for all from April 2025.

The visitors were satisfied that the education provider's response has adequately addressed their concerns around this area.

<u>Quality theme 6 – ensuring practice educators on the physiotherapy programme have the relevant training required to support their learning and development</u>

Area for further exploration: For the occupational therapy programme, we noted evidence of how the education provider works with practice educators for the development of the workforce. Regular monitoring of the practice educators' qualification etc. was highlighted in Programme Handbook and Practice Placement Handbook. We noted the education provider has an Educator Training programme to support learning and development of the practice educators. However, this was not

evident on the physiotherapy programme. Therefore, we requested further evidence to demonstrate the standard is met for the physiotherapy programme.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore these through email response. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issues raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained that they collaborate with other HEIs in the region to provide regular support and development for both new and established practice educators. We understood they collaborate using the PARE online platform, which records Educational Audits for HEI practice-based learning. The education provider noted PARE was introduced to them through a Higher Education Practice Standards Committee College Project, in collaboration with four other education providers in the region. We understood the platform enables the sharing of audits among the five education providers. The education provider added that the collaboration ensures parity and quality assurance across practice-based learning.

The visitors considered that the use of the PARE audit tool as a shared resource with other HEIs in the region provides sound data that practice educators supporting learners have the required skills and expertise.

<u>Quality theme 7 – ensuring clarity in selection and entry criteria specific to degree apprenticeships</u>

Area for further exploration: General selection and entry requirements were presented. However, we could not find specific details relating to apprenticeship programmes other than in the occupational therapy Programme Specification apprenticeship document. The visitors therefore requested to see degree apprenticeship related information available to applicants to determine if this standard is met. The visitors expected to see documentary information for the physiotherapy and online information for both programmes.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore these through email response. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issues raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained that learner-facing information on both programmes is available on their external website, with tailored advice for individual applicants. They added that the links provided offer a broader education provider context and an AHP-specific example, which the occupational therapy and physiotherapy apprenticeship pages will follow once approved. We noted admissions information has been updated in the relevant sections of each programme specification.

The visitors considered the selection criteria are now clear and include the relevant information including degree-apprenticeship specific information. Sufficient individual

guidance is also available. The visitors were satisfied that the quality activity had adequately addressed their concerns, therefore they considered the relevant standard met.

<u>Quality theme 8 – ensuring the physiotherapy programme has a range of practice-based learning that supports the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency (SOPs) for physiotherapists</u>

Area for further exploration: For the physiotherapy programme, the education provider highlighted that practice-based learning is integrated at all levels throughout the year. They found that six-week blocks are the ideal duration, as identified by their practice partners, to support effective learning and achievement. The visitors noted the duration but considered there was lack of clarity in the range of practice-based learning experience available to the learners. It was not clear how the education provider ensures the expectations regarding the standards of proficiency will be met in the work-based learning experiences. Therefore, the visitors requested further information to demonstrate that the physiotherapy programme has an appropriate range of practice-based learning that would support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the SOPs for physiotherapists.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We explored this through additional evidence. We considered this would allow the education provider to fully address the issue raised.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider highlighted identified practice-based learning providers. These include NHS Trusts (primary and secondary care, mental health, paediatrics), independent/private, voluntary, and social care sectors. They noted they have also been approached by ICS senior leaders offering leadership and research practice-based learning. We understood new employers wishing to enrol learners must discuss their service provision with the employer experience manager to determine available practice-based learning opportunities. We were informed that if an employer lacks sufficient practice-based learning diversity, the apprenticeship hub will arrange reciprocal practice-based learning with other employers. They noted this system has proven effective for existing apprenticeship programmes.

The visitors considered the education provider has experience of delivering apprenticeships in social care and with independent healthcare providers. They are confident that this experience will translate into these new programmes ensuring that the range of practice-based learning is sufficient to ensure learners could reach all the required standards to register as a physiotherapist. Clear discussions take place with employers prior to learners starting on the programme to identify when experience outside of their direct place of employment will be required to ensure standards can be met.

The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's response and were reassured that it had adequately addressed their concerns.

Section 4: Findings

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

Conditions

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

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

Overall findings on how standards are met

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

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment
- **SET 2: Programme admissions** –
  - The programme specification for each of the programmes detailed the admissions entry criteria. For the occupational therapy programme, the education provider noted admissions policy entry criteria are reviewed annually to align with academic demands and regulatory requirements. Any changes are discussed with the professional body, Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT). They noted applicants from diverse backgrounds are considered and entry requirements, including Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) tariff and GCSE Maths and English, are available on the programme webpage.
  - As discussed in quality theme 7, admissions information specific to degree apprenticeships is clearly outlined in the programme specifications and on the relevant webpages.
  - Therefore, the visitors were satisfied that the relevant standard in this SET area has been met.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
  - The education provider noted they hold regular meetings with practice-based learning coordinators, practice educators and practice learning

leads to discuss quality matters and provide updates regarding the programmes as appropriate. As detailed in quality theme 1, evidence of meetings and discussions demonstrated that employers support the development of the programmes and are committed to them.

- o The education provider explained that they have a dedicated practice-based learning team including a Placement Lead who are in regular communication with practice education providers to ensure availability and capacity of practice-based learning. From quality theme 2 above, we were reassured that the processes in place for ensuring availability and capacity and capacity of practice-based learning are effective. The processes help to ensure fair distribution of practice-based learning across all education providers in the region.
- o The education provider submitted CVs of staff on both programmes. We were informed of the Academic Workload Planning Model that is used by the education provider. This helps to ensure fairness and a balanced workload across the key areas of Learning and Teaching, Innovation and Research, Student Development and Support, Staff CPD and Development and Leadership and Management. As outlined in quality theme 3 above, there is evidence that additional staff will be in place to cover the breath of the curricula for both programmes.
- o The education provider noted module handbooks and other resources to support learning. We understand learners are able to access a range of resources and specialist teaching facilities and equipment. The occupational therapy team noted they are supported by the College Technicians team as part of their specialist teaching. They added that the University Learning Centre provides both online resources and traditional library facilities and provides both individual and groups study spaces. Through quality theme 4, we noted the reading lists for all the modules and were able to determine that they are appropriate and effective in supporting the required learning and teaching of the programmes.
- o Through the initial submission and the quality activity, the visitors were satisfied that all standards within this standard area have been met. The visitors recommend however that staffing should continue to be monitored to ensure recruitment goes ahead as planned. This is added to the Recommendation in Section 5.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery** –
  - o Module specifications are mapped to the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) and linked clearly to learning outcomes and cross-referenced to other modules.
  - o The education provider noted the programmes are designed to meet HCPC SOPs for professional behaviour, with conduct, performance, and ethics integrated throughout all modules. They noted that the module learning outcomes help learners develop knowledge of professional and ethical conduct. We understood learners are informed about the education provider's professional conduct and suitability policy during programme induction.

- The education provider noted the physiotherapy programme has been designed to reflect the profession's philosophy, core values, skills, and knowledge base, which are integrated throughout all modules. We understand the work-based learning pedagogy provides structured learning to support each week's on-the-job activities. Learners must apply key topics in practice and develop evidence and resources to demonstrate their learning. This approach ensures that theoretical knowledge is effectively translated into practical skills.
- The education provider noted the occupational therapy module specifications and learning outcomes ensure learners stay focused on occupational therapy. We are aware that specific modules, such as Future Focused Practice, help learners develop knowledge of occupation-centred practice and public and global health agendas. The education provider added that learners study a module that requires them to use the RCOT career development framework to critically reflect on their progression within the four pillars. They noted this prepares them for qualified practice through the Transitioning to Practice module.
- The education provider noted the physiotherapy programme is designed to move away from traditional specialist silos, reflecting the diverse nature of physiotherapy services and the service users physiotherapists will encounter. The occupational therapy programme ensures learners engage in a range of digital enabled health systems which relate to the area of practice within their practice learning modules. We noted staff are encouraged to attend conferences to ensure current areas of practice are included in the programme. The visitors considered the design of the programmes allows the education provider to reflect current practice. We noted visiting lecturers also help reflect current practice.
- Integration of theory and practice is evidenced within the module descriptors and embedded in programme learning outcomes. The link between theory and practice / application within specific modules gives greater focus to the use of theory and research.
- A range of learning and teaching approaches are utilised throughout, and this is evident throughout the module descriptors. Examples of the learning and teaching methods include Enquiry and Evidence based learning; Technology enhanced learning; Critical reflection; and Small group seminars and workshops. We understood the methods are designed to enable learners to develop knowledge and understanding.
- Reflective thinking is embedded throughout the programmes and within the overall teaching approach. Learners are clearly supported to become autonomous practitioners.
- It is clear within the programme or module descriptors how the programme supports and develops evidence-based practice as evidence and research underpin the curriculum. For example, specific modules such as Understanding the evidence base, and research design modules give greater focus on the use of theory and research.

- o The visitors were satisfied that the information provided adequately demonstrates that all standards related to the design and delivery of the programmes have been met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning** –
  - o Learners on the occupational therapy programme will complete three 10-week practice-based learning, totalling 1125 hours of practice, with allowances for sickness absence. Each week, they will work 37.5 hours, including 3.5 hours dedicated to study. We understood the practice- based learning hours are part of their off the job hours and forms part of their time at the education provider.
  - o The practice-based learning assessment encompasses the occupational therapy process and interventions focusing on the person, occupation, and environment.
  - o We understood a learning contract, developed by the learners and practice educators, guides each practice-based learning opportunity and is reviewed during midway meetings with the education provider.
  - o As outlined in quality theme 8, learners on the physiotherapy programme will have access to practice-based learning covering a range of sectors. Some of these include NHS Trusts (primary and secondary care, mental health, paediatrics), independent/private, voluntary, and social care sectors. We are reassured this would allow the learners to achieve the learning outcomes.
  - o There are processes in place that would ensure an adequate number of staff in practice-based learning. As noted through quality theme 5, the education provider has a dedicated placement team that works with practice education providers to ensure there is sufficient staff to support learners in practice-based learning. The education provider added that this is part of the apprenticeship contract and all parties need to sign up to this prior to the apprentice commencing on programme.
  - o For the occupational therapy programme, we understood an initial practice educator training is provided, with an online package available for both initial and refresher training. The education provider noted this training occurs three times a year. They added that throughout the year, various continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are offered to support the development needs of practice educators. Tri-partite midway meetings between the education provider, practice educator, and learner, along with stakeholder discussions, have led to changes in assessment documentation to streamline and enhance existing practices.
  - o The education provider noted training will be given to physiotherapy practice educators on the specific teaching, learning, and assessment needs of the programme, including different levels of progression. Additionally, the training will cover inclusive practices and how to support learners with support plans.
  - o As noted through quality theme 6, we were clear on how the PARE audit tool is used by education providers across the region to ensure

practice educators are suitable and have the required skills and expertise to support and develop learners in a safe and effective way.

- o Through the initial submission and the quality activity, the visitors were reassured that all standards within this SET area have been met.
- **SET 6: Assessment** –
  - o There is a variety of assessments methods used as evidenced in modules descriptors. The programme module learning outcomes are mapped to the HCPC SOPs and the Programme Specification outlines learning outcomes and methods of assessment of each module.
  - o Expectations of professional behaviours and reflection of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics are evident throughout the programmes. We noted appropriate evidence placed on learners demonstrating professional behaviour within the assessments. For the occupational therapy programme, the Practice placement assessment forms clearly focus on professional behaviours and linked directly to SOPs with learners' development plans linked to RCOT Pillars of Practice.
  - o Learning outcomes are clearly linked to assessments and different times of the programmes including the practice placement assessment form allowing learners to demonstrate development in critical thinking and practical skills. The visitors considered the assessment methods are carefully thought through to ensure achievement of the learning outcomes is established.
  - o The visitors were satisfied that all standards relating to assessments have been met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Section 5: Referrals

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process.

Recommendations

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

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

Recommendation: How the education provider ensures recruitment of staff to the occupational therapy teaching team progresses as expected by January 2025.

Reason:
- The visitors noted the education provider plans to recruit additional staff to ensure a range of expertise within the occupational therapy team as learner numbers increase. We noted a timeframe for appointment of staff has been outlined indicating the new staff will be in place by January 2025.
- The visitors are aware of the potential risk to staffing if recruitment does not go as planned. As such they considered the education provider should conduct ongoing monitoring of staffing to confirm that planned appointments are made as the programme progresses.

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

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

Education and Training Committee decision

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

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

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

Appendix 1 – summary report

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

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
University of Derby	CAS-01475-L4G4W2	Jo Jackson Jennifer Caldwell	Through this assessment, we have noted the programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.	Together with employers, the education provider is developing a business plan which will detail staffing resource requirements. They have a number of physiotherapists already employed and are advertising a post to provide curriculum development support. The education provider will be drawing on the current occupational therapy workforce to deliver and manage the new occupational therapy programme. Office for Student (OfS) funding will support staffing resourcing for the three programmes. Interviews for physiotherapy staff are to be held in early 2024. The education provider has occupational therapy and physiotherapy facilities which will be used to deliver specialist

				teaching. Some existing equipment as part of our health and sports provision is in place. The business plan will also include provision for consumables and further specialist equipment.

Programmes		
Programme name	**Mode of study**	**Nature of provision**
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	WBL (Work based learning)	Apprenticeship
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	WBL (Work based learning)	Apprenticeship

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MA Art Therapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Art therapy		01/09/2002
MA Dramatherapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Drama therapy		01/09/2002
MA Music Therapy	FT (Full time)	Arts therapist	Music therapy		01/09/2018
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/10/1995
MSc Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2009
PG Dip Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/08/2017
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	DL (Distance learning)	Operating department practitioner			01/05/2019
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice, Degree Apprenticeship	WBL (Work based learning)	Operating department practitioner			01/05/2019
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice Apprenticeship	WBL (Work based learning)	Paramedic			01/01/2024
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			09/09/2024
Post Graduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology Practice	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Forensic psychologist		01/01/2022
Post Graduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology Practice	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Forensic psychologist		01/01/2022

BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics	FT (Full time)	Prosthetist / orthotist			01/01/2022
BSc (Hons) Prosthetics and Orthotics Degree Apprenticeship	WBL (Work based learning)	Prosthetist / orthotist			01/01/2022
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/1992
MSc in Diagnostic Radiography (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/08/2016
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography Degree Apprenticeship	DL (Distance learning)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/01/2024
Post-graduate Practice Certificate in Independent / Supplementary Prescribing (Physiotherapists)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/08/2014
Post-graduate Practice Certificate in Independent / Supplementary Prescribing (Podiatrists)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/08/2014
Post-graduate Practice Certificate in Independent / Supplementary Prescribing for Paramedics	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2019
Postgraduate Practice Certificate in Independent/Supplementary Prescribing for Physiotherapists	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2020
Postgraduate Practice Certificate in Independent/Supplementary Prescribing for Podiatrists	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/09/2020