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## Approval process quality report

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| Education provider          | Coventry University                                       |
| Name of programme(s)        | MSc Occupational Therapy Integrated Degree Apprenticeship |
| Date Assessment commenced   | 21 May 2021   |
| Visitor recommendation made | 13 October 2021   |
| Case reference              | CAS-01056-G8B5W6  |

### Summary of findings from this assessment

This is a report on the approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programme detailed in this report meets our standards of education and training. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding programme approval.

The outcomes of this process were as follows:

- Further Stage 1 assessment was not required based on the new programme(s) being proposed for delivery.
- The visitors recommended the programme(s) be approved as all programme level standards were met through their Stage 2 assessment.

The Education and Training Committee will now meet to consider the visitors' recommendations and make a decision regarding programme approval.

## The areas we cover in this report

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## Section 1: Background information

### **Who we are**

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.

### **Our standards**

We approve institutions 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 standards are divided into two levels based on their relevance to the institution and programme(s). The following considerations were made when splitting standards between institution and programme level:

- Where accountability best sits, with either the accountable person for the institution or programme
- How the standard is worded, with references to the education provider and processes often best sitting at the institution level, and references to the programme or profession often best sitting at the programme level
- We have preferred seeking assurance at the institution level, to fit with our intention to put the institution at the centre of our quality assurance model.

### **Our approach to quality assuring education**

We are flexible, intelligent and data-led in our quality assurance of institution 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
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards

Institutions 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**

We take a staged approach to quality assurance, as we need to understand practices which will support delivery of all programmes within an institution, prior to assessing the programme level detail. The approval process is formed of two stages:

- Stage 1 – we assess to be assured 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 process we will initially review the proposal and then design our assessment based on the issues we find. As such the assessment methods will be different based on the issues which arise in each case.

### **How we make 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 of the visitors, inclusive of conditions and recommendations. 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 meets in public on a regular basis and their decisions are available to view [on our website](#).

## **Section 2: Our assessment**

### **Stage 1 assessment: The institution**

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Education provider | Coventry University |
| Key contact        | Kim Stuart          |

As part of the initiation of the process the education provider indicated that the proposed programme would be part of Coventry University. This institution is well established with HCPC and currently delivers approved programmes in:

- Paramedic
- Biomedical scientist
- Independent / Supplementary prescribing
- Operating department practitioner
- Occupational therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Dietitian
- Diagnostic radiographer

In previous standards assessments of these programmes, visitors have established the institution level standards are met. The provider has also demonstrated this through ongoing monitoring carried out by the HCPC.

As part of the provider's definition of their institution, they have defined the policies, procedures and processes that apply to the programmes delivered within it. These relate to the institution level standards we set which ensure the following areas are managed effectively:

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Admissions                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information for applicants</li> <li>• Assessing English language, character, and health</li> <li>• Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L)</li> <li>• Equality, diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>  |
| Governance and leadership          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective programme delivery</li> <li>• Effective staff management</li> <li>• Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level</li> </ul>  |
| Quality, monitoring and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic components, including how curricula are kept up to date</li> <li>• Practice components, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments</li> <li>• Learner involvement</li> <li>• Service user and carer involvement</li> </ul> |
| Learners                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Ongoing professional suitability</li> <li>• Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E)</li> <li>• Equality, diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>   |
| Assessment                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectivity</li> <li>• Progression and achievement</li> <li>• Appeals</li> </ul>   |

### **Assurance that institution level standards are met**

As part of this stage we considered how the proposed programmes fit into the named institution by considering any notable changes to the policies, procedures and processes related to the areas above.

We considered how the proposed programmes are assimilated with the management of existing approved programmes in the institution. We determined the proposed programmes would be managed in way that was consistent with the definition of their institution. On this basis, we were satisfied it is appropriate for the programme to sit as part of Coventry University and take assurance the institution level standards will continue to be met by its introduction.

### **Stage 2 assessment: The programmes**

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Education provider | Coventry University |
|--------------------|---------------------|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Accountable person (for the programmes) | Kim Stuart   |
| Programmes                              | MSc Occupational Therapy Integrated Degree<br>Apprenticeship |
| Profession                              | Occupational therapist                                       |
| Mode of study                           | Work based learning  |
| Type of programme                       | Pre-registration   |
| Learner numbers                         | 50 learners once per year                                    |
| Qualification level                     | Postgraduate   |
| Start date                              | January 2022   |

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.

### Visitors appointed to undertake this assessment

We appointed the following panel to assess the above information against our programme level standards:

|                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Registrant visitors | Dawn Blenkin - occupational therapist |
|                     | Jane Grant - occupational therapist   |

### Assessment of the proposal

Initial review:

- The visitors reviewed the education provider's submission and considered their approach to each standard.
- This first review culminated in a virtual HCPC meeting in which the visitors discussed and made decisions around the standards they considered to be met and the areas they required further information around.
- Following the finalisation of areas to explore the visitors discussed and finalised the most appropriate quality activity to undertake this investigation.

### Quality activity:

We design our assessment to be proportionate and appropriate to the issues identified and to seek input from relevant stakeholders when necessary. In this case, we considered it was appropriate and proportionate to request additional information via further documentation.

| Theme  | Reason for additional clarification / documentation  |
|--|--|
| How the education provider makes sure there is an effective process in place to ensure the | The visitors noted the education provider's process for forecasting placements and information in the statement of commitment, which demonstrated an employer's responsibility to provide corresponding practice placements. The visitors noted that the education provider has existing |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.</p>   | <p>BSc and MSc Occupational therapy provision. The visitors saw no specific reference in the documentation around how the education provider will ensure capacity and availability of placements for the additional number of learners on the new programme. It was also unclear how the additional placements taken by the apprentices will affect the existing programmes.</p>  |
| <p>Ensuring adequate staffing capacity to deliver an effective programme.</p>   | <p>The education provider referred to a 'large teaching team' which will be supplemented by hourly paid lecturers and visiting guest lecturers. They also indicated their staff: learner ratio to be 1:20. The visitors sought clarification to know whether the education provided had considered all programmes this set of staff would be teaching. The visitors also needed to know if the provider had considered the time taken for other non-teaching duties.</p>  |
| <p>Ensuring adequate resources to support learning in all settings.</p>   | <p>The programme appeared to be well resourced to ensure effective delivery to learners in their first year. The visitors saw that there were adequate resources in place for the first cohort of 50 learners. It was unclear how the current resources would meet the needs of additional 50 learners in their second year. The visitors were unclear what teaching is face-to-face and which elements are online and the percentage split of these, because this information was lacking in the evidence submitted. The visitors also needed further clarity on any considerations the provider had given to the differing learning needs of apprentices.</p> |
| <p>How the education provider ensures there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.</p> | <p>The visitors saw very detailed information about how the provider will ensure that practice educators will have adequate training and ongoing refresher training. The visitors considered there needs to be further evidence of how the education provider will ensure adequate placement capacity to be able to determine whether there will be adequate staff in practice-based learning.</p>  |
| <p>Ensuring adequate range of practice-based learning opportunities.</p>  | <p>The visitors needed clarification if the same structure, duration and range of practice-based learning on the existing MSc programme would apply to the degree apprenticeship programme.</p>   |
| <p>Assessment policies specifying requirements for progression and assessment methods being effective at measuring learning outcomes.</p>                   | <p>The visitors sought clarification around the End Point Assessment to understand when apprentices are required to undertake it and whether they receive adequate support.</p>   |

## **Summary of visitor findings**

### SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register

The visitors considered that the Masters level was an appropriate level of qualification for the new Occupational therapy programme.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

### SET 2: Programme admissions

The evidence supplied demonstrated that entry requirements are aligned to the current MSc programme and the apprenticeship standards. There was also detailed information around how accreditation of prior experiential learning will be assessed for the new programme, and what prospective applicants would have to provide in order to evidence this.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

### SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership

The evidence from the submitted documents showed that there is collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers – particularly around how the placements will operate and be supported on the MSc Occupational Therapy Degree Apprenticeship programme. The information submitted included the education provider's placement expansion strategy and their placement allocation standard which demonstrated their processes to ensure availability and capacity of practice-based learning are effective.

The staffing projections reassured the visitors that the provider had adequately forecasted the staffing requirements and had institutional commitment for the growth in learner numbers. The staff curriculum vitae showed a wide range of experience and research interests. Visiting guest lecturers from different areas of practice are also employed.

Adequate detail provided in learner handbooks and the course specification demonstrated that the education provider had considered what additional resource implications there will be, and how they will ensure accessibility to all learners.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

### SET 4: Programme design and delivery

The visitors understood from the standards mapping submitted and through earlier discussions with the programme team, that the design and delivery of the programme is modelled on the existing approved MSc pre-registration programme.



Therefore, they were confident that the new programme would also meet the learning outcomes in a similar way. It was evidenced in the documentation that the education provider adopts a range of learning and teaching methods to suit a wide range of learners. The visitors saw that there are changes in the way that learning and teaching will be undertaken on this new MSc route, but the visitors were satisfied that the learning and teaching methods are appropriate to the different nature of the apprenticeship route, with an equal split between practice-based learning, university-based learning and work-based learning.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

#### SET 5: Practice-based learning

The information provided demonstrated that the structure and duration of practice-based learning will be same for both the apprentice and full-time learner. The apprentice will have the additional chance to Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) the first placement depending on their prior work experience. This mirrors their existing MSc pre-registration provision so the visitors were satisfied with this approach.

The education provider included a statement that showed employers will be expected to provide a placement for an apprentice at each placement point. This, combined with other evidence of a placement expansion strategy, reassured the visitors that the provider had a process in place to ensure an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff were involved in practice-based learning.

The evidence supplied also showed that the education provider has good systems in place to ensure that practice educators are on the relevant part of the Register, and there is a robust process for working collaboratively with practice educators, including visits during placements. The provider also has a comprehensive programme of training and Continuing Professional Development for practice educators.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

#### SET 6: Assessment

As with the programme design and delivery, the visitors noted the way the assessment strategy and method are designed is the same as the MSc pre-registration programme. From further clarification sought by the visitors from the programme team around End Point Assessment (EPA), the visitors understood that the EPA is fully integrated within the programme with no additional assessment of the apprentices. The visitors were clear that the EPA will be signed off at an exam board by a dedicated external examiner who will independently review a sample of learner journeys from across the programme.

On this basis, there were no conditions set in relation to this area of the standards.

### Section 3: The visitors' recommendations

Based on these findings the visitors made the following recommendations to the Education and Training Committee:

#### **Programme approval**

The programme is recommended for approval, without conditions.

### Section 4: Committee decision on approval

- We will record the decision of the Education and Training Committee here following their meeting on 07 December 2021.