
Approval process report

Birmingham Newman University, Paramedic, 2022-23

Executive Summary

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

We have:

- Reviewed the institution against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programme(s) should be approved
- Decided that all standards are met, and that the programme(s) is 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

Next steps Outline next steps / future case work with the provider:

- The provider's next performance review will be in the 2025-26 academic year
- The education provider is applying for an occupational therapy programme to be approved

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

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

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

Our standards

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

Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

The approval process

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

- Stage 1 – we take assurance that institution level standards are met by the institution delivering the proposed programmes

- 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:

Gemma Howlett	Lead visitor, paramedic
Jason Comber	Lead visitor, paramedic
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider has one approved programme. It is a higher education provider. The proposed programme will sit within the School of Nursing and Allied Health.

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	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2023

Institution performance data

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

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

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	N/A	30	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 is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision.</p> <p>We assessed the education provider's documents to see whether there are sufficient resources for an effective programme. The visitors were satisfied with the information provided.</p>

Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	N/A	N/A	N/A	There is no data available for this data point. As they are a new institution, there is no institution performance data.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	N/A	N/A	N/A	There is no data available for this data point. As they are a new institution, there is no institution performance data.
Learner satisfaction	N/A	N/A	N/A	There is no data available for this data point. As they are a new institution, there is no institution performance data.

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 –**
 - Programme information is accessible on the webpages of the education provider. The admissions policy provides information on supporting applicants with differing requirements during the interview process.
 - 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 –**
 - A satisfactory enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) check is a mandatory requirement for entry onto programmes. A conditional

offer will not be converted to an unconditional offer until a satisfactory DBS check is completed.

- Learners must undergo an occupational health review for physical and mental health and immunisations.
 - Learners are required to sign a Code of Conduct and Fitness to Practice disclosure in the Fit and Proper Guidance to start a programme. Learners must inform the education provider if there are any changes to their health or DBS status.
 - 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.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - Where an applicant is applying for RPL against practice / clinical components of the programme, their hours and evidence of how they have achieved these must be countersigned by a registered healthcare professional. The final decision regarding the RPL approval is made by the Associate Dean following the recommendation of the Head of Subject. RPL claims including relevant RPL mapping documents will be verified by a relevant subject external examiner. All successful RPL claims are verified at the relevant programme assessment board.
 - RPL will not normally be considered for learners who have partly completed a programme of education and who have failed for academic and or practice / clinical learning.
 - 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.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider's religious mission and ethos is to offer a high quality, supportive and challenging education to all sections of society. The education provider is committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community.
 - The Admissions Policy outlines their commitment to ensuring they welcome equality and diversity in the learner population, that they are committed to widening participation, and the admissions procedures are transparent and fair. All staff, clinicians and experts by experience must undertake equality and diversity training prior to contributing to the selection of applicants. The Admissions Policy outlines the process for applicants to request feedback in relation to their performance as well as how to appeal against a decision and make a complaint.
 - The Recruitment Strategy Group ensures compliance with relevant regulatory requirements. The Equality and Diversity Committee terms of reference outlines the education provider's responsibilities in

monitoring recruitment and employment practice in relation to equality and diversity. The Equality and Diversity Policy sets out the overall approach taken by the education provider to ensure the learning environment supports diversity and inclusivity.

- 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.

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 Register¹ –**
 - Programme webpages state on successful completion of the programme, graduates will be eligible to apply for entry onto the HCPC register.
 - General Academic Regulations states all modules within three- and four-year full-time programmes are core modules and must be undertaken and passed to achieve the undergraduate programme, as well as the required professional elements. It also states aegrotat awards are not acceptable for providing eligibility to apply for registration with the HCPC.
 - 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.
- **Sustainability of provision –**
 - The education provider is “committed to inspiring future graduates to make a positive difference in the wider community, and recognise the importance of citizenship, leadership, and advocacy”.
 - The education provider has mechanisms in place to ensure it continues to work in partnership with key stakeholders. Forums both within the education provider and externally provide opportunities for all stakeholders to inform and advise the programme team about changes to provision or priorities within health and social care. Partnership working and co-production of curricula has been a central approach at the education provider in the design and delivery of the programmes with the aim they are fit for purpose.
 - The education provider has established quality assurance and risk management systems and processes. These facilitate scrutiny,

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

monitoring, and evaluation of programmes with the aim they reflect contemporary and up to date evidence-based practice. The education provider's Annual Enhancement Round provides scrutiny and evaluation of programme performance, including specific priorities for the coming year and innovation and new developments.

- 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.
- **Effective programme delivery –**
 - The senior leadership team hold higher degrees and have extensive experience in higher education. Role descriptors for senior lecturers outline the relevant experience and requirements for registration with the relevant professional body and to remain on the register as well as engage with revalidation and CPD activity. All teaching staff are required to hold a recognised teaching qualification and or fellowship with the HE or commit to working towards this. Associate lecturers are subject to the same level of suitability and experience.
 - Practice-based learning and simulation activities within the programme are effectively managed by the Head of Subject for Placements and Simulation. The education provider has invested in the ARC Placement Management Software to help in the management of practice-based learning.
 - The education provider has established quality assurance and risk management systems and processes. These systems and processes facilitate scrutiny, monitoring, and evaluation of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) programmes of education. This is with the aim programmes reflect contemporary and up to date evidence-based health and social care practice. The Annual Enhancement Round scrutinises and evaluates programme performance including priorities and innovative practice and new developments.
 - 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.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
 - The education provider has an established induction, training, and ongoing development programme for all staff. The Corporate Induction Handbook outlines the process for mandatory training at the education provider. New academic staff receive a full induction and are allocated a line manager and a mentor to support them. Staff development is identified at annual and mid-year appraisal. This includes professional development to meet the requirements of professional membership and or registration.

- Contracts of Employment outline the need for scholarly and research activity. Academic staff are allocated professional development study days to engage in scholarship.
 - The Annual Training and Development Schedule provides information of the developmental opportunities available to staff. The General Contract for all Academic Staff outlines the research and scholarship opportunities for staff to ensure they remain contemporary in their practice as educators.
 - The education provider ensures practice partners have a robust induction and staff development programme for all staff working in the practice-based learning. The education provider provides practice educator training for new practice-based learning providers, as well as a study day for experienced practice educators.
 - 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.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
 - The education provider works with stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of programmes. The education provider has established relationships with practice partners. The education provider has several mechanisms in place to ensure there is effective and regular collaboration with them as part of the quality process. Practice partners contribute to the values-based recruitment selection process at the education provider and are also part of the wider programme team.
 - 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - The Quality Office provides strategic and operational oversight including faculty and school adherence to academic and programme / profession specific regulations. The Senior Leadership Team and the Operations Team are responsible for ensuring continuous monitoring and enhancements of all programmes.
 - The education provider requires external examiners to provide feedback on all levels of study of programmes.
 - 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.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - The education provider works closely with practice learning partners to ensure ongoing assessment and audit of learning environments. This includes hosting forums to monitor quality and intelligence from regulators, and to devise action plans where these are required.
 - Practice-based learning providers ensure staff involved in teaching are aware of their responsibilities and the issues which need to be considered when undertaking their roles. Whilst undertaking practice-based learning, all learners will be supported via a named personal tutor from the education provider.
 - The Practice Environment Profile and Educational Audit Tool for Practice Environments, provide support with learning in a safe environment. The Education Placement Agreement provides guidance on issues of health and safety, including harassment of learners and how to escalate this information.
 - The Raising and Escalating Concerns Policy outlines the process for publicising findings where concerns regarding practice-based learning have been raised and investigated.
 - 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.
- **Learner involvement –**
 - The education provider seeks the views of existing and prospective learners through various mechanisms. For example, open day events, learning day activities, and a focus group.
 - Learners have multiple modes to feedback to staff throughout their programme, including the Student Practice Evaluation Questionnaire and module evaluations.
 - The education provider has a programme representative system which feeds into the Student Union Staff Student Consultative Committee.
 - 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.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - Service users and carers (Experts by Experience) (EBE) contribute to the selection, recruitment, assessment, and delivery of education. The EBE Context, Policy and Procedure Policy outlines the responsibilities of the education provider towards EBE.

- 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**
 - The education provider has an established intranet and virtual learning environment (VLE) learners use to access learning material and wider aspects of information to support their learning. The Student Handbook provides support, guidance, and resources.
 - The intranet contains signposted links to services for learners. The library intranet pages outlines information on how to access and use the library and its services. The library also produces subject guides, including about accessing information, referencing guides and extra support for learners.
 - The education provider has a Student Services Department. There are various areas of support available to learners.
 - In addition to learner services, the education provider has an active Student Union. Each learner group has a representative who is elected by the group and trained by the Student Union. All learners are allocated to and supported by a Personal Tutor.
 - Reasonable Adjustment Plans can be shared with practice educators to ensure awareness of different needs in all settings.
 - 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.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - Professional programmes have specific regulations in relation to fitness to practise. Learners must be suspended from their studies due to health and or misconduct issues.
 - The Fitness to Practise Procedure outlines how the education provider manages and considers FTP issues. For example, the initial process to be undertaken if there are allegations of academic misconduct.
 - The Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure outlines the process if a learner's health is impacting on their studies. There is a four-staged approach including emerging concerns, continuing concerns, and significant concerns which significantly impact resulting in a fitness to practice panel being convened. The Raising and Escalating Concerns

Policy outlines the process for managing issues of concern about a learner's practise.

- 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.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - Programmes are developed, designed, and will be delivered to ensure learning is collaborative with a range of peers, experts by experience and the local community.
 - The Practice Environment Profile and the Learning Environment Audit identifies the diversity of professional programmes to facilitate learning from and with professional groups. Opportunities for interprofessional learning will be available within practice learning environments. The Simulation Strategy and Operational Plan augments interprofessional education to provide learning opportunities with actors and experts by experience, supported with practice education staff.
 - 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.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) –**
 - The University Equality and Diversity Committee:
 - is responsible for development of an inclusive and non-discriminatory learning and working environment;
 - monitors annual statistics with reference to equality and diversity issues, such as recruitment;
 - receives and actions formal recommendations resulting from any incidents of discrimination, victimisation, or harassment; and
 - receives, reviews, and responds to submissions from learners and staff about matters relating to equality and diversity.
 - The education provider publishes EDI Annual Reports of Monitoring. Through the Admissions Policy the education provider supports applications for learners with additional needs or special circumstances. The Recruitment Strategy Group monitors statistics about applications.
 - Quality processes monitor learners' progression. Examination board data is scrutinised at assessment boards. The Annual Enhancement Round exercise document captures performance metrics. Data relating to module and programme evaluation is collected through module evaluation and evaluation of practice learning.
 - Learners who may require additional support can access learner services and employability teams. The Learner Support Agreement Process outlines the referral and individuals involved in supporting the

learner. Learners can be supported with a reasonable adjustment plan. The education provider evaluates data surrounding support for learners in all learning environments.

- 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.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - All marking is anonymous, except for Objective Structured Clinical Examination and practice assessment. The process for the subject assessment / module assessment board and the programme assessment board ensure assessment is fair, reliable, and valid, to enable learners to demonstrate progression and achievement.
 - 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.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - The threshold for passing assessments at levels four, five, six and seven is 40% for undergraduate programmes. The regulations also detail the maximum number of attempts for practice based and theory modules. Learners are also required to have normally successfully completed a level / year of study before starting the next year / level. Opportunities to resit modules or retrieve practice-based learning are embedded with the academic calendar to negate the risk of delayed progression.
 - 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.
- **Appeals –**
 - There is a two-stage process to making an academic appeal. The education provider has an Academic Appeals Procedure. The Student Union provides support for learners who are considering or have made an academic appeal.
 - 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.

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:

- There are staff involved with delivery and management of the programme. For example, Head of School of Nursing and Allied Health.
- The education provider has invested to support the programme. They have developed a learning and teaching space and clinical simulation facilities. They have plans to create a clinical teaching space, extending therapies teaching space, and a paramedic science teaching space. There are also learning spaces such as classrooms. The education provider has bought equipment to enable learning and teaching. For example, mobility aids including crutches, frames, and wheelchairs.
- The physical resources for the programme are already in place. The programme leader will be in post in September 2023, and lecturers will be recruited by March 2024.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic	30 per cohort, one per year	02/09/2024

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.

Performance data

We also considered intelligence from others (eg prof bodies, sector bodies that provided support) as follows:

- NHS England Midlands - We received information considering current pressures regarding practice-based learning for physiotherapy in the Midlands. The information was reviewed but we considered it would not impact on this assessment.

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.

Quality theme 1 – support for non-paramedic academic staff

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the Senior Lecturer / Programme Leader is a registered paramedic, and the education provider is recruiting for a lecturer who is a registered paramedic. They noted that support and input of other, non-paramedic staff, including visiting lecturers would help to deliver this programme. However, the visitors did not receive any information about the support and training for staff who will not be from a paramedic background. The visitors were consequently unsure of how these staff will be supported and trained so they can deliver an effective programme. They therefore sought more information about this.

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 as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined all staff are required to engage with the teaching observation process as a means of enhancing teaching activities and furthering innovation. All academic staff are also allocated professional development study days to engage in scholarship, with additional negotiated time to undertake higher levels of study or research activity. The visitors recognised most modules will be led by, and delivered by, HCPC registered paramedics. Visiting lecturers will support the delivery of modules. All visiting lecturers will be HCPC

registered paramedics. The wider team, who are not HCPC registered paramedics, will contribute to the delivery of the paramedic specific modules where their specific expertise, for example in acute mental health assessment, will add to the overall learner experience. For interprofessional modules, learners will be taught in mixed groups to enable them to learn from, with and about other health professions learners using specific expertise.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence ensured the education provider will support non-paramedic academic staff. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 2 – staffing for an effective programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors understood the cohort for year 1 is 30 learners, and for year 2 the cohort will be of 36 learners. The visitors recognised the education provider had submitted curriculum vitae of staff within the School of Nursing and Allied Health. However, the visitors were unclear of what part of the programme these staff will be teaching. The visitors also did not receive information about the education provider's plans for recruitment. They were consequently unsure whether there will be an appropriate number of staff able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively. The visitors therefore sought more information about this area.

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 as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider informed us they had recruited a second HCPC registered paramedic. They will start as a Senior Lecturer in Paramedic Science in May 2024 on a full-time contract. The visitors recognised most modules will be led by and delivered by HCPC registered paramedics. Visiting lecturers will support the delivery of modules. All visiting lecturers will be HCPC registered paramedics. The wider team, who are not HCPC registered paramedics, will contribute to the delivery of the paramedic specific modules where their specific expertise, for example in acute mental health assessment, will add to the overall learner experience.

For interprofessional modules learners will be taught in mixed groups to enable them to learn from, with and about other health professions learners utilising specific expertise. Paramedic specific sessions are also incorporated into these modules. For example, Introduction to Professional Health Care Practice has specific sessions on keeping a portfolio and the HCPC audit. An additional two lecturers will be recruited in mid-2025, and a further two lecturers in mid-2026. All these four will be HCPC registered paramedics.

The visitors were satisfied they knew what part of the programme staff within the School of Nursing and Allied Health will be teaching, and the education provider's plans for recruitment. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 3 – ensuring practice-based learning staff are appropriately qualified and experienced

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined they have an agreement in place with West Midlands Ambulance Service, 12 NHS Trusts, an Integrated Care Systems and a private, independent and voluntary organisation (PIVO) in relation to providing practice-based learning. As part of these agreements, practice educators are required to have an induction and staff development programme. However, the visitors were unable to determine the qualifications and experience requirements for practice educators. The visitors therefore sought more information about this.

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 as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained how learners will be allocated a named mentor to oversee their progress, support to provide a positive learning experience. The named mentor will be responsible for signing the summative proficiencies and the final grading. The mentor will have undertaken mentorship training and will have completed a module in Mentorship at level 6 accredited by the education provider. They will also be a HCPC registered paramedic.

The education provider outlined associate mentors will be able to sign example evidence of proficiencies but will not be able to sign off the learner's work. They complete an approved and non-credit-bearing one day mentorship programme. An associate mentor needs to be a HCPC registered paramedic. In non-ambulance practice-based learning, a professionally qualified practitioner who is appropriately registered will be assigned to learners. They will be able to sign proficiencies.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence the education provider provided ensured practice educators had appropriate educational and experience requirements. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

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.

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** –
 - Learners will not be able to enrol onto the programme without a validation of their academic qualifications, a satisfactory DBS check and Occupational Health clearance. The admissions policy details the approach to the selection and admissions processes for learners entering programmes, including suitability for PSRB programmes.
 - Application forms are assessed in relation to applicant's academic profile, personal statement and a values-based face-to-face group and individual interview. All applicants are assessed through the application process in relation to their digital and technological literacy.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –
 - The education provider had invested in resources for the programme. Practice teaching sessions involve demonstration of paramedic skills. Only HCPC registered paramedics will be teaching these. All staff within the school are trained and will receive updates on the operation of the facilities to support learning, teaching, and assessment.
 - The education provider has worked with stakeholders during the co-production of the programme and will continue working with practice learning partners to ensure there is effective collaboration.
 - The programme has developed partnerships with West Midlands Ambulance Service University NHS Foundation Trust (WMAS). They have a signed memorandum of understanding in place and contract commissioning letter from them to provide ambulance-based practice-based learning. All providers have signed a formal education partnership agreement agreeing to offer practice-based learning.
 - As discussed in [quality theme 1](#), the Senior Lecturer / Programme Leader is a registered paramedic. All staff engage with a teaching observation process as a means of enhancing teaching activities and furthering innovation. All academic staff are also allocated professional development study days to engage in scholarship, with additional negotiated time to undertake higher levels of study or research activity.
 - As discussed in [quality theme 2](#), the cohort for year 1 is 30 learners, and for year 2 it is 36 learners. For the initial intake of 30 learners, two senior lecturers who are HCPC paramedics are in post. An additional

two lecturers will be recruited in mid-2025, and a further two lecturers in mid-2026.

- The education provider has resources in place which are effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme. Several specialised resources have been bought to enhance the programme delivery. These resources are specific to the delivery of the paramedic science programme to enable learners to meet the SOPs for paramedics.
- The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The programme has been designed to comply with SETs, SOPs, SPCEs and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark Statement Paramedics. The curriculum has been mapped against the existing COP curriculum guidance from 2019. The programme is designed to ensure learners meet the standards of proficiency to be eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC as a paramedic.
 - Learners are required to demonstrate knowledge of professional regulation of the laws, ethics, values, and behaviours that underpin professional practice to meet programme learning outcome C6.
 - The programme has mechanisms in place to ensure it works in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure graduates are prepared for the workforce. For example, the curriculum development steering group shapes the programme to ensure it is relevant to current practice.
 - The curriculum structure has been designed to ensure a balance between theory and practice learning, and the integration of theory and practice. The assessment strategy in each module specifies the rationale for the assessment and its relevance to practice.
 - The programme provides learning teaching and assessment experiences through lectures, seminars, skills simulation, virtual learning, and input from practice partners and service users and carers. A range of evidence-based learning and teaching methods are used to support learners to achieve the overall programme learning outcomes.
 - The delivery of the programme has been designed to develop autonomous and reflective thinking throughout.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - A learner's attendance needs to be at least 75% for any practice-based learning. Otherwise, it will not normally be possible for them to continue the practice-based learning due to being unable to meet the required learning outcomes or be assessed effectively through the PAD.
 - The Education and Practice Partnership Agreement set out what the expectations and requirements are of the parties involved in the provision of the education and training of learners. Practice-based

learning providers will make appropriate and sufficient staff available to ensure learners receive appropriate practice-based learning.

- The curriculum structure has been designed to ensure practice-based learning is integral to the programme.
 - The Practice Environment Profile and Educational Audit Tool for practice environments, evidence learning in a safe environment. These are completed before learners attend practice-based learning as part of quality assurance processes. This will ensure the allocation of learners is appropriate to the number of staff in practice.
 - All Trusts and practice-based learning providers have committed to ensuring a safe and effective learning environment via a memorandum of understanding, contract commissioning letter, or by signing an educational partnership agreement. As part of these agreements, practice educators have a robust induction and staff development programme.
 - The Practice Partnerships department will plan, monitor, and allocate practice-based learning to ensure learners have a range of learning opportunities to enable them to achieve the required proficiencies. Learners will undergo practice-based learning in all three years of the programme: 12 weeks in year one, 10 weeks in year two and 15 weeks in year three.
 - The education provider has agreements in place with West Midlands Ambulance Service, 12 NHS Trusts, an Integrated Care Systems and a PIVO to providing practice-based learning. As discussed in [quality theme 3](#), learners will be allocated a named mentor to oversee their progress, support and provide a positive learning experience. This mentor will be responsible for signing the summative proficiencies and the final grading. They will have undertaken mentorship training and will have completed a module in Mentorship at level 6 accredited by the education provider. They will also be a HCPC registered paramedic.
 - Associate mentors will be able to sign example evidence of proficiencies but will not be able to sign off the learner's work. They complete an approved and non-credit-bearing one day mentorship programme. An associate mentor needs to be a HCPC registered paramedic. In non-ambulance practice practice-based learning, a professionally qualified practitioner who is appropriately registered will be assigned to learners. They will be able to sign proficiencies.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - Assessment within the programme is mapped so on successful completion of the programme the learners will have met the standards of proficiency for paramedics and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
 - Learners are required to demonstrate knowledge of professional regulation of the laws, ethics, values, and behaviours that underpin professional practice to meet programme learning outcome A7.

- The Assessment Principles and Good Practice Guide outline 12 principles of assessment. The assessment scheme is considered fair, reliable, valid, varied, and inclusive, underpinned by the Learning and Teaching strategy. There are a wide range of assessment methods. For example, a 2500-word case study.
- Mentors use a grading criteria table to support them when grading the PAD. They also attend training related to grading of PADs prior to supporting learners in practice-based learning. This training included awareness of bias in assessment, worked examples and case studies. During practice-based learning, there are drop-in sessions where mentors can raise any questions or seek clarification.
- The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Section 5: Referrals

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

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

Recommendations

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

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

- All standards are met, and therefore the programmes should be approved

Education and Training Committee decision

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

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:

- The programme is approved

Reason for this decision: The Panel accepted the visitor's 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
Birmingham Newman University	CAS-01471-Y6H6X0	Gemma Howlett and Jason Comber	<p>Through this assessment, we have noted:</p> <p>The programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved</p>	<p>Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:</p> <p>There are staff involved with delivery and management of the programme. For example, Head of School of Nursing and Allied Health.</p> <p>The education provider has invested to support the programme. They have developed a learning and teaching space and clinical simulation facilities. They have plans to create a clinical teaching space, extending therapies teaching space, and a paramedic science teaching space. There are also learning spaces such as classrooms. The education provider has bought equipment to enable learning and</p>

				<p>teaching. For example, mobility aids including crutches, frames, and wheelchairs.</p> <p>The physical resources for the programme are already in place. The programme leader will be in post in September 2023, and lecturers will be recruited by March 2024.</p>
Programmes				
Programme name			Mode of study	Nature of provision
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science			FT (Full time)	Taught (HEI)

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			04/09/2023