
Performance review process report

Birkbeck, University of London, Review Period 2021 - 2023

Executive summary

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

We have:

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

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored via quality activity focused on :
 - Ensuring interprofessional opportunities and initiatives are in place for learners in the education providers' provision.
- The provider should next engage with monitoring in four years, the 2027-28 academic year, because:
 - This allows sufficient time for their institutional restructure to be completed and reflected on.
 - This allows sufficient time for the two areas of recommendation to be implemented and these developments reflected upon.
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Previous consideration	This is not applicable as this review was conducted as a result of their periodic engagement and first engagement with the performance review process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when the education provider's subsequent engagement with the performance review process should be • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2027-28 academic year.

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- Subject to the Panel's decision, the education provider will reflect on the two areas referred to their next performance review based on the visitor's recommendation.
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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

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

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

Our standards

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

Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

The performance review process

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

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

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

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

Thematic areas reviewed

We normally focus on the following areas:

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

How we make our decisions

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

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

The assessment panel for this review

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

Julie-Anne Lowe	Lead visitor, Occupational therapist
Rosemary Schaeffer	Lead visitor, Practitioner psychologist
Ian Hughes	Service User Expert Advisor
Alistair Ward-Boughton-Leigh	Education Quality Officer
Jacqueline Bates-Gaston	Advisory visitor, Practitioner psychologist

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

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

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 2 HCPC-approved programmes across 1 profession. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2021.

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	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021

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 programmes¹.

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
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¹ An explanation of the data we use, and how we use this data, is available [here](#)

Numbers of learners	40	53	06.12.2023	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners above the benchmark, meaning we should explore the potential impact on resources to support learners</p> <p>The education provider provided this data after further clarification. They have also said how the total number will vary from year to year, depending on how are accepted onto the programme combined with some learners taking a study break either in year, or between Year 1 and Year 2. From this year onward, they have capped the number accepted into the programme to a maximum of 15 per year. This is to reduce pressure on Part 2 of the Professional Doctorate (Year 3 and Year 4 - the research thesis), which while outside the scope of the HCPC performance review, is nonetheless affected by the decisions made on Part 1 (the MRes). We explored this by making the visitors aware of this ahead of their review and</p>
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				factoring this into their reasoning / assessment.
Learner non continuation	3%	0%	2020-21	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects</p> <p>The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has been maintained.</p> <p>We explored this by making the visitors aware of this ahead of their review and factoring this into their reasoning / assessment.</p>
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	94%	95%	2019-20	<p>This data was sourced from summary. This means the data is the provider-level public data</p> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 1%</p> <p>The definition of a Bronze TEF award is "Provision is of satisfactory quality."</p> <p>We explored this by making the visitors aware of this ahead of their review and factoring this into their reasoning / assessment.</p>

Learner satisfaction	82.2%	78.8%	2023	<p>This data was sourced at the summary. This means the data is the provider-level public data.</p> <p>The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 2.2%</p> <p>We explored this by making the visitors aware of it ahead of their review and factoring it into their reasoning / assessment.</p>
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Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

The education provider was asked to provide a self-reflective portfolio submission covering the broad topics referenced in the [thematic areas reviewed](#) section of this report.

The education provider's self-reflection was focused on challenges, developments, and successes related to each thematic area. They also supplied data, supporting evidence and information.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

Quality theme 1 – Ensuring Interprofessional Education (IPE) is in place and integral to their programme.

Area for further exploration: We noted the education provider's reflections were limited in this section and seemed to suggest that IPE might not be in place currently. It is important that we understand how IPE is implemented because this

needs to be integral to programmes as set out in our standards of education and training (SETs). We therefore determined that exploring this via quality activity was the most appropriate way to confirm this.

Quality activities agreed to explore the theme further: We requested the education provider to submit information on what IPE initiatives are in place and how these are received by staff and learners. We allowed them the freedom to supply both an additional documentary and a narrative submission to be able to detail their processes and their approach to IPE in their own words.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider responded to our questions with a narrative response. Here they were able to detail the IPE opportunities that exist internally to the education provider itself. They discussed how their former department of organisational psychology has been incorporated into their new 'Birkbeck Business School'. This allows learners on the approved programme to be invited to events and learning opportunities with other faculties, such as the Law, Business, Economics, and Marketing faculties.

The visitors found this to have addressed their concerns and to have demonstrated that IPE is in place and integral to the programme. They noted that IPE opportunities are available both internally and externally to the education provider's institutional structure.

The visitors still recommend the education provider to further develop this area. They have found there to be a general lack of specific information regarding how and where IPE is integrated across the curriculum. At present, this does not appear to be a mandatory element of the curriculum, because learners are invited to attend rather than expected to attend as part of their core learning. They found that sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure that IPE occurs but would recommend a more unified and embed approach is taken forward. We recommend the education provider reflect on this and present their reflections / developments at their next performance review.

Section 4: Findings

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings for each portfolio area, focusing on the approach or approaches taken, developments, what this means for performance, and why. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability –**
 - The education provider has discussed the challenges they have faced during the review period. As a subject area, the school that delivers the approved programme has been put under the purview of the Birkbeck

Business School. This change was aimed at providing clearer levels of support for the Professional Doctorate offer, a further development of the embeddedness of the programme into their teaching.

- The education provider had also experienced a decline in learner numbers particularly of those from the European Union (EU). They have also noted challenges surrounding changes in the demographic makeup and working habits of Londoners, particularly in a post-COVID world. This means that many more people are working remotely than in the past, often living outside the city, a move away from part-time study, which has traditionally been the education provider's key target market. They also highlighted how they observed increased competition among public and provider higher education institutions in London. The steps they took to address these challenges included:
 - A programme of restructuring and cost-cutting started in the 2022-23 academic year. This is planned to put their finances on a more sustainable footing over the long term. This included merging five Schools into three Faculties.
 - They have worked to develop provision in emerging areas with strong demand from applicants and students, notably business analytics.
 - The faculty has been working to introduce more flexible provision delivery from the 2024-25 academic year. They stated this would include a significant increase in the amount of teaching delivered during afternoons, with the potential also for increased block delivery.
 - They also stated that the faculty is building relationships with high-quality agents, which will aim to increase learner recruitment internationally.
- Through clarification, the education provider detailed that have sufficient resources for the higher numbers of learners on Part 1 (MRes) of the doctorate. The main resource is the professional practice supervisors. They also made the decision to cap the intake to 15 people per year in Part 1. This will be in place from the 2024-2025 cohort onwards and help them manage learner numbers going forward.
- The visitors welcomed the additional information made available by the points of clarification. They also found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area and have identified no risks to the provision.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider has discussed how their partnerships are 'two-fold'. Firstly, with their practice supervisors, some of whom are in private practice and run their own consultancies, and some who work for large organisations, such as the UK Government. Secondly, with employers or clients for whom learners do consultancy work.
 - They explained how they work closely with their practice supervisors and ensure they are fully supported in their role as well as being clear on their responsibilities. They achieve this through monthly group supervisor meetings and the supervisor's handbook. Supervisors are kept informed of any changes in the education provider that may affect them via emails and monthly meetings.

- They detailed how the relationship between learner practitioners and their clients and / or employers is managed via the 'Placement Monitoring Form' and Placement Feedback. For some clients and / or employers, there are times when anonymity is requested, and they always aim to honour this. In these circumstances, they allow learners to redact any identifiers in their practice logs before submission onto the online portal.
- Through clarification the education provider explained how supervisors are trained at the start of their engagement. Training sessions are recorded and available via a shared platform for those who would like a refresher. All new practice supervisors receive additional training for their first learning log review with one-to-one feedback and a second review of their work from a programme director.
- The visitors found the education provider's reflections to be detailed and welcomed the information supplied through clarifications. They found the education providers approach to managing partnerships appropriate and them to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider has identified three specific areas of institutional challenge over the review period. They reflected on the move out of the pandemic and the restrictions this placed on their provision. This presented opportunities as well as challenges including the rapid upskilling of staff to operate online and improved infrastructure to support this work. This provided an opportunity to reconsider modes of delivery to their time-poor learner population, with greater use of online resources and hybrid forms of delivery where appropriate. They reflect this has been followed by steps in generative artificial intelligence and how this impacts approaches to learning, teaching and academic integrity.
 - The education provider has also reflected on the changing regulatory environment experienced over the review period. This included;
 - Updated guidance on Office for Students (OfS) expectations of compliance
 - A changed relationship with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (including the use of the Quality Code as an established benchmark for compliance).
 - A change in direction (generally welcome) in access and participation policy and the production of a new TEF evaluation and submission.
 - The education provider has reflected on how they had undergone a significant institutional change in the review period. This included a restructuring from five schools or 18 departments to three faculties with eight schools. Preparations for the change ran alongside a complete review of the whole taught portfolio and were conducted over 10 months. The purpose of that review was to introduce a consistent programme structure for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, with 30 credits as the usual baseline for learners. The rationale, in quality terms, was to improve consistency of experience, standardise teaching patterns, balance study load, simplify entry routes

and rationalise the modules on offer to reduce general complexity. All programmes went through scrutiny and reapproval.

- The consequences of a wholesale process in a rapid period, following directly on from the pandemic has been a suspension of routine periodic programme review. How this is addressed in the future (including accommodating continuous improvement and reporting) is under consideration at present.
- The visitors noted the review of the education providers' whole taught provision. Additionally, how the rationale for this was to improve consistency of experience and standardise teaching patterns. They found the conduct of such a review reassuring and should result in a better programme of study. The visitors are satisfied with their performance in this area finding them to be performing satisfactorily.
- **Placement quality –**
 - The education provider has reflected on how they do not have placements on the approved programme. They refer to their learners as 'practitioners-in-training', and they are in employment as part of the programme. This is either as paid employees, for example, working for a large consultancy, or working for themselves. This is a requirement of the programme due to the nature of occupational psychology being about the psychology of the workplace. The practice logs are designed around the British Psychological society (BPS) consultancy framework. Practitioners-in-training must be in active employment and have access to consultancy work across each of the five domains of occupational psychology in order to progress on the programme.
 - The education provider explained that they retain oversight and monitor the quality of workplace arrangements via their Placement Record and Placement Monitoring forms. Monitoring and oversight also come as part of the practice supervisor's relationship with learners. For example, in supervision meetings discussing how to handle issues such as safeguarding during organisational change.
 - Through clarification the education provider discussed scenarios where learners have not been able to meet the project requirements due to change in employment or project delays. In this situation, different mechanisms of support were put in place to support the learner's onward progression.
 - The visitors noted the education providers system of system of placements focusing on being in work and acting as 'practitioners-in-training' as appropriate. The visitors are satisfied with the education providers' performance in this area, finding them to be performing satisfactorily and their reflections clear.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - The education provider described how the learners on the MRes programme learn from one another via several mechanisms. Firstly, they meet five times a year at the 'weekend school sessions'. Here they have a rotation where different learners share their key learning from one of the consultancy projects they've been working on. They normally have time to hear from four learners, with each having up to 10 minutes to present their key learning from the consultancy project

they worked on or led. The rest of the group then had up to 10 minutes to ask the presenter questions.

- The education provider stated that learners have discussed the value of hearing about consultancy projects from different sectors and countries. For example, learn and share sessions have included projects such as
 - developing a framework to support unemployed neurodiverse people back into employment.
 - The design and delivery of an assessment centre for a global organisation, adapting assessments according to cultural needs;
 - the design and delivery of a women's leadership development programme
- From the evidence supplied, we did not have sufficient information available to ensure IPE remains in place at the education provider. It is important that IPE remains in place as part of their provision, we therefore explore this further via quality theme [one](#).
- Following this further exploration the education provider confirmed to us that IPE is in place at their institution and forms part of their processes. We found this to be an area for the education provider to reflect on. We recommend they consider how IPE sits within learning and to provide more detail on this at their next performance review.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - The education provider has discussed how their learners will not engage with carers during the programme due to the nature of the provision. They reflected on how the work of an occupational psychologist is focused on the working life in an organisational context. They instead use the term 'client' in consultancy projects with clients essentially being service users.
 - Other stakeholders that they engage with include employees who could be classed as service users. Their interactions with learners are recorded in learning logs. They explained how if a learner is leading a project or programme to change working methods, they must demonstrate how they've engaged employees. This would include how they've handled issues around data protection and informed consent. For each stage of the learning log, learners are expected to reflect on ethical considerations and the standards of proficiency to account for reflections on their boundaries, fitness to practice, care for all stakeholders etc.
 - In these logs, learners would detail how they built a relationship with their clients, including agreeing on responsibilities and accountabilities and how any disagreements will be managed. The relationship with the client is also key in the other five stages of the consultancy cycle. For each log, the learner must get approval from a client to use the project or the log before commencing writing the logbook.
 - Through clarification, the education provider explained how service users' feedback on their engagement. Their feedback form for has clear criteria to help service users provide constructive and clear feedback. Practice supervisors also give detailed feedback on the logs. Where feedback is inadequate or vague, the practice supervisor and /

or programme director would explore this and request more detail if required.

- The visitors welcomed the additional information supplied via clarifications. They considered this and the evidence supplied in the initial submission when completing their assessment. They noted the process of following up with clients when their feedback is not sufficient as a good mechanism. They found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily with an adequate approach to this area.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The education provider has discussed how they have a diverse learner population. This means higher proportions of Black, Asian and mixed ethnic background learners and a slightly higher proportion of learners disclosing a disability (or more than one disability). Additionally, they have noted several older learners and those more likely to come from the lowest two Index of Multiple Deprivation or IMD quintiles.
 - They have discussed their three areas of focus over the course of the review period in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). These being:
 - Securing good practice for online learning spaces and resources. Their new strategy is designed to secure consistent information to support learning, supporting meeting quality requirements and to support accessibility and consistency for learners from all backgrounds.
 - They are also working with the OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) but note in the context of this particular programme that the EORR covers undergraduate rather than postgraduate programmes.
 - Closing the awarding / attainment gap, the focus here is at the undergraduate level. In the Access and Participation Plan, they worked on developing their approach to assessment and feedback. A project is being introduced which will also support changes to the curriculum. Obligatory race equality training was introduced for all staff members including how to handle racist incidents in the classroom. A compulsory race equality orientation activity for learners including a clear message of zero tolerance of racism and other forms of harassment.
 - They identified through an analysis of their regulations where these might have differential impacts for learners and taking steps to address these. They are also taking action to make staff, especially teaching staff, more ethnically diverse and reflective of the student body.
 - Through clarification, the education provider supplied specific examples including the support in place for learners on the programme and the institution-wide mechanisms in place. This includes their 'cross-college' learning development team. Who offer live online workshops, digital resources and one-to-one appointments for all learners. These focus on subjects such as procrastination, perfectionism and prioritisation; essay and assignment writing.
 - The Birkbeck Business School also offers study skills workshops once a term on time management, essay writing and referencing.

- Learners who have declared a disability (prior to commencing their studies) are contacted by the College's Wellbeing services with further information about support available. All enrolled learners are invited to complete a Study Support Plan (SSP) upon enrolment. This is the formal mechanism by which learners can provide brief information about the impact of their disability on their studies. Here they can also request reasonable adjustments and provide consent for their SSP to be shared with relevant teams.
- The visitors considered both the information provided in the initial submission and the additional information presented during their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area. The visitors want to feedback that reflections on recruitment, support and retention in terms of widening participation would be useful for future reviews.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - The education provider discussed how they have completed a review of their MRes which forms the first part of the approved programme. This involved reflecting on how to amend processes and expectations to allow them to not only grow the programme but do so without compromising the programme and learner experience. This also aligns with their ethos of offering opportunities in terms of widening participation in education.
 - Through clarification the education provider submitted further details and reflections on their restructure. They also reflected on the launch of their new Business School, both of which have been positive for the programme. They explained how their senior leadership team were very supportive of the programme. This extends to being keen to offer professional doctorate programmes in professions such as marketing, and business. They reflected that the programme remained popular and had a waiting list of applicants for Part 1 of the programme. It is currently the only alternative pathway to getting HCPC registration and a British Psychological Society (BPS) charter for this profession area to the BPS' own programme.
 - The visitors took into account both the information provided in the initial submission and the additional information presented during their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area. The visitors have found the information submitted for this section to be limited. They noted the education provider's reflections centred on ongoing developments such as their recent restructuring. We therefore recommend that these developments be completed and reflected on during their next performance review.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up:

- We are referring the education provider ongoing work to improve and increase interprofessional learning to their next performance review. We recommend the education provider considers how IPE sits within learning and how this

works to achieve the learning outcomes. We recommend the education provider compile their detailed reflections and examples during their next performance review.

- We are referring to the ongoing developments discussed by the education provider as part of their horizon scanning section for their next performance review. We found their reflections in this section centred on ongoing developments, such as their recent restructure, with many things being 'in progress'. We recommend they provide an update on the outcome of their restructuring and reflect on the impact.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
 - The education provider has discussed how the SOPs have always been an integral part of their programme. As such, the changes to the Standards, which came into effect in September 2023, have been seamlessly implemented.
 - They explained how the changes to the SOPs were communicated with learners in their day sessions and via email. The new documents were uploaded on Moodle so learners could access the up-to-date files easily. The practice supervisors were also informed of the changes via email and at the monthly practice supervisor meeting so they could also ensure that the new standards were used. They confirmed the new guidance had been implemented and all new cohorts starting from 2023 would be taught the new SOPs.
 - Through clarification the education provider detailed the process they took to embed the new standards of proficiency. These being:
 - going through the new SOPs with their practice supervisors at their monthly group meeting.
 - updating all documentation, such as handbooks, and amending SOP activities at the five-weekend sessions.
 - updating the SOP tracker that learners must complete as part of their annual progress reports. These now require more detail.
 - They also discussed how they referred learners and supervisors to the HCPC site and materials such as reflective tools and case studies. They used case studies to bring to life various Standards most relevant to occupational psychology.
 - The visitors considered both the information provided in the initial submission and the additional information presented during their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area and to have had a clear process in place to embed the new SOPs.
- **Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic –**
 - The education provider has discussed how learning and mechanisms introduced during the height of the pandemic have been implemented. This includes the weekend sessions having both in-person and virtual options. The monthly 1-2-1 supervision meetings were online pre-pandemic and this method has remained.

- The education provider reflected mindfully of the challenges the pandemic presented and the ongoing long-term challenges. This included areas such as work-life balance, working patterns, and inclusion at work. They have reflected on this learning as part of how they design their programme and support learners in balancing their work and studies.
- The visitors noted the education providers' reflections in this area, finding this section to be succinct but sufficiently detailed. They agreed the education provider has been performing well and wanted feedback on the good work the education provider has conducted regarding their ongoing post-pandemic work.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The education provider has discussed how their learners' practice-based learning is focused very much on the 'real-world' and real-life scenarios. By this they mean they are working in 'live' consultancy environments. Therefore, simulation was not as relevant for their context. The programme is focused on the six learning logs that learners produce to demonstrate their consultancy skills as a practitioner psychologist-in-training. As a result of there being no essays or traditional assignments, the issue around AI and the potential for cheating hasn't been an issue for this program.
 - They reflected that research in areas such as AI and coaching has been growing. They shared the latest research in their daily sessions to help them reflect on the use of technology. As practice develops in this space, they plan to bring in experts on this topic as part of an expert speaker slot.
 - The visitors noted their reflection and have found them to be performing satisfactorily in this area. They wanted to feedback on the potential risk of downplaying the potential for AI to be used in writing up learning logs. The risk of AI being used for evidence that will be assessed and that this does not relate only to essay and traditional assessment evidence. The visitors recommend the education provider consider this in their ongoing development.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**
 - The education provider has discussed how apprenticeships aren't relevant for their MRes in Professional Practice in Occupational Psychology. This is out of scope for the level of provision they offer.
 - They have reflected on non-approved areas also delivered by the institution where apprenticeships are available, but these are out of scope for this review.
 - The visitors noted how apprenticeships are not relevant for this programme. But also recognised the reflections provided by the education provider.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
 - The education provider has discussed how they have not had any QAA review at an institutional level since June 2010. This was the result of the regulatory changes to oversight of quality and standards in higher education.
 - They have discussed how their quality assurance framework is built upon current and previous iterations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Their work plan for 2022-23 included a mapping exercise between the OfS conditions, the existing Quality Code, their compliance, and areas of strength and weakness.
 - The visitors noted the education provider's reflections and ongoing mapping exercises. The education provider will also reflect on any future assessments and reviews at their next / future performance reviews. The visitors have no concerns and find the education provider to be performing well.
- **Office for Students (OfS) –**
 - The education provider discussed how they have completed a review with the OfS. The findings of the report are not yet known, but the education provider understands this is standard. The education provider has reflected on the learning they have gained through this process.
 - The education provider has discussed how they are already engaging with the new OfS conditions of registration. This is through their periodic quality assurance processes and school / faculty level action plans. They conducted a mapping exercise from November 2023 aimed at concluding in spring 2024, and they intended to share any challenges identified through this process with sector-level colleagues. They will also share how they made changes and implemented the new conditions.
 - The visitors found the reflections in this area to be clear and are satisfied that the education provider is performance in this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - The education provider has discussed how the BPS is their professional body for their approved programme and the professional body for occupational psychologists, in the UK.
 - They discussed how two key members of their academic team full chartered members of the Division of Occupational Psychology of the British Psychological Society. They are also active members, both sitting on various BPS Committees and Special Groups such as the Special Group for Independent Practitioners. This enables them to share and use insights from decisions from BPS, as well as up-to-date materials or learning from events.
 - Through clarification, the education provider discussed how their next review with the BPS is due in 2026-27 and both their programme leaders are involved in BPS processes. Both programme directors are committee members for the Special Group for Independent Practitioners and, through this, gain regular updates from the BPS.

- The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area but found this could be an area developed for their next review.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up:

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development –**

- The education provider has discussed how time is spent each year reviewing the programme and planning for the year ahead and incoming cohorts. As part of their planning, they discuss the SOPs and how they can effectively be delivered. For example, actions they have taken because of the 2023 review include:
 - Creating case studies based on those found on the HCPC website to use in their ethical practice sessions during their weekend sessions.
 - Updating their supervisors on changes to the SOPs and ensuring they are reviewing / marking practice logs using the HCPC SOPs.
 - Ensuring feedback is given to learners on their practice log references where they have missed naming specific HCPC SOPs.
- Through clarification the education provider detailed how the curriculum for Part 1 (the MRes) of the doctorate is tied to the HCPC and BPS requirements. They have ‘five-day schools’ which are each designed around the five areas of occupational psychology as determined by the BPS Division of Occupational Psychology.
- The timetable for each of these day sessions has relevant guest speakers. The journal articles they review and discuss will be in relation to the designated topic.
- The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education providers plans for curriculum development to be appropriate and the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**

- The education provider has discussed how the new SOPs were introduced to Practice Supervisors via their monthly supervisor group meetings, along with sending them updated documentation and guidance.
- They ensured that practice supervisors were aware of the changes and expected knowledge shared in the learners’ learning logs.
- Through clarification, the education provider reiterated how their two programme leads keep abreast of any changes from the BPS and / or

specifically the Division of Occupational Psychology discussing these in their monthly meetings and raising with supervisors and learners where needed.

- The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area but recommend the education provider develop their approach to this section and reflect on this at their next performance review.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
 - The education provider has discussed the importance of practise-based learning and how it is integral to the programme. Learners cannot be on the programme if they are not in practice, either working for an organisation or self-employed. As part of the admissions process, applicants must set out how they have access to consultancy work across the five domains of occupational psychology.
 - The learning logs are structured so that learner practitioners must demonstrate their evidence-based practice against the six stages of the BPS consultancy cycle. Within each of the six stages, they must also demonstrate their ethical practice as consultants against the relevant HCPC Standards. The quality of practice-based learning and reflective thinking are reviewed and marked by our practice supervisors.
 - Through clarification, the education provider details how those learners who experience a project falling through all have taken the option to take a study break of one or more terms. They then use that break to reconnect with the client or source a new project. This is determined by either their line manager and / or their client contacts (if they are self-employed).
 - The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider's reflections to satisfactorily detail their progress and performance in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learners –**
 - The education provider has detailed how programme directors meet learner representatives (reps) each quarter. The actions from these meetings are noted and shared with the reps and they report back to them on their ideas and suggestions. The reps would gather feedback for these meetings and are a voice for the learner groups.
 - The education provider has discussed how at the institutional level, their internal audit service reviewed the complaints service in autumn 2020 and found that there was work to do on the consistent handling of

complaints at a local departmental level and reporting of these matters. The 'Student Complaints, Conduct and Appeals' (SCCA) team within Academic Standards and Quality has worked to provide training and has established new protocols for who handles matters at different levels within the new Faculty / School structure as part of the transition from one organisational structure to another over the 2022-23 academic year.

- They plan to improve the information on their website, for example, so it reflects the greater guidance provided to support learners requesting mitigating circumstances in assessment. The Education Committee receives routine reporting on key complaints, conduct, and appeals matters annually. The SCCA team implemented 'lessons learned' approaches for difficult learner case matters. They have included a review of complaint outcomes as part of the new terms of reference for their Faculty Education Committees.
- Through clarification the education provider describes how the quality of supervision is monitored in several ways:
 - "The moderation of the submitted learning logs and the marking / feedback grid completed by supervisors. Feedback is given to the supervisors on the quality of their feedback.
 - The external examiner, as part of the sub-board of examiners, also reviews a selection of submissions. They provide feedback on the quality of the learning logs and on the quality of the feedback provided by supervisors to learners.
 - 1-2-1 meetings with each practice supervisor to go over any issues and give them feedback on their feedback.
 - Monthly group meetings where all supervisors come together. Issues can be raised here, and if any other concerns have been raised before can be discussed here."
- The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to have clearly detailed the mechanisms in place for learner involvement. They found them to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - The education provider has discussed how this section is less relevant for them. This is because they do not have practice placements in the way that clinical or forensic psychology programmes might. Their learners come already in employment, and they don't determine where they work or who they work for.
 - Through clarification, they detailed how learners can use study breaks to allow for changes to learners' work / placement places. This accounts for how they will manage a project falling through or learners needing to take a break for personal reasons.
 - The visitors considered both the information available in the initial submission and the further information made available in their assessment. The visitors have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **External examiners –**

- The education provider has discussed how feedback from their external examiner and the sub-board of examiners in January 2023 was positive. There were no recommendations for changes, and they aim to keep up the standards of their processes.
- They also discussed how they continue to seek feedback from learners and supervisors. They have a continuous improvement ethos and don't just review when it is the annual Sub-Board of Examiners or when we have their annual planning day. But make continuous improvements to the part of their ongoing processes.
- The visitors have found the education providers' processes are in place to review and act on external examiner feedback. They noted the positive feedback the education provider has received from their external examiners in their recent review and have found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learner non-continuation:**
 - The visitors noted how the education provider has no examples of non-continuation on their programme. They found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - The visitors found the education provider to be performing adequately in his area. The education provider detailed how all learners are employed whilst on the programme (as required for the programme).
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - The education provider has discussed their use of the OfS' National Student Survey (NSS) in monitoring learner satisfaction. They have reported and reflected on a general trend of upward trajectory of learner satisfaction in recent years. The education provider also discussed their own mechanisms to collect and review learner feedback.
 - The visitors note their reflections and efforts in this area, finding them to be performing satisfactorily.
- **Programme level data:**
 - The visitors note that processes are in place for established data to be collected. The education provider also provided data around learner numbers and how this equates to a staff-learner ratio of 1:2. The visitors were satisfied with their performance in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

Referrals to next scheduled performance review

Development of IPE and presentation of these reflections

Summary of issue: We found that there are sufficient IPE opportunities in place, which do not pose a risk to their overall provision. However, many of these opportunities appear optional and require further development and integration. We recommend that the education provider evaluate how IPE is incorporated into the learning process and provide more detailed information on this at their next performance review.

Developments identified in horizon scanning to be completed and reflected on before their next review.

Summary of issue: We are referring to the ongoing developments discussed by the education provider as part of their horizon scanning section for their next performance review. We found their reflections in this section to be centred on ongoing developments such as their recent restructure with many things being 'in progress'. We recommend they complete their restructure and demonstrate a more integrated approach for their next review at their next performance review.

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

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

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year.
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report.

Reason for next engagement recommendation

- Internal stakeholder engagement
 - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were their learners, practice educators, service users and external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with their programme's professional body. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider engaged with other relevant professional or system regulators, including the OfS and BPS, during the review period. They considered the findings of these in improving their provision.

- The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
- Data supply
 - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. Regular supply of this data will enable us to actively monitor changes to key performance areas within the review period.
- What the data is telling us:
 - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes and acts on data to inform positive change.
- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a four-year monitoring period is:
 - For the education provider, ongoing developments such as their restructuring are to be completed and reflected on.
 - For the areas the visitors recommend the education provider to develop, such as their engagement with their professional body, be worked on and reflected on at their next performance review.

Education and Training Committee decision

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

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

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out as detailed in section 5 and reflected on at their next performance review.

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period for the reasons noted in the report. That the education provider and its programmes next engage with the performance review process in four years.

Appendix 1 – summary report

If the education provider does not provide observations, only this summary report (rather than the whole report) will be provided to the Education and Training Committee (Panel) to enable their decision on the next steps for the provider. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation (including their reasons) and any referrals.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Review period recommendation	Reason for recommendation	Referrals
Birkbeck, University of London	CAS-01356-D3P9B2	Rosemary Schaeffer Julie-Anne Lowe	Four Years	<p>We are recommending a four-year ongoing monitoring period so that the two areas of referral can be enacted. This will mean the education provider conducts their performance review in academic year 2027-28.</p> <p>These are of development can then be reflected on at their next performance review. We this to be an appropriate length of time for these changes to be enacted</p>	<p>The two areas of referral are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Development of IPE and presentation of these reflections</u> <p>We recommend the education provider consider how IPE sits within learning and to provide more detail on this at their next performance review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Developments identified in horizon scanning to be completed and reflected on at their next review.</u> <p>We found their reflections in this section to be centred on ongoing developments such as their recent restructure with many things being ‘in</p>

					<p>progress'. We recommend they complete their restructure and demonstrate a more integrated approach for their next review at their next performance review.</p>
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Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MRes Professional Practice Occupational Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Occupational psychologist		01/01/2021
MRes Professional Practice Occupational Psychology	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Occupational psychologist		01/01/2021