
Performance review process report

University College Birmingham, Review Period 2020-2023

Executive summary

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

We have:

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

Through this assessment, we have noted

- The areas we explored focused on:
 - Quality activity 1: The education provider stated all practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules had been enhanced to ensure learners developed their digital skills as per the revised Standards of proficiency (SOPs). The visitors were however unsure how practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules had been enhanced to ensure learners further develop their digital skills. Through a quality activity, the visitors were satisfied the education provider had embedded practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules to ensure learners further develop their digital skills.
 - Quality activity 2: The education provider identified the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme had not met employer needs and decided to pause enrolment in 2022. The education provider informed us the programme was revalidated in April 2024 to ensure it met employer needs.
 - Quality activity 3: The education provider outlined how the National Student Survey (NSS) satisfaction score was below current benchmark figure. The visitors were unsure of the education provider's reflections about the score. Through a quality activity, we were satisfied the education provider had reflected on the score and indicated their subsequent plans.
 - The provider must next engage with monitoring in five years, the 2028-29 academic year, because:
-

-
- The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind.
 - The education provider engages with a professional body and considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
 - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. From the 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.
 - The following areas should be referred to another HCPC process for assessment:
 - The education provider enhanced and further centralised the service user role within the taught and assessed elements of the programmes. However, the visitors had not received information about:
 - how the education provider had integrated the revised standards of proficiency (SOPs) around further centralising the service user across their provision, and
 - as the education provider had made changes, what were those changes, how did you go about making them, and why were they appropriate.

The visitors therefore considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the programmes in terms of how demonstrated the revised SOPs. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, how they had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and as they had made changes, what those changes were, how they went about making them, and why were they appropriate, through the focused review process.

- The education provider identified the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme had not met employer needs and decided to pause enrolment in 2022. The education provider informed us the programme was revalidated in April 2024 to ensure it met employer needs. They stated the key drivers for changes through the revalidation process were feedback from learners and practice educators. However, due to the timeframes associated with the progression of this performance review case, it had not possible to receive evidence about the outcomes of the revalidation process and the education providers reflections in the initial submission. The visitors were therefore unsure how the education provider had ensured the degree apprenticeship programme continues to fit the needs of employers. Through a quality activity, the visitors considered as the programme was paused due to not meeting employer's needs, and it was not possible to receive evidence of the revalidation process there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.
-

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

Decision The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide:

- when the education provider's next 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:

- Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2028-29 academic year
- Subject to the Panel's decision, we will undertake further investigations as per section 5

Included within this report

Section 1: About this assessment	5
About us	5
Our standards	5
Our regulatory approach.....	5
The performance review process.....	5
Thematic areas reviewed.....	6
How we make our decisions	6
The assessment panel for this review.....	6
Section 2: About the education provider.....	7
The education provider context	7
Practice areas delivered by the education provider	7
Institution performance data	8
Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes	10
Portfolio submission.....	10
Data / intelligence considered.....	10
Quality themes identified for further exploration	11
Quality theme 1 – revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – ensuring learners develop digital skills	11
Quality theme 2 – work undertaken to ensure the apprenticeship provision fits employers needs.....	12
Quality theme 3 – reflections on learner satisfaction.....	13
Section 4: Findings.....	13
Overall findings on performance	14
Quality theme: Institution self-reflection	14
Quality theme: Thematic reflection	17
Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection	20
Quality theme: Profession specific reflection.....	21
Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions	22
Data and reflections	23
Section 5: Issues identified for further review.....	24
Referrals to the focused review process.....	24
Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes.....	25
Assessment panel recommendation.....	25
Education and Training Committee decision	26
Appendix 1 – summary report	27
Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution	30

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:

Helen Catherine White	Lead visitor, dietitian
Kathryn Campbell	Lead visitor, physiotherapist
Jenny McKibben	Service User Expert Advisor
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer
Susan Annetts	Advisory visitor, physiotherapist

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.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers two HCPC-approved programmes across one profession. It is a higher education institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2020. The education provider engaged with processes in the current model of quality assurance during the period being reviewed. In April 2023, the education provider asked us to approve a MSc Dietetics (pre-registration), full time programme. This gained approval in January 2024 and the first intake was February 2024. Due to the date of approval, the dietetic programme is not covered by this performance review.

The education provider engaged with the approval process in the legacy model of quality assurance in 2018 for two new programmes, BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy, and BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship). After considering the education provider's response to the conditions set, we were satisfied the conditions were met and the programmes were approved.

The education provider engaged with the major change process in the legacy model of quality assurance in 2021 to report an increase to an intake for the full-time BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy programme. We were satisfied there was sufficient evidence the standards continued to be met, and the Education and Training Committee agreed the programme remains approved in 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	Dietitian	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2024
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2020

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
Numbers of learners	50	55	2024	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners above the benchmark.</p> <p>We explored this by assessing whether the education provider had the appropriate resources in place for the number of learners. After our assessment, we were satisfied and did not have any further areas to explore.</p>

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

Learner non continuation	3%	3%	2020-21	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider's performance in this area is in line with sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 7%.</p>
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	94%	88%	2019-20	<p>This data was sourced from summary data. 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 3%.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing learner's experience on programmes and potential for progression. After our assessment, we were satisfied and did not have any further areas to explore.</p>

Learner satisfaction	77.7%	69.4%	2022	<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 dropped by 6%.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing how the education provider supports learners. After our assessment, we were satisfied and did not have any further areas to explore.</p>
----------------------	-------	-------	------	---

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.

Data / intelligence considered

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

- NHS England (Midlands) informed us of pressures on practice-based learning in the region, in physiotherapy particularly.

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 – revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – ensuring learners develop digital skills

Area for further exploration: The visitors recognised all practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules had been updated to ensure learners developed their digital skills. They also recognised virtual reality was embedded across the education provider's provision. The education provider said they have a simulation and immersive learning suite provision which used technology to simulate real-life working environments. The visitors recognised that learners now had access to a greater range of technology which would assist in the development of their digital skills. However, the visitors were unsure how the curriculum within practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules had been enhanced to ensure learners further develop their digital skills in line with the revised SOPs. They therefore sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by requesting a documentary response from the education provider so the visitors could understand how the education provider embedded the revised SOPs, or ensured the revised SOPs were already delivered. We considered this was the most effective way to explore the theme as we decided it was a query to which we needed to ensure our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider informed us the curriculum had been enhanced to ensure learners further develop their digital skills in line with the revised SOPs. They outlined how learners assess and treat patients in the education provider's physiotherapy clinic. We were informed assessments included the use of telehealth, which offered remote interventions to patients. The visitors noted it is a paperless service where patient notes are recorded, referrals are sent, and patient communications are completed securely and electronically. The education provider outlined where applicable, they used the Digital Framework for Allied Health Professionals, published by NHS England to guide the digital skills and competencies they have embedded. They added the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Digital is currently developing a digital strategy, of which learners are key stakeholders. This strategy will underpin the development of digital skills teaching and learning.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence assured them how the education provider had embedded practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules to ensure

learners further develop their digital skills. We had no further areas to explore in this theme.

Quality theme 2 – work undertaken to ensure the apprenticeship provision fits employers needs

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the education provider had one approved degree apprenticeship programme with a first intake of September 2020. They understood the education provider identified the delivery model of the programme had not met employer needs and decided to pause enrolment in 2022. The education provider informed us the programme was due to be revalidated in April 2024 to ensure it met employer needs. They stated the key drivers for changes through the revalidation process were feedback from learners and practice educators.

However, due to the timeframes associated with the progression of this performance review case, it had not possible to receive evidence about the outcomes of the revalidation process and the education providers reflections in the initial submission. The visitors were therefore unsure how the education provider had ensured the degree apprenticeship programme continues to fit the needs of employers. 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 the degree apprenticeship programme used the same delivery model as the direct entry programme. The degree apprenticeship programme was reviewed alongside other healthcare apprenticeship programmes. The education provider identified through the Programme Quality Review, Enhancement and Monitoring (PQEM) process, the programme did not fulfil the apprenticeship requirements by not meeting the employer needs through issues such as communication, sourcing practice-based learning, the absence of an initial tripartite meeting, and a poor sense of community. They therefore paused enrolment onto the programme from 2022. The education provider confirmed that learners who were on the degree apprenticeship programme were not impacted by this decision and were on track to complete the programme on time.

The education provider outlined how the degree apprenticeship programme had been delivered over four years, and the education provider had considered it could be delivered effectively in three years. This was seen to benefit the employers and learners. The education provider informed us they ensured the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) standards were met by working with their Centre for Apprenticeships.

However, the visitors considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards as it was paused due to not meeting employer's needs. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.

Quality theme 3 – reflections on learner satisfaction

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the NSS satisfaction score (69%) was lower than the current benchmark (77%). The visitors were unable to identify any reflections on this within the submission. The visitors were unsure of the education provider's thoughts and reflections about the score, and any actions they had considered to enhance this score. 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 ensure our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider informed us they recognised their NSS satisfaction score was below the benchmark for 2021-22. They explained this was due to two large intakes from programmes other than physiotherapy, which distorted the overall result for the education provider. They outlined they have NSS Action Plans for each department within the education provider. These focus on specific NSS themes and are monitored through the PQEM process. We understood the education provider had adopted a targeted approach for the programmes which were below the benchmark in the 2023 NSS results. This had involved periods of monitoring and action planning to address any learner concerns. The education provider stated they had not any graduates from the degree apprenticeship programme yet, so no comparison could be made between this programme and the direct entry programme. They explained the first learners from the degree apprenticeship programme will graduate in 2024.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence assured them the education provider had reflected on the score and indicated their subsequent plans. We had no further areas to explore in this theme.

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 –**
 - Learner fees had stayed the same since 2017. The education provider outlined how they had faced pressures on their finances and will continue to as fees for a standard full-time undergraduate programme remain frozen. They informed us they have managed to keep control while maximising income from various sources. This has led to financial surpluses. We were informed the Executive Deans collaborate with other staff to ensure resources keep up with learner growth to maintain quality. During the academic year, a Strategic Planning Round reviews learner numbers, new programmes, and staffing to maintain appropriate staffing levels. Requests for new or replacement staff are considered by the University Recruitment Panel.
 - The education provider had increased learner numbers on the physiotherapy provision since its first cohort in 2020. Projected learner numbers for programmes are modelled in December for the following academic year. This is done by the Head of Department, with support from the Director of Finance, and reviewed by the Executive Dean of the school and the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services. These processes have ensured appropriate and sustainable resourcing.
 - Covid-19 presented the education provider with challenges in respect of teaching, learning, and adapting to new modes of learning, such as online learning.
 - The development of the simulation faculty is in its early stages. The education provider has received funding from NHS England for a researcher. They will evaluate simulation in-house projects to inform current and future curricula.
 - The education provider evaluated the first year BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy simulated practice-based learning which was implemented during Covid-19. They considered it was successful and resulted in a module change to the programmes.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider has partnership-working across their provision. They work with a range of partners. For example, the education provider's partnership with Birmingham and Solihull (BSoL) embeds

NHS England's (NHSE) Placement Sustainability Framework through diverse practice-based learning opportunities.

- Practice-based learning demand and capacity within the West Midlands is reviewed at both bi-annual NHSE reviews and BSOL meetings. Through these, effective processes are in place to monitor the governance of partnership arrangements.
 - The education provider supported the development of additional practice-based learning capacity across NHS and private providers. For example, the BSOL group, of which the education provider is a part of, have implemented a fair share model for practice-based learning allocation. They work alongside other education providers in the region to ensure there is sufficient and appropriate practice-based learning for learners. For instance, the education providers have aligned their blocks of practice-based learning.
 - They consider they have a robust system in place to enter new partnership arrangements. New partnerships are built in line with the sustainability framework.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider's Quality Enhancement Monitoring (QEM) processes enable them to ensure their learning and teaching strategy is embedded throughout their programmes. These processes have allowed the education provider to respond to challenges effectively to ensure the quality of academic learning.
 - The education provider's approach to education centres around working with learners. They have a collaborative approach to enhancement, where learners actively participate in governance structures. Learners are core members of committees, including the Validation and Approvals Committee, and are equal partners in initiatives.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
 - **Placement quality –**
 - The education provider meets with Trust Education Leads of each practice-based learning provider to complete quarterly quality monitoring reviews. Assessment of practice-based learning via these processes has resulted in improvements where they had identified risks to learning. For example, the education provider noted learner engagement, when providing feedback about practice-based learning, could be improved. The education provider planned to raise the evaluation response rate to a benchmark level of 80%, from the current rate of 60-70%. As part of this, they planned to undertake work to see how confident learners are with raising concerns.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **Interprofessional education –**
 - The education provider promoted collaborative learning and working as core themes to their programmes. The education provider recognised there had been challenges, with a limited scope of provision, to ensure learners were exposed to interprofessional experiences to support with their development.
 - Through clarification, the education provider identified development opportunities for interprofessional education. For example, the development of a toolkit for practice partners to use in practice-based learning, to explore interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities within, and across, organisations.
 - The education provider also recognised challenges and developments within IPE provision. They saw their response as an opportunity to design experiences which reflect learner's professions and the communities within which they work.
 - Due to Covid-19, the education provider had to move IPE activities online. Significant work had been needed to adapt the learning materials for online use.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - The education provider recognised the insights, experiences and skills service users and carers bring to the learning experience. They are committed to developing and strengthening service user and carer engagement (SUCE) through their Service User Collaborative Group (SUCG).
 - Through clarification, we learnt how Covid-19 impacted the SUCE activities. Engagement moved online from September 2020 until January 2022. Practical sessions with learners were carried out face to face with the full use of personal protective equipment but, due to government guidance, service users were not allowed to attend these sessions. Activities were followed up online to ensure service user input. Learners communicated remotely with service users.
 - In addition, when sessions were moved online, some service users were able to be involved. However, not all had access to the necessary resources or had the digital literacy to take part.
 - As part of planning and resourcing for the academic year 2024-25 the education provider will be requesting a dedicated member of staff to lead further developments in collaboration with the SUCG.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The Access Participation and Equal Opportunities Committee provided a forum for the discussion of access, participation, and equality of opportunity. It was led by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Access, Participation and Student Experience.

- The education provider is preparing their Access and Participation Plan to be submitted in July 2024.
- The Office for Students (OfS) Access and Participation figures were updated in April 2023.
- Through clarification, the education provider outlined their mechanisms to promote equality and diversity. For example, in the recruitment process the applicant's interview includes a question on equality, diversity and inclusion to gauge learners' understanding of diversity. An increasing number of Black and Asian learners enrolled at the education provider.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - The education provider continued to review and develop their curriculum to respond to national and regional workforce demand. For example, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), the professional body for physiotherapy, identified the need to increase NHS physiotherapy workforce by 12,000 places.
 - The education provider worked in collaboration with external partners to address local, regional, and national needs for new programmes.
 - The curriculum is a focus for the education provider's strategic annual planning. This is where the portfolio is reviewed, and any new resources requested.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
 - The education provider undertook a review of the currently approved programmes to prepare for the revised SOPs. All staff and learners have been made aware of the changes to the SOPs.
 - The education provider identified that revised standards relating to Promoting Public Health and Preventing Ill-Health were already embedded into the current provision.
 - The education provider made changes to the programmes regarding registrants' mental health. For example, the programmes were enriched to ensure learner's awareness of their own mental health and well-being and the support available to them is much clearer.
 - As discussed in [quality theme 1](#), practice-based learning will develop learners' digital skills. Virtual practice-based learning provision has a

focus on the development of digital skills. Practice-based learning and specialist clinical modules have been enhanced to ensure learners develop their digital skills.

- The education provider has introduced leadership practice-based learning as a way of applying the teaching of leadership in practice-based learning.
- Regarding how the education provider embedded the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – Further centralising the service user. The education provider enhanced and further centralised the service user role within the taught and assessed elements of the programmes.
- However, the visitors had not received information about:
 - how the education provider had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and
 - as the education provider had made changes, what were those changes, how did you go about making them, and why were they appropriate.
- The visitors therefore considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the programmes in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, how they had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and as they had made changes, what those changes were, how they went about making them, and why were they appropriate, through the focused review process.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to the majority of the revised SOPs. However, we recommend the education provider reflect and engage through our focused review process in relation to further centralising the service user.
- **Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic –**
 - During Covid-19, the education provider was able to hold face to face teaching for clinical skills, while most of the theoretical content was delivered online.
 - Simulated practice-based learning received positive feedback from learners, practice partners, and the BSoL Allied Health Professions Physiotherapy practice-based learning group. Covid-19 provided the education provider with the opportunity to use the maximum simulated hours allowed by the CSP. The education provider received positive feedback about this from both learners and practice-based learning partners. Therefore, this remained a permanent feature of the provision.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The education provider appointed a Senior Lecturer in practice-based learning and formed a dedicated simulation team. Simulation is now embedded across the education provider.
 - The assessment strategy allows for the use of current technology in line with practice requirements, such as telehealth and Anatomage tables.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**
 - The education provider follows the appropriate Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) standards. They also ensure the apprenticeship programme meets relevant Ofsted and Office for Students (OfS) guidelines.
 - As discussed in [quality activity 2](#), the education provider identified through the PQEM process the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme was not meeting the employer needs. They decided to pause enrolment onto the programme from 2022 and revalidated the provision in April 2024 to ensure it meets employer and learner needs. Current learners on the programme are unaffected and are on track to complete the programme on time. However, the visitors considered as the programme was paused due to not meeting employer's needs, and it was not possible to receive evidence of the revalidation process there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: The education provider enhanced and further centralised the service user role within the taught and assessed elements of the programmes. However, the visitors had not received information about:

- how the education provider had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and
- as the education provider had made changes, what were those changes, how did you go about making them, and why were they appropriate.

The visitors therefore considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the programmes in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, how they had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and as they had made changes, what those changes were, how they went

about making them, and why were they appropriate, through the focused review process.

The education provider identified through the PQEM process the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme was not meeting employer needs. They decided to pause enrolment onto the programme from 2022 and revalidated the provision in April 2024 to ensure it meets employer and learner needs. Current learners on the programme are unaffected and are on track to complete the programme on time. However, the visitors considered as the programme was paused due to not meeting employer's needs, and it was not possible to receive evidence of the revalidation process there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
 - Programmes were mapped to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. This exercise ensured the education provider's programmes met the standards and quality across all aspects of education. This included ensuring quality in areas such as teaching, assessment, support, and governance. The Code ensured programmes' quality and consistency.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Office for Students (OfS) –**
 - No OfS monitoring had taken place during the review period. However, the education provider regularly monitors their compliance of the OfS conditions of registration through the Academic Board.
 - The education provider set out how they meet the revised conditions of registration. For example, condition of registration B5 states "awards are only granted to students whose knowledge and skills appropriately reflect any applicable sector-recognised standards". The education provider ensured the apprenticeship programme meets relevant OfS guidelines.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - The education provider worked with the relevant professional bodies, such as the CSP, and regulators to respond to any annual audits and reviews.
 - They have received approval by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) for four nursing programmes since 2020.

- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development –**
 - The education provider increased the variety of practice-based learning provision for learners. This was due to limited practice-based learning opportunities. New partnerships were developed in order to provide new practice-based learning experiences, such as through long-arm supervision.
 - They undertake periodic review and revalidation in line with internal quality processes. The key drivers for change are related to feedback from stakeholders and learning and teaching strategies.
 - The review of learner satisfaction relating to modules resulted in changes to the module structure. For example, for the physiotherapy programmes, the modules Academic and Professional Development and Health Across the Lifespan were merged to ensure an understanding of public health and preventative health care issues.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - The education provider worked with professional body guidance and adopted it as appropriate. For example, the CSP developed a Combined Placement Assessment Form (CPAF). The form is a standard assessment form to be used to assess physiotherapy learners in practice-based learning, in all settings, no matter which programme they study. The form was adopted by the education provider and well received by learners and staff working in practice-based learning. It has also been adopted by most of the education providers in the Midlands.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
 - The BSoL Placement capacity group monitors and reviews capacity across the BSoL partnership. The education provider identified demand on capacity outweighed the current regional availability for learners. They increased capacity through innovation and offered a more diverse range of practice-based learning. The education provider worked with other education providers to align practice-based learning blocks. This helped with the fair share model applied in the region.

- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to 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 several mechanisms for learners to feedback via. Learner feedback is provided through mid-module and end of module reviews. These feed into the PQEM process. The education provider responded to learner feedback through 'You Said We Did' on the virtual learning environment.
- The education provider has implemented actions in response to learner feedback. For example, the physiotherapy Dissertation Module now starts earlier – in early December rather than early February. This was based on feedback from previous final year learners.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **Practice placement educators -**

- Practice educators fed back at the Education Collaborative group and within the AHP physiotherapy group. For example, they fed back their frustration with some practice-based learning providers who were reluctant to develop additional placement capacity for learners, despite the implementation of an agreed fair share module for placement allocation. The education provider is working through this issue with practice-based learning providers.
- Capacity challenges were identified by practice educators. The education provider responded by developing innovative practice-based learning models. For example, in September 2021 they delivered an in-house physiotherapy patient clinic which is learner-led. These models have ensured practice-based learning requirements are achieved. The first group of learners graduated from the direct entry programme in the summer of 2023 after completing on time, in line with approved programme timeframes.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **External examiners –**

- The external examiner reports have been comprehensive and complimentary about several areas. For example, they highlighted the range and spread of assessment types across Levels 4, 5 and 6 of the programmes as they align appropriately with the different and developing requirements of physiotherapy practice.

- Programme teams respond to external examiner feedback. They assess recommendations and implement changes if appropriate. For example, the external examiner highlighted viva station timings were too short. The length of viva's was subsequently changed.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

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 education provider reflected on the reasons the number of learners continuing from Level 4 to Level 5 (year 1 to year 2) was lower than expected. For example, some learners were unhappy about not being able to go out on practice-based learning during Covid-19.
- The education provider worked with stakeholders to ensure learners were able to progress with their studies despite the global pandemic challenges. The education provider consequently communicated with learners and practice partners about both government and local guidelines about Covid-19.
- Non-continuation data was positive. It showed a decrease over the review period.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**

- The education provider stated there are excellent rates of successful progression for their learners.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.

- **Learner satisfaction:**

- As discussed in [quality activity 3](#), the visitors noted the NSS satisfaction score (69%) is below the current benchmark (77%). The education provider's NSS scores dipped in 2022. This was due to the impact of Covid-19. The NSS scores for 2023 demonstrated a positive upwards trend for learner satisfaction, with a 9% increase on overall satisfaction compared to the year before. The education provider will continue to monitor this.
- The education provider analysed comments and scores and developed action plans in response to feedback. For example, after the 2021 NSS, they identified areas for improvement such as removing inconsistencies in teaching on modules. An action plan was put in place to address these issues. NSS scores for 'teaching on my course'

subsequently increased from 75% in 20/21 to 94% in 21/22 and 'academic support' increased from 75% to 90%.

- The education provider has also been shortlisted in the Students' Union, Career Prospects, Lecturers and Teaching Quality and Facilities awards.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area.
- **Programme level data:**
 - The education provider has continued to resource their provision in line with the professional body expectations. They continue to monitor staffing against learner numbers to ensure they maintain professional body recommendations. This is carried out through strategic planning.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to 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 the focused review process

Revised SOPs - further centralising the service user

Summary of issue: The education provider enhanced and further centralised the service user role within the taught and assessed elements of the programmes.

However, the visitors had not received information about:

- how the education provider had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and
- as the education provider had made changes, what were those changes, how did you go about making them, and why were they appropriate.

The visitors therefore considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the programmes in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, how they had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and as they had made changes, what those changes were, how they went about making them, and why were they appropriate, through the focused review process.

Work undertaken to ensure apprenticeship provision fits employers needs

Summary of issue: The education provider identified through the PQEM process the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme was not meeting employer needs. They decided to pause enrolment onto the programme from 2022 and revalidated the provision in April 2024 to ensure it meets employer and learner needs. Current learners on the programme are unaffected and are on track to complete the programme on time. However, the visitors considered as the programme was paused due to not meeting employer's needs, and it was not possible to receive evidence of the revalidation process there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.

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 2028-29 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 learners, practice educators and external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with the relevant professional body. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider engaged with Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, ESFA, OfS, and IfATE.
 - 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 enables 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.

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 2028-29 academic year
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out through the focused review process

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period, for the reasons noted through the report.

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
University College Birmingham	CAS-01364-C3D5C3	Helen White and Kathryn Campbell	Five years	<p>The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind.</p> <p>The education provider engages with a professional body and considers sector and professional development in a structured way.</p> <p>Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. 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.</p>	<p>The education provider enhanced and further centralised the service user role within the taught and assessed elements of the programmes. However, the visitors had not received information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the education provider had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and • as the education provider had made changes, what were those changes, how did you go about making them, and why were they appropriate. <p>The visitors therefore considered there was a potential risk to the performance of the</p>

					<p>programmes in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, how they had integrated further centralising the service user across their provision, and, as they had made changes, what those changes were, how they went about making them, and why were they appropriate, through the focused review process.</p> <p>The education provider identified through the PQEM process the delivery model of the apprenticeship programme was not meeting employer needs. They decided to pause enrolment onto the programme from 2022 and revalidated the provision in April 2024 to ensure it meets employer and learner needs. Current learners on the programme are unaffected and are on track to complete the</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

					<p>programme on time. However, the visitors considered as the programme was paused due to not meeting employer's needs, and it was not possible to receive evidence of the revalidation process there was a potential risk to the performance of the programme in terms of how it continued to demonstrate the HCPC standards. They therefore considered the education provider should reflect on their performance in this area, the revalidation process and the changes they have made, and the sustainability of the programme in a year's time through the focused review process.</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MSc Dietetics (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/02/2024
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2020
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2020