
Performance review process report

The University of Bolton, Review Period 2018-2023

This is a report of the process to review the performance of the University of Bolton. 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 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

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
 - Quality activity 1: We explored how the education provider implements feedback from the service user group, and how they monitor service user satisfaction overall. We considered that the education provider had clear mechanisms for gaining feedback and understanding the service user experience.
- The provider should 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. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were learners, service users and practice educators.
 - The education provider engaged with professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
 - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
 - 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.
 - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes.

[Previous consideration](#) N / A as this case did not arise from a previous 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.

Next steps Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2028-29 academic year.

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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:

Joanna Finney	Lead visitor, Operating Department Practitioner
Tim Hayes	Lead visitor, Paramedic
Sarah Hamilton	Service User Expert Advisor
Niall Gooch	Education Quality Officer
Claire Wilson	Advisory visitor, profession / entitlement

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 required professional expertise across all professional areas delivered by the education provider. We considered this because there were areas within the portfolio which the lead visitors could not make judgements on with their professional knowledge or expertise. These areas were SPECIFICS

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 7 HCPC-approved programmes across 3 professions and including 2 Independent and Supplementary Prescribing programmes. It is a Higher Education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2014.

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	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2019
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2021
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2019
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2014

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.

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

Data Point	Bench- mark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	250	166	February 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 below the benchmark.</p> <p>We explored this by considering whether the current levels of enrolment pose any threat to the financial sustainability of the programme. The visitors used quality activity to better understand the education provider's reflection on sustainability.</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	5%	2020-21	<p>This Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 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 above 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 1%.</p>

				<p>We explored this by considering the education provider's reflection on the reasons why learners left the programmes, and considered that the reflection was appropriate and did not indicate any problems.</p>
<p>Outcomes for those who complete programmes</p>	<p>93%</p>	<p>94%</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>This HESA data was sourced from summary data. 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>We explored this by considering how the education provider supported the learners into the next steps of their career.</p>
<p>National Student Survey (NSS) Positivity score</p>	<p>75.7%</p>	<p>78.3%</p>	<p>2022</p>	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects</p> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>We explored this by considering how the education provider had reflected on their support mechanisms for learners.</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.

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 – Reflection on the approach process of using feedback from service users

Area for further exploration: The education provider submitted information in their portfolio about service user involvement. They provided detail about the processes used and the kind of feedback received. We considered that they had a clear record of engagement and discussion with relevant service users during the review period. However, the visitors could not make a full assessment of performance during the review period. This was because the education provider did not include detail about how service user feedback was incorporated into the programmes. They also did not provide reflection on whether service users were satisfied with their level of involvement, and their terms of engagement. Without this information, it was impossible to determine whether the service user involvement was at the necessary level, so we explored through quality activity how service user feedback was put into practice, and how the education provider gauged service user satisfaction.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We had an email exchange with the education provider in which we requested additional reflection in certain areas.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider submitted a written narrative giving some reflection on how they had put service user feedback into practice. They noted that there had been changes to assessment of clinical practice, to learner recruitment, and to practice modules, in response to feedback from service users.

They also provided more detail about the number of service users they had available, and noted that individual service user leads for their programmes were required to liaise with service user groups to understand their feelings and views about their involvement. The education provider noted this feedback was good overall, and that negative feedback tended to be related to service users who felt

their experience was not being appropriately taken into account. Service users had the opportunity for close involvement in all the programmes, including guiding details of the interview process.

The visitors considered this was strong reflection and that it reflected good performance in this area. This was because the education provider was able to keep open channels of communication with an appropriately sized group of service users.

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 reflected on how they had used the annual faculty-level planning process to consider resourcing and sustainability. The faculty in which the HCPC-approved programmes sit collaborate with the Assistant Vice Chancellor (Strategic Planning) as part of this process. They had considered issues such as “retention of learners, employment outcomes, recruitment figures, NSS survey results, numbers of apprenticeship learners and the financial position of the school.” Data is used in these reflections. The faculty as a whole uses this opportunity to define staffing needs, budgetary requirements and risks to programmes.
 - The key challenge identified through this process during the review period was recruitment. The education provider explained how they had changed their recruitment process to ensure that it was both robust but also flexible enough to meet their needs. Additionally the education provider had laid out more career events for practitioners who might wish to move into academia, and collaborated with local partners to ensure that workforce needs will continue to be met.
 - The education provider noted through their reflection that their HCPC provision remains well-staffed and that they face few issues with recruitment to these programmes, despite challenges in the wider sector. However, they remain vigilant about changes to this situation, as demonstrated by the reflection above.
 - The visitors considered that the education provider was performing well in this area, because they had clearly identified key risks to sustainability and taken defined actions to address them.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The most important piece of reflection in this area during the review period involved the education provider's involvement in the Greater Manchester Health and Care Learning Environment Strategy 2021-

2024. This was a project initiated by NHS England and the Greater Manchester Project Management Office (GMPMO), a local authority organisation. The education provider was also involved with the North West Capacity working party, an organisation of education providers and other stakeholders, and with the North West Practice Education Group (NWPEG).

- The education provider gave examples of several workstreams that they have taken forward as part of their work with these groups. These include reforms to their management of physiotherapy capacity, curriculum improvements in liaison with NWPEG, and innovation in practice-based learning. Specifically the education provider are the leads for an NHS England project developing “Targeted Practice Education Projects (TPEPs)” across the region.
- The visitors considered that performance in this area was good, because the education provider had demonstrated that they were working effectively with a range of partners.
- **Academic quality –**
 - The key context for the education provider’s reflection in this area was the university-level Academic Strategy 2030. This sets out requirements and expectations for individual programmes, and provides metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) through which programmes can be objectively assessed. Data from the National Student Survey and from the education provider’s Graduate Outcomes of Continuation Completions is used, as well as module evaluations.
 - The education provider noted some of the good feedback they have received, from external examiners, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and from annual programme reviews. They also reflected on quality development actions still to be taken, including:
 - improved tracking of learner experience at all stages;
 - a more streamlined annual review process;
 - more effective recording of actions taken in response to external examiner feedback.
 - The visitors considered that performance in this area was good because the education provider was clearly able to reflect on their methods for maintaining academic quality, and to adapt and improve as necessary.
- **Placement quality –**
 - The education provider stated that the NHS England Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF) ensures the quality of placements through education audits, practice evaluations, and monitoring processes. Developed by regional HEIs, including Bolton, and practice partners, it aligns with HCPC Standards for Education and Training. Audits are conducted on the InPlace platform, while practice evaluations are on the PARE platform. For Primary Care Organisations, audits are on the Unified Learning Environment within PARE, developed by the Primary Care School.
 - A key part of the education provider’s reflection was their involvement in a multi-stakeholder review of their paramedic practice-based learning. This was in co-operation with the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), other regional HEIs, and NHS England (NHSE). NHSE undertook a large-scale review of learner experience in NWAS

and gave regional HEIs, including the education provider, several recommendations for how to improve learner experience. The implementation of these recommendations is ongoing.

- The education provider gave some other examples of their reflection on practice quality. One of these was their involvement in the NHSE Reducing Pre-registration Attrition and Improving Retention (REPAIR) project. Another was their removal of two physiotherapy learners from a practice-based learning setting after the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had expressed concerns about the placement. This resulted in the development of an action plan using enhanced audits to return this placement to an acceptable quality level.
- The education provider also reflects on the quality of practice-based learning at the level of School Boards, on a twice yearly basis. They also use the Issues in Practice (IP) process, developed by regional stakeholders, as a way of monitoring placement quality in real time.
- The education provider considered that performance in this area was good because the education provider was clearly able to reflect on placement quality through different mechanisms and take effective action as required.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - The education provider's reflection focused on how they had identified areas for improvement within their interprofessional education (IPE). They noted some of the general challenges of providing appropriate IPE, including issues related to scheduling and learning spaces. They also gave some examples of concrete and specific difficulties of which they had become aware through their monitoring processes. For example, learners did not always fully understand what was required of them in IPE sessions. Additionally, the model used by the education provider to deliver IPE in practice-based learning relies on a certain amount of non-direct supervision and is therefore not always easy to monitor appropriately.
 - The education provider reflected on how they used IPE on the prescribing and paramedic programmes, and stated that they had received strong feedback. These programmes use the Greater Manchester IPE protocol, which is a way of pooling resources among regional HEIs.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good, because the education provider had clearly reflected on their delivery of IPE across the HCPC-approved provision, and made changes where appropriate during the review period.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - The education provider reflected on how they had used various mechanisms and initiatives to maintain and develop the quality and appropriateness of their service user and carer involvement. These included:
 - The recruitment of a Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Outreach Worker to lead and organise community outreach to ethnically diverse communities;
 - The Caribbean African Health Network (CAHN) in Bolton meet monthly with the education provider, usually in the person of the

- service user lead, to discuss relevant issues, develop joint initiatives, and to recruit more service users;
 - Involvement with Befriending Refugees and Asylum Seekers (BRASS) to bring in a more diverse service user base;
 - Involvement with Healthwatch Bolton, to maintain links with the local community and a good supply of representative service users.
 - The education provider have developed, and are implementing, an action plan, based on feedback from all of the above, to ensure that their service user involvement continues to be high quality and representative.
 - Following [quality activity](#), which they used to clarify the specifics of how feedback from service users would be implemented, the visitors considered performance in this area was good. This was because the education provider had submitted a detailed account of how they had reflected on their service user involvement during the review period.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The key process by which the education provider reflects on their performance around equality, diversity and inclusion is the university-level Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR), provided by the Office for Students (OfS). The EORR enables institutions to self-assess the risk that they are not providing equity to all learners.
 - For the HCPC provision, two groups in particular have been identified as under-performing: those who were eligible for Free School Meals (FSMs), and those from ethnic minorities. The education provider have put together an action plan to improve performance for these groups. This action plan requires them to gather accurate data, to undertake specific targeted interventions, and to evaluate those interventions. This must be completed by 2025.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good, because the education provider had clear, defined mechanisms for making their programmes as accessible as possible to learners from different backgrounds.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - The education provider submitted reflections on long-term challenges facing all the programmes in the HCPC provision. For their physiotherapy programme, they noted that there is a national shortage of practitioners and that the profession is becoming more complex and demanding, with an ageing population and a move towards working in multi-disciplinary teams.
 - For operating department practice (ODP), the issues are similar, with the additional factor of a high attrition rate of registrants. They explained how the Reducing Pre-registration Attrition and Improving Retention (REPAIR) project is intended to address this.
 - For non-medical prescribing, the education provider reflected on changes in the professional landscape which were likely to affect learners when they joined the Register. For example, the increasing need for patients to be involved in decision-making meant that learners required a clear understanding of what healthy and appropriate involvement looked like.
 - For paramedic, the education provider highlighted three key issues identified as long term challenges: maintaining placement capacity,

ensuring the recruitment process delivered the best candidates, and getting better feedback from learners. They had action plans in place to address all of these areas.

- The visitors considered that performance was good because the education provider had clearly set out how they had reflected on upcoming challenges to their provision.

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) –**
 - Across their provision, the education provider used their Periodic Review and Revaluation (PRR) process to consider how each programme might need to be amended or updated to embed the revised SOPs. They explained how each of the individual programmes were comprehensively reviewed and the content or delivery amended as necessary. The education provider submitted reflections on how this had been done.
 - For example, all modules on the physiotherapy programme were rewritten and remapped to ensure that they reflected the need for learners to take a leadership role and to embed equality and diversity in their practice. On the ODP programme, to meet the revised 'Promoting public health and preventing ill-health' SOP, the assessment on module ODP400, Anatomy and Physiology for Operating Department Practice, was redesigned. On the non-medical prescribing programme, case studies were reviewed to ensure that they reflected an appropriate diversity of service users. On the physiotherapy programme, to meet the revised SOP around centring the service user, all service user involvement was reviewed to ensure that it gave a clear sense of the service user's own experience.
 - The visitors considered that performance in this area was good because the education provider set out in detail how each programme had reflected on how they might need to change in light of the new SOPs.
- **Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic –**
 - The education provider reflected on how each of their programmes had adapted to the pandemic, and which of the adaptations had been taken forward post-pandemic. These adaptations tended to be similar across professional areas. For example, several programmes now make greater use of virtual learning, and offer more flexibility for learners who wished to use more virtual learning. The education provider also note in the portfolio that the more frequent communication with practice educators required by pandemic conditions has improved their collaboration. Pastoral support for learners has also been developed, after the additional arrangements put in place during the pandemic to offer help to isolated learners proved useful in maintaining their wellbeing.

- The education provider have also retained some of the changes to assessment made during the pandemic, e.g. moving it online, as these offer more flexibility to learners. Also, digital upskilling of both staff and learners was implemented, as a result of the education provider considering how best to use new technologies.
- The visitors considered performance in this area was good, as the education provider had submitted a clear account of how each programme had reflected on what had worked well during the pandemic and what would be useful in the “new normal”.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - During the review period, the education provider significantly increased their use of clinical simulation. This was the main technological innovation. They reflected on why they had invested in this technology, how they had used it, and how they had enabled staff, learners and practice educators to gain most benefit from it.
 - They noted that they had delivered many training sessions, both informal and formal, to prepare these groups to use the technology. They also stated that they have feedback mechanisms in place so that any difficulties or issues with simulation can be discussed and addressed. They have specifically brought in service users to advise on the best way to use simulation, and regular meetings are held with staff to discuss best practice.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good, because the education provider had reflected closely on the best way to make use of new technology and integrate it into their provision.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**
 - The education provider runs one apprenticeship programme, which began in 2019. Their reflection was focused on successes and challenges in the delivery of this programme. Challenges included timetabling difficulties which made it hard for all learners to complete the required clinical hours – this was addressed through more frequent and focused communication between practice educators and programme staff.
 - The education provider reflected that overall the programme has been a success and that its structure has enabled learners to integrate practical and theory components effectively. They note that the number of partner employers is increasing steadily, and that feedback from employers suggests their apprentices are high quality.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good because the education provider had reflected thoroughly on how well their apprenticeship was performing during the review period.

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 noted that they refer to Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) standards and guidance in all their programme design and planning. Programmes all undergo annual reviews, and these reviews incorporate requirements to meet relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) standards.
- They noted that they have not introduced any new HCPC-approved provision during the review period, or undertake major reviews of their programmes. This means they have limited ability to reflect on how they assess their provision against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (UKQCHE).
- The visitors considered performance in this area was good because the education provider had reflected as thoroughly as possible on their approach to the UKQCHE.
- **Office for Students (OfS) –**
 - The key reflection for this area concerned the changes made in 2022 to the OfS General Ongoing Conditions of Registrations (GOCR). The education provider undertook an institutional review process to ensure their ongoing compliance with these regulations. The outcome of their reflection was that more than fifty new or revised requirements were considered by their programmes.
 - The portfolio gave examples of these changes, such as enhancements for access for international learners, more detailed explanations of assessment for learners, and a clearer approach to data protection around learners' work.
 - The education provider also noted that there is an action plan in place to continue monitoring of compliance with OfS requirements and to prepare for any future amendments to the GOCR.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good because the education provider had clearly taken steps to incorporate updated OfS guidance into its provision, and reflected on the best way to do this.
- **Performance of newly commissioned Allied Health Professional (AHP) provision in Wales –** Not applicable as this is an English institution.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - The education provider reflected on two particular interactions they had had with relevant professional bodies. In 2023 the NMC, in conjunction with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), raised concerns about the Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) Trust, where the education provider had two physiotherapy learners on placement. These learners were withdrawn and the education provider, liaising with the NMC and CQC, will not place learners back into placement at GMMH until the CQC improvement plan has been implemented in full.
 - Also in 2023, the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPharm) revalidated the non-medical prescribing programme. The education provider reflected on how they had implemented the recommendations from this process, which included more support for learners, more preparation for professional practice, and better online access to programme staff.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good because the education provider was able to reflect well on their engagement with relevant bodies. We note at this stage that in 2023, we considered

whether the responses of local HEIs to the concerns raised about GMMH needed to be investigated, using our focused review process. Our conclusion was that an investigation was not necessary at that time.

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 noted that all their HCPC-approved programmes had developed their curriculums during the review period. They had reflected on what changes needed to be made and how these should be put in place.
 - For example, in the physiotherapy programmes, the undergraduate provision had its placement modules restructured following learner feedback on the assessment load. On the MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration), a large single observational placement was replaced by smaller placements with more content. The education provider noted that they have received good feedback from learners and practice educators concerning both these changes.
 - On the ODP programme, certain assessments have been redesigned to ensure that learners going into practice-based learning have the knowledge they need for clinical modules.
 - For the paramedic programme, the key curriculum development in the review period has been the integration of the new SOPs, discussed above.
 - For the prescribing programme, the education provider note that there was a full programme review in 2021, to ensure compliance with the amended Competency Framework from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society.
 - The visitors considered performance in this area was good, because the education provider had used action plans to ensure that individual programmes were being appropriately developed, during the review period.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - The education provider reflected on how they had taken account of professional body guidance in a number of key areas. For example, they had adopted the Common Placement Assessment Form (CPAF) designed and promoted by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. Additionally they had made some changes to the prescribing programme, as part of the re-accreditation by GPharm. These changes are set out in the portfolio, along with the mechanism by which they will be put into place. The ODP programme was also reviewed to ensure that it complied with the College of Operating Department Practitioners' Standards for Supporting Pre-Registration Operating Department Practitioner Education in Practice Placements December 2021.

- The visitors considered that performance in this area was good, because they had seen evidence of responsiveness to changes in professional body guidance, and reflection on the best way to implement relevant changes.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
 - The education provider reflected on their approach to ensuring capacity across different programmes. They noted that during the review period capacity was an ongoing issue, in different programmes. Part of the reflection was that their approach to securing capacity across the programme was variable and this sometimes caused problems. For example, it was hard for staff to keep track of capacity across different areas. The education provider's solution to this difficulty was to introduce a new InPlace digital capacity management programme. They were also giving staff specific responsibilities for expanding capacity, using InPlace. This is a work in progress but they report that staff surveys suggest that additional placement capacity is coming on stream.
 - The visitors considered that performance in this area was good, because the education provider had reflected appropriately on their mechanisms for maintaining capacity, and had implemented improvements.

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 reflected on the feedback received from learners, especially around practice-based learning. They were able to supply data about both the completion rate of their PARE (Practice Assessment Record and Evaluation) survey, and the actual answers provided in PARE.
 - Examples of issues addressed when raised through PARE during the review period were learner concern about timeliness of placement allocation notification, assessment load, and a lack of understanding of incident reporting. The education provider noted that they had put in place a review of their placement allocation process, involving relevant stakeholders such as the practice education providers. Regarding other issues, these were being dealt with by the programme staff through internal review processes.
 - The visitors considered that the education provider was performing well in this area, because it was clear that they were able to review the feedback received from learners, and make appropriate changes through define channels.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - The education provider submitted reflection on the channels used to gain feedback from practice educators. These included groups like the North West Allied Health Professions Practice Learning Reform

Steering Group, and the Greater Manchester Educators In Practice Forum.

- The education also reflected on how they had put in action feedback from these settings. For example, they had an ongoing review of how the necessary information about aspects of the programme was provided to practice educators. They also noted that practice educators have asked for, and been given, the opportunity to contribute to regular programme / module review.
- The visitors considered the education provider was performing well because they had shown clear evidence of seeking, and acting upon, feedback from practice educators.
- **External examiners –**
 - The education provider reflected on the feedback received from their external examiners on a programme-by-programme basis. Examples of external examiner feedback were given, and key themes highlighted. Across the provision the education provider had made changes to assessment load, to moderation of assessment by programme staff, and to clarity of learning outcomes, in response to external examiner feedback.
 - The visitors considered this was evidence of good performance, because the education provider was clearly able to appropriately identify issues raised in external examiner feedback, and take action to amend / improve the programme delivery or content.

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 noted financial pressures as a key reason why learners decide they can no longer continue their studies. They make available support such as hardship funds, and dedicated staff members.
 - Continuation and withdrawal data are monitored and scrutinised annually via the annual programme review process. This is overseen by the Education Performance Data Group. This group identifies emerging trends and, if necessary, puts in place interventions to address any issues and shares good practice between programmes.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - The education provider noted they have performed well here. They did not have a clear idea of why this was, but in general they noted they have a strong culture of professional support, and have amended assessments to ensure congruence with current professional practice.
 - The education provider aims to build on their completion rates. They stated the broadening of their portfolio allows for more IPE. The

education provider considers this will support learners both on the programme and once they are in the workplace.

- We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - The education provider noted their score was strong overall, and that they have been working on improving the learner experience and learner engagement with their programmes. This is reflected in the score being higher than NSS learner satisfaction data received in previous years. equitable with the subject benchmark, and therefore conclude that they have performed well.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Programme level data:**
 - The education provider did not highlight any specific concerns in this area. They provided strong programme level data in several area of the portfolio, so we were confident that they were gathering and analysing such data to drive improvements.
 - We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing 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).

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another 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.

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, service users, practice educators, partner organisations and external examiners. We therefore consider there is very little risk around programme quality.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement

- The education provider engaged with professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
- The education provider engaged with other regulators such as the NMC, the General Pharmaceutical Council, and the Office for Students. They considered the findings of these organisations 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.

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.

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
The University of Bolton	CAS-01368-W8X6S0	Joanna Finney Tim Hayes	Five years	<p>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, service users and practice educators.</p> <p>The education provider engaged with professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.</p> <p>The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.</p> <p>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</p>	N / A

				<p>areas within the review period. From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes.</p>	
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Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practise	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/01/2019
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practise	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2021
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2020
Degree Apprenticeship for Operating Department Practitioners - Level 6	FLX (Flexible)	Operating department practitioner			01/01/2019
MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2020
Non-Medical Prescribing IP and/or SP (HE6)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014
Non-Medical Prescribing IP and/or SP (HE7)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014