
Performance review process report

University of Reading, 2018-22

Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of the University of Reading. 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 our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area following 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 interprofessional education workshops were attended by learners from the speech and language therapy programmes and various other professional groups. These workshops enabled learners from other professions to share experiences and knowledge with each other, which enhanced their learning experience. Despite this, areas for further development have been identified and the changes should be in place by August 2024.
- In response to the requirement for learners to complete the required number of practice placement hours as part of the new pre-registration Eating, Drinking and Swallowing (EDS), the education provider developed additional EDS opportunities, which has been challenging.
- The provider must next engage with monitoring in five years, the 2027-28 academic year, because:
 - Visitors are satisfied with the submission and confirmed the professions and programmes regulated by the HCPC were performing well. There are no risks or issues identified that have been referred to another process. Visitors have therefore recommended a five year performance review monitoring period for the education provider.

[Previous consideration](#)

This is the education provider's first interaction with the performance review 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 Outline next steps / future case work with the provider:

- The provider's next performance review will be in the 2027-28 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:

Lucy Myers	Lead visitor, Speech & Language Therapist
Hazel Anderson	Lead visitor, Prosthetist / orthotist
Sheba Joseph	Service User Expert Advisor
Saranjit Binning	Education Quality Officer

We encourage reflections through portfolios to be made at the institution level wherever possible. The performance review process does not always require

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

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

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers two HCPC-approved programmes across one profession and two programmes for the post registration prescribing annotations. It is a higher education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2001.

This is the first time the education provider has engaged with the current quality assurance model.

However, they have previously completed annual monitoring in 2018-19. During this review period they have also reported two major changes for the speech and language therapy programmes through the legacy model.

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	Speech and language therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2001
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			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	Bench- mark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	206	206	2022	<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 at the benchmark.</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	4%	2019-20	<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 how the education provider supported</p>

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

				learners. We considered the education provider was performing well in this area.
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	94%	96%	2019-20	<p>This 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 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 2%.</p> <p>We explored this by considering the employability opportunities available to learners. We considered the education provider was performing well in this area.</p>
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Silver	June 2017	<p>The definition of a Silver TEF award is "provision is of high quality, and significantly and consistently exceeds the baseline quality threshold expected of UK Higher Education."</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing how the education provider plans to maintain this high quality teaching. They have monitored their teaching quality throughout the review period and demonstrated it has remained at an appropriate level. We considered the education provider was performing well in this area.</p>

Learner satisfaction	76.7%	75.9%	2022	<p>This NSS data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is broadly 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 been broadly maintained.</p> <p>We explored this by considering the education providers reflections. They acknowledged the score was lower than expected and had drafted an action plan to address this.</p>
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Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

We have reported on how the provider is performing on all areas, including the areas below, through the [Summary of findings section](#).

Quality theme 1 – Involvement of other professions within the delivery of interprofessional education

Area for further exploration: Visitors noted how the education provider reflected on the opportunities they offered for interprofessional learning. Learners on the speech and language therapy programme participated in the interprofessional workshops, but it was not clear what professions were involved. Further reflections were therefore requested from the education provider in terms of which professional groups were involved with the workshops and the team's evaluation of these workshops and the effectiveness of them.

There was also evidence of the education provider seeking to extend this area and review it as part of the Portfolio Review Project. Visitors therefore requested further information on how they planned to do this and when these changes would be implemented.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We agreed to explore this area further by requesting email clarification from the education provider. The visitors considered the email clarification would be the most effective method for the provider to respond to the queries they had.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained how the interprofessional workshops were accessed by various professional groups and how the speech and language therapy learners work with Physician Associates, Pharmacists and Student Teachers across the programme. They explained how the effectiveness of these workshops was evaluated through the completion of a questionnaire annually, which learners from all professions complete at the end of the workshops. This feedback was then reviewed by the team and actioned as necessary. Based on the feedback provided they have identified the speech and language therapy programme as an area where further development is required, as learners do not appear to understand the roles and professions they will be working with once they have qualified. The education provider is therefore planning to develop interprofessional learning in topics such as mental health, disability, and neurodiversity. This developmental work is due to take place over the next academic year with the aim of implementing it by August 2024. In addition to this, the content of the interprofessional workshops will be reviewed with the pharmacy team to increase relevance of the workshops for the speech and language therapy learners. These developments should be implemented in Autumn 2023.

The education provider also found evidence of some inconsistencies with learners engaging with these opportunities, despite there being a clear and structured approach through the workshops. To address this issue and ensure consistent engagement, all learners will be required to provide a reflection on one element of their interprofessional learning as part of the portfolio assessment.

Visitors were satisfied with the detailed reflection provided and acknowledged learners were offered appropriate opportunities to collaborate and learn from other professions. There was clear evidence of the team reviewing and developing interprofessional education opportunities and learners being able to demonstrate interprofessional learning.

Quality theme 2 – Learners completing the required placement hours

Area for further exploration: It was noted the new pre-registration Eating, Drinking and Swallowing (EDS) competencies were introduced by the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) in February 2021 and had been incorporated into the speech and language therapy programme. The purpose of these competencies was to ensure learners are competent in Eating, Drinking and Swallowing when they qualify. Learners were therefore required to complete practice placement hours in adults and paediatrics, however there was no reflection provided on how this would be achieved and how challenging it would be to secure these opportunities. Further information and reflection were therefore requested on how this requirement will be addressed and how they will ensure all learners complete 60 mandatory hours with 40 direct speech and language therapy supervised patient facing contact hours. Visitors specifically requested reflections on the challenges the education provider may experience with this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We agreed to explore this area further by requesting email clarification from the education provider. The visitors considered the email clarification would be the most effective method for the provider to respond to the queries they had.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider recognised the importance of these competencies and developed EDS opportunities in addition to those already available to learners. They acknowledged the challenges with meeting specific placement hours in response to EDS. Despite this, they were able to identify 75% of EDS placement opportunities with their current placement providers in both adult and paediatric services. In addition to these opportunities, the education provider also used their EDS joint service to generate additional opportunities and worked closely with local expert adult and paediatric services to develop placements.

With regards to ensuring all learners completed the required number of practice placement hours, the education provider accepted this would be challenging however there was a process in place for this. Learners were required to complete clinical report forms and RCSLT forms, which is where placement hours were captured. This was monitored by the Placement Team and the learner profiles were reviewed annually to ensure the required number of hours had been completed. To ensure there was not a shortage of opportunities for learners, additional opportunities were generated with the use of case studies, eLearning and simulation placements.

Visitors were satisfied with the reflections provided with regards to the EDS hours and the challenges experienced with identifying these opportunities. They acknowledged the education provider had a robust plan to ensure learners had access to these opportunities and that the hours completed by learners were tracked.

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 how financially challenging the Higher Education landscape had been during this period, which was partly due to the pandemic. As a result of this they undertook an institutional review of all their activities to ensure they are sustainable and continue to provide a 'positive student experience'. This exercise included a review of their estate, teaching and learning, research, and staff workloads. Despite the financial difficulties, they reflected how the schools responsible for the health programmes have continued to be financially viable and secure.
 - During this period, staff turnover was impacted, and the prescribing programmes experienced some gaps with staffing, which resulted in them having to review cohort sizes. In May 2022 one intake had to be reduced, so the current staff team could maintain the standard of delivery and minimise the impact on the learner experience. This has since returned to normal levels due to them successfully recruiting new staff for the prescribing programmes.
 - Visitors acknowledged the education provider reflections on the challenging landscape for Higher Education and recognised the actions they had taken to mitigate their impact. They also noted how the education provider considered the risk to the HCPC education standards with regards to the staff situation and how this was responded to.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider demonstrated strong partnerships, which were developed and managed at a local level. They reflected how these local partnerships provided stability for the provision, however despite this they recognised, that developing and maintaining partnerships in this way has resulted in teams working in 'silos' and 'some duplication' across the schools. This approach meant the education provider has not been able to benefit from the opportunities the partnerships offered at institution level. To align the local level partnerships in the area a Strategic Partnerships Director post was approved. The University Health Strategy Board was also reintroduced in 2022, which is responsible for overseeing partnership development and other activities at institution level.

- There was evidence of strong working relationships with partners and collaboration with the local NHS Trust and the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust. Working alongside these partners, they have recently created the Strategic Partnership Board and Health Innovation Partnership (HIP). The purpose of these partnerships is to work jointly on research, education, and engagement. The education provider recognises the benefits of working jointly and has reflected how this allowed them to create an education suite with additional simulation equipment and fund clinical training. These initiatives have been funded jointly and therefore both learners and Trust staff have access to them.
- Visitors acknowledged the strong programme level partnerships and noted the work the education provider was undertaking to develop these partnerships strategically at institution level. The reflection identified some strengths of partnerships with other organisations, such as employing practitioner academics who link between the organisation and the education provider.
- They were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Academic and placement quality –**
 - The education provider demonstrated a commitment to quality assurance with the introduction of the Enhancement-led Quality Assurance (EQA) framework in 2021. This framework ensures the quality of the provision is maintained at institution, school and programme level. The student experience is considered through this process and priorities are identified accordingly and recorded in the School Teaching Enhancement Action Plans. These plans are submitted to the Teaching and Learning Committees and the Pro-Vice Chancellors for Education and Student Experience, who have overall responsibility for identifying themes and issues and responding to them and evaluating the impact of them.
 - During this review period, learners provided feedback via the National Student Survey (NSS) regarding the quality of assessment and feedback they received. The education provider responded to this feedback by working closely with a small group of learners to understand the exact issues with the feedback being provided and reviewed the marking criteria and rubrics.
 - They reflected on the importance of gathering feedback from learners and how they rely on this to monitor placement quality. The collection of this data enables the education provider to respond to issues quickly and draft action plans. They recognise the feedback received from learners is positive, however they continuously review feedback to identify any issues and action them.
 - Visitors noted the new quality framework promotes an integrated approach to enhancement. They were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - Learners on the prescribing programmes were from various professions, such as nurses, physiotherapists, and radiographers.

Practice based activities were therefore used to enable learners to share their experiences with other learners from different professions. The aim of this was to enhance their learning between the different professions. They were encouraged to communicate with each other via WhatsApp to facilitate discussion and provide support with assessments and developing learning opportunities.

- Learners on the speech and language therapy programmes were required to work in multidisciplinary teams and therefore worked across various settings, such as the NHS, schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) organisations. To prepare them for this, they were required to attend interprofessional learning workshops where they could work with learners from other professions and understand their roles. Visitors explored this further through [Quality theme 1](#) where details were provided on the workshops and how they were evaluated. In their response they reflected on how they were developing interprofessional education to maximise opportunities for learners and ensure engagement.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and acknowledged appropriate measures were in place to address the area explored through the quality activity, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - Service users were involved with various aspects of the HCPC programmes, which included admissions, teaching and practice-based learning. The education provider considered ways of increasing this involvement by expanding the service user roles to include them in assessments and programme development.
 - The education provider recognised the importance of service user feedback and collected this at various stages. Some of the feedback collected provided the education provider with the opportunity to increase service user involvement and improve the experience for them.
 - For example, the Experts by Experience were involved with interviewing applicants, however some of them found this level of communication challenging. The Experts by Experience panel therefore developed video tasks for applicants to engage with, which meant they were still able to attend the interviews as observers, but the same level of engagement was not required from them, which improved the experience for them.
 - The education provider reflected on how, despite the successful engagement with service users on the speech and language therapy programmes over the years, there are still challenges with engagement. They recognised this was due to the availability and acknowledged it was challenging to maintain enough service users to ensure service user involvement on the programmes. To increase the number of service users involved, the education provider advertised through various platforms to reach a large audience.
 - Visitors acknowledged the reflections on service user involvement how the education provider had identified areas for further development of service user involvement and reflected on the low engagement.

- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The education provider has a clear commitment to equality and diversity and received recognition for this. In 2019 they were awarded the Athena Swan Silver Award, which acknowledged their commitment to gender equality. In January 2023 they were awarded the Bronze Race Equality Charter Mark and they are also a Stonewall Global Diversity Champion.
 - To maintain this commitment the education provider developed action plans and strategies to ensure they continued to work on their priorities. For example, by 2026 the education provider is aiming to reduce the awarding gap, which will enable learners from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups to achieve first and upper second class degrees. This will also apply to learners with disabilities. Other initiatives include the introduction of a module inclusivity audit, reviewing admissions processes and withdrawing some of the assessments which were considered as being bias on the speech and language therapy programme.
 - The Sub-Committee for the Delivery and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (DELT) monitors all data, trends and concerns relating to learning, teaching and learner experience, which includes academic misconduct and exceptional circumstances. In 2022, there were a large number of BAME learners being investigated for academic misconduct. To address this issue the education provider reviewed their processes and policies and introduced additional resources and support to assist learners with understanding academic practice. Work was also undertaken to raise awareness of the support available to learners.
 - Visitors acknowledged equality and diversity was integrated into all aspects of the education providers functions and noted the actions they were taking to ensure they were identifying and responding to issues of inequality.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - Reflections were provided on the work undertaken to develop the University Health Strategy. The purpose of this strategy was to review current provision and identify areas for growth and new programme areas, however this had to be delayed due to the pandemic. Work on the strategy recommenced in 2022 and was completed in early 2023.
 - The education provider recognised the changes with the Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) curriculum would impact the sustainability of the prescribing programme. They therefore explored other ways of expanding the programme by advertising it to other professions, such as dieticians and podiatrists.
 - A new speech and language therapy programme was introduced in the South East region, which impacted placement capacity. The education provider addressed the challenges with placement capacity and worked with the new provider to plan placement schedules to ensure there was no overlap with placements. As part of the school's five year

plan, it was agreed the programme will be supported with resources to increase future placement capacity within the Integrated Care Services and private, voluntary and independent sector.

- Visitors noted the education provider had identified the key challenges and described the solutions they had used to address these.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: The education provider is planning to develop interprofessional learning in topics such as mental health, disability, and neurodiversity. This developmental work is due to take place over the next academic year with the aim of implementing it by August 2024. In addition to this, the content of the interprofessional workshops will be reviewed with the pharmacy team to increase relevance of the workshops for the speech and language therapy learners. These developments should be implemented in Autumn 2023. The education provider will be required to reflect on the progress of this work in their next performance review.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
 - The visitors recognised this section, only applied to the speech and language therapy programmes.
 - In their reflection the education provider explained how their Curriculum Framework ‘underpins’ many of the revised HCPC Standards of Proficiency (SOPs). As a result, they are in a good position to embed the revised SOPs in preparation for September 2023.
 - For example, promoting public health and preventing ill-health. They reflected on how there is evidence of this SOP being taught, however recognised it requires more emphasis to ensure learners understand their role with promoting public health and preventing ill-health.
 - As part of the Curriculum Framework review, the programme teams reviewed programmes and identified where SOPs could be developed further to ensure learners understand equality, diversity and inclusion. This resulted in a ‘range of patient backgrounds and circumstances’ being included in the case studies. This approach enabled learners to consider the barriers patients from specific backgrounds may experience and how these barriers can be removed.
 - The education provider’s Wellbeing Programme supports mental health and learners are encouraged to seek support when needed and signposted accordingly. Teaching sessions are also focussed on health management and resilience.
 - Visitors acknowledged the reflections on the new SOPs themes and noted the actions described to enhance the emphasis on these themes within module learning outcomes. They were assured the revised SOPs would be embedded within the programmes by September 2023.

- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Impact of COVID-19 –**
 - During the pandemic all teaching was moved online and the campus was closed. Online platforms such as Blackboard, the Virtual Learning Environment and Microsoft Teams were used for teaching, assessments and meetings. The education provider reflected on the actions taken to minimise the disruption to learners and to ensure teaching and assessments were not affected.
 - Since returning to campus, they reflected and have retained some of the approaches used during this period, such as a combination of in-person and online delivery for some teaching. This enhanced the learning experience and provided the education provider with more flexibility on how the teaching is delivered. It also allowed learners to have more flexibility with their personal circumstances (e.g. childcare and other caring responsibilities).
 - Some assessments remained online for which the education provider received positive feedback from the external examiner. They reflected on the benefits of the assessments remaining online based on the feedback received from learners where they reported a decrease in exam anxiety. This approach also assisted learners who require adjustments with assessments.
 - All placements were discontinued, and the programme teams had to consider alternative assessments to enable learners to meet the requirements. This required the team to work with providers to develop online placement experiences and module assessments, which would enable learners to demonstrate the required skills to complete their placements.
 - In addition to this, placements were also provided online via telehealth, which is a model the programme team has continued to use. They acknowledged the benefits of this model and the security it provided for the provision if there were any changes with face to face delivery. Additional opportunities were identified with Age UK with the telephone befriending service to support learners with their assessments. These opportunities enhanced the learners knowledge and experience within elderly care and the programme teams are now considering offering these opportunities to all cohorts.
 - Visitors acknowledged the mitigations applied during the pandemic and noted the consideration given to the learner experience when decisions were being made regarding what changes made during the pandemic would be retained.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Blackboard play a key role with learning, teaching and assessments and provide learners with the support to learn and collaborate. The education provider reflected on the benefits of these platforms, especially during the pandemic and

acknowledged how quickly staff adapted to using these platforms to deliver and facilitate teaching and live sessions.

- To enhance the digital learning experience and provide additional flexibility they have recently adopted the use of Yuja, which is a learning capture tool, to record and store screencasts and live classroom teaching.
- Simulation placements were developed to provide learners with further placement opportunities during the pandemic. The education provider has made the decision to continue using them due to the positive feedback received from both learners and practice educators.
- Reflections were provided on the benefits of virtual and online patient consultations within the education provider's clinic. This approach provided learners with easier access to these opportunities, especially on weekends. In addition to this, the increased use of Telehealth has assisted with developing further opportunities for learners and provided them with access to new learning and healthcare environments.
- Visitors noted how the pandemic accelerated the use of technology particularly in relation to placements and acknowledged the increased use of Telehealth and simulated practice.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Apprenticeships –**
 - The education provider has delivered apprenticeship programmes in the Business School for several years, however they have no plans to develop apprenticeships within the HCPC regulated professions.
 - Visitors acknowledged the education provider were aware of apprenticeship developments in speech and language therapy and recognised the potential risks which could impact them, such as placement capacity.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

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 confirmed the programmes delivered during the review period had not been assessed against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.
 - The programmes do, however, meet the standards of education and training (SETs) and the twelve themes of the Quality Code are similar which allows the education provider to ensure they continue to meet the Quality Code.
 - We were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies –**

- The education provider liaises closely with placement providers and if a Care Quality Commission (CQC) visit is unsatisfactory they liaise with the individual placement provider to establish the risks. Based on this a decision is made as to whether they can continue to use the placement. They confirmed they have not had any concerns with placement providers during this period.
- They are currently working on a process with their Practice Partnership Forum, which will provide them with information relating to upcoming CQC assessments in advance. This will enable them to plan and foresee any potential issues that may arise and work closely with the placement provider during this period.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Office for Students monitoring –**
 - The University Board for Teaching, Learning and Student Experience (UBTLSE) continuously monitors compliance with Office for Students (OfS) registration. If any concerns are raised, they are brought to the relevant schools attention and the necessary action is taken with the support of the Senior Management Team. During this period no concerns were raised.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - The education provider engages with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and has recently interacted with them to review the Pharmacist Independent Prescribing Programme and Nurse Prescribing programme.
 - In January 2023, the GPhC visit took place and the education provider was required to further develop the training of the Designated Prescribing Practitioners. A working group has therefore been created to develop this. This working group also includes staff delivering the Master of Pharmacy (MPharm) programme, as there is a need to also develop practice supervisor training for this programme.
 - Reflections have been provided on the audits the education provider has completed with the HCPC and the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT). RCSLT introduced a new audit process, which staff from the Clinical Language Sciences team contributed to through their working group. They also participated in the accreditation panels. Being a part of this process has provided the staff team with the knowledge and understanding of how the RCSLT accreditation process works and helps them to ensure their programmes are meeting requirements.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

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 Curriculum Framework has been updated to reflect current practice and to increase awareness of the diversity of learners. Other factors considered during this process included the guidance on decolonising the curriculum and the learner journey.
 - The revised SOPs have been included in the curriculum and areas where further development is required have been identified and highlighted.
 - Changes to the RCSLT curriculum guidance have resulted in the education provider reviewing their curriculum and developing specific areas further to reflect these changes. Some of these have included developing the employability sessions, promoting research skills and developing technology to support learners with their practice. The speech and language therapy modules have also been reviewed to include diversity, equality, and inclusion in the learning outcomes.
 - The updated Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) competency framework is incorporated into their prescribing programme to ensure the curriculum aligned with the new competencies. This allows learners to have a patient-focussed approach to prescribing and practice.
 - Visitors commented on the clear descriptions provided in relation to the internal and external curriculum developments and acknowledged their approach to ongoing reflection and development.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - The RCSLT updated their placement guidance in 2021 including the definition of placements. The guidance accepted practice hours that were completed via telehealth related placement activity. This change led the education provider to develop placements in simulation, leadership and research further to offer learners additional opportunities. This allowed the education provider to offer learners a range of opportunities to enhance their learning. However, they reflected on the challenges they experienced with the development of these new placement activities in relation to practice educators. Providing practice educators with the required support for them to understand the new placement activities and support learners had been challenging. Support was therefore incorporated into the practice educator training sessions.
 - A shortage of Speech and Language Therapists trained in eating, drinking and swallowing was identified during the pandemic and because of this new pre-registration EDS competencies were published in February 2021. These were embedded in the curriculum and the relevant teaching, which included practice placements. This was challenging to do, however with the development of additional EDS opportunities they were able to provide learners with sufficient experiences to achieve the required hours, which has been explored further in [Quality theme 2](#).

- The new pre-registration EDS competencies were published in February 2021 and were included in the curriculum and the relevant teaching. In addition to the teaching, they have ensured EDS is embedded throughout the programme, which includes practice placements and practice educator training.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning –**
 - The education provider has reflected on how working collaboratively with the Placement Partnership Forum has enabled them to offer learners a range of placement opportunities. This has resulted in placement capacity being managed effectively across the region and additional capacity being generated. They have however, acknowledged the additional work this approach has created administratively, which has been challenging for both the placement provider and the education provider. This is in the process of being reviewed.
 - On the speech and language therapy programme, they have increased placement capacity by developing a school-based placement where a 'long arm' approach will be used. This new opportunity and approach mean learners can work autonomously similar to Newly Qualified Therapists in a Multidisciplinary Team.
 - Visitors acknowledged the processes described to ensure capacity of practice-based learning and noted the surplus of placements.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

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 demonstrated a commitment to gathering learner feedback and responding to it. For example, on the prescribing programmes, changes were made to the case study, peer support and an online tutorial system were introduced. All these changes were made because of the feedback received from learners.
 - Reflections have been provided on the complaints received from learners during the pandemic in relation to appropriate adjustments not being made for them. A common theme emerged, which related to some confusion over the information being sent to learners and the timeliness of this information. The education provider acknowledged communication between the school and the Disability Advisory Service needed to improve to avoid complaints of this nature.
 - There was an increased number of learners completing the National Education and training Survey (NETS), however due to the way it is structured, data for the individual programmes could not be extracted

and interpreted and it could only be viewed as a set of overall results for the allied health professions. This was not helpful for the speech and language therapy programme, as it was a small cohort. The education provider therefore made the decision to use the data from the NETS survey alongside the feedback the team have gathered from the learners.

- Visitors recognised there were a range of mechanisms to capture learner feedback. They noted how through the complaints process learner feedback was received and necessary action was taken.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - The education provider recognises they do not receive good quality and fully completed feedback from practice placement educators and are therefore considering developing a data management process to improve this.
 - Placement educators raised concerns with regards to attending training on campus during the pandemic and the risks this posed. Taking these concerns into account and the impact this would have on the education provider being able to train new educators, a decision was made to deliver this online. The education provider reflected on the increased attendance online and how this was an improvement in comparison to attendance figures prior to the pandemic.
 - Visitors acknowledged the actions taken to improve feedback from practice placement educators and noted the increased attendance online.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **External examiners –**
 - The education provider reflected on the revised processes regarding communicating with external examiners. The purpose of this was to provide a streamlined approach to communications, which was received positively by them. The communication included regular updates of when they would receive documentation, schedule of assessments and access to the Virtual Learning Environment where they could access teaching materials, feedback, marks, etc.
 - Reflections relating to how external examiner feedback was responded to and examples, were provided.
 - Changes to the clinical exam for the speech and language therapy programme were noted. Previously only two members of staff were involved with this, however the external examiner suggested audio recording the assessment, which would allow for a third member of staff to moderate if necessary.
 - Visitors acknowledged the education provider had considered and responded to external examiner feedback positively where they could.
 - They were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

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 recognised the number of learners on the speech and language therapy programme were low, which had impacted data. They noted in the first year a small number of learners withdrew from the programme due to personal circumstances.
 - During this period, the education provider has reflected on achieving a 100% completion rate in 2019, 2020 and 2022 on the MSc Speech and Language Therapy programme. In 2021, one learner did not complete. This completion rate suggests the support available to learners is effective and should be considered for other learners.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the explanation provided on slightly lower than benchmark progression and acknowledged the impact small cohorts have on data.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - It is recognised how the HCPC regulated programmes benefit from good employment opportunities and in many cases learners secure employment before they have graduated from the programme, which is positive. However, the education provider has reflected on the completion of the graduate outcomes survey and how challenging it is to ensure learners complete it, which means the data presented is not always accurate.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.
- **Teaching quality:**
 - A Silver Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award was achieved in 2017. The education provider has stated their commitment to excellence in teaching and learning and have reflected on some of the areas, such as the Academic Tutor System, which have been developed further in line with the TEF process.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and noted how they were continuing to identify areas of improvement to achieve a higher award.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - The education provider has reflected positively on how the National Student Survey (NSS) scores have been above 80% for the last three years and how the scores for 2022 are lower than expected. They recognise the pandemic has impacted these scores but note the learners on the speech and language therapy programme have expressed a greater level of dissatisfaction. To address this the education provider has drafted an action plan, which includes improving communication with learners and the support they are offered.
 - Visitors noted the reflections provided on the data and the action the education provider was taking to respond to the feedback received. They were satisfied with the information provided in this section.

- **Programme level data:**
 - Recruitment for the HCPC programmes has been positive, especially for the speech and language therapy programme. However, staffing has been impacted during this period and the prescribing programmes have been affected. As mentioned earlier in this report, due to the number of staff leaving, one intake had to be reduced, however since then staff have been recruited. Gaps with staffing were also experienced on the speech and language therapy programmes, which were covered with temporary appointments. This ensured an appropriate learner to staff ratio was maintained.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well.

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 2027-28 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, external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with several professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
 - The education provider engaged with other relevant professional or system regulator(s) (e.g. NMC, OfS)]. They considered the findings of other regulators in improving their provision
 - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way

- Data supply
 - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. Regular supply of this data will enable us to actively monitor changes to key performance areas within the review period
- What the data is telling us:
 - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes and acts on data to inform positive change.
- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a five year monitoring period is:
 - Visitors are satisfied with the submission and confirmed the professions and courses regulated by the HCPC were performing well. There are no risks or issues identified that have been referred to another process. Visitors have therefore recommended a five year performance review monitoring period for the education provider.

Education and Training Committee decision

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

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

- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2027-28 academic year.

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

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MSc Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/01/2001
MSci Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2018
PGCert Independent and Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2020
PGCert Supplementary Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/01/2020