hcpc health & care professions council

Performance review process report

The University of St Mark and St John, 2018-22

Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of The University of St Mark and St John. 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.
- Undertook quality activities to arrive at our judgement on performance, including when the institution should next be reviewed.
- Recommended when the institution should next be reviewed.
- Decided when the institution should next be reviewed

Through this assessment, we have noted:
- The areas we explored focused on:
  - How the education provider is monitoring and addressing any potential equality, diversity and inclusion issues within their learner and staff population. They do this through collecting data, monitoring cohorts and staff and make adjustments where appropriate.
  - How the education provider is ensuring long term sustainability of practice placements for learners. They do this through contractual agreements with placement providers and communicating to find out placement capacity and need.
- The following are areas of best practice:
  - The visitors identified the development of 'People Who Use Services Involvement Policy' as good practice. It showed how the education provider has reflected on and addressing feedback and changes to service user and carer involvement, particularly in response to the pandemic.
  - The visitors noted the education provider's use of a 'fair share' model as good practice. This model enables them to plan placement capacity more efficiently.
- The education provider should next engage with monitoring in three years, the 2025-26 academic year, because:
  - This will give appropriate time for the education provider's new physiotherapy programme to have been running for a few years. This will

enable them to have data from learners across all years of the programme allowing the education provider to reflect upon performance. This is also impacted by the awareness that physiotherapy placement provider capacity is often challenging to sustain, therefore reviewing this in three years will allow a review of how the education provider is managing this and highlight any challenges. Further influenced by the education provider's acknowledgment of their own rapid expansion, which could create a risk to performance.

Previous consideration	This is the education provider's first interaction with the performance review process. Their last annual monitoring was in 2018-19. They engaged with our approval process in 2021 to gain approval of a new physiotherapist programme.
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 2025-26 academic year

Included within this report

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 and language therapist
Jo Jackson	Lead visitor, physiotherapist
Manoj Mistry	Service User Expert Advisor
Sophie Bray	Education Quality Officer

We encourage reflections through portfolios to be made at the institution level wherever possible. In this assessment, we considered we did not require professional expertise across all of the professional areas delivered by the education provider. We considered this because the lead visitors were satisfied they could assess performance and risk from the institutional level based portfolio. They felt like

programme specific examples were informative and they were confident in making the recommendation.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers three HCPC-approved programmes across two professions. It is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2008. Their last annual monitoring was in 2018-19. They engaged with our approval process in 2021 to gain approval of a new physiotherapist programme.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

The provider is approved to deliver training in the following professional areas. A detailed list of approved programme awards can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Physiotherapist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2022
	Speech and language therapist	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2003

Institution performance data

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

Data Point	Bench mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	130	132	2022	The number of learners enrolled on the education providers programmes aligns to the number of learners their programmes are approved for (the benchmark). The visitors were satisfied they are recruiting to an expected level and can resource their programmes appropriately.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	1%	2019-20	This data point is collated from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, via Jisc data consultancy. The education provider's result sits below the benchmark. This suggests they are performing well with regards to ensuring

				learners are continuing with their studies.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	97%	2019-20	This data point is collated from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, via Jisc data consultancy. The education provider's result is higher than the benchmark. This suggests they are performing well with ensuring learners continue into employment/ further education on completion of their programme.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Silver	2017	The education provider received the Silver award in 2017, which demonstrates 'The student experience and outcomes are typically very high quality, and there may be some outstanding features'. Although this is an older data point, the education provider has a strategy to ensure continued and improved performance. The visitors were satisfied with their performance.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	75.5%	81.6%	2022	This data is collated from the Office for Students (OfS). The education provider's result is higher than the benchmark. This suggests they are performing well with ensuring learners are satisfied with their studies.
HCPC performance review cycle length	N/A	TBC	2018-22	The visitors have recommended a three-year monitoring period. This will be recommended to the Education and Training Committee Panel for the final decision.

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 sought out clarification on each quality theme via email communication to allow the education provider to elaborate on previous information they had sent or send further evidence documents to answer the queries.

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 – Ensuring appropriate equality and diversity monitoring and support of learners.

Area for further exploration: The education provider has outlined how equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is considered within the curriculum. It was unclear how EDI is monitored within the learner cohorts or staff. It was also unclear how the education provider addresses support or adjustments for learners with protected characteristics. The visitors explored if there were processes in place to monitor and support the diversity of the learner body or staff and how this related to learner experience. It is important the education provider is striving to be a fair and inclusive organisation, with appropriate monitoring of EDI in place.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained how EDI is monitored annually with outcomes published on their website. Action plans are created out of this by the EDI committee. This is also monitored by the OfS through the Access and Participation Plan (APP) and accompanying processes. They provided examples of actions resulting from this. These included setting up progression agreements in areas of higher diversity, running access events such as Summer School with specific widening participation criteria, and working with young people who are care experienced. They also share internal data in January each year in the APP Action Group. This enables quicker reactions to change, for example an increase in learners arriving that year who are reporting mental ill health.

The education provider outlined how adjustments are made by the programme teams. This is often in consultation with the Disability and Inclusion Advice Service to ensure adjustments meet learner needs where appropriate. Learners receive support via the Student Wellbeing and Support team. They have access to subsidies towards learning difficulties diagnoses, support with Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) arrangements and tutors and mentors. The visitors are satisfied a comprehensive response was provided demonstrating how EDI is considered at all levels within the education provider. They are satisfied resources dedicated to EDI show this is a priority which considers the requirements of current and future learners.

Quality theme 2 – Ensuring placement capacity for all learners is sustainable.

Area for further exploration: The education provider reports they have plans for development and to increase the range and provision of health programmes they deliver during their horizon scanning. They reflected on a number of challenges they have considered related to this expansion. The visitors noted it was unclear if they had considered the potential impact of increasing their portfolio of programmes could have on placement capacity. The education provider is the second provider of physiotherapy programmes in the Southwest region of England (the region) which

may negatively impact on placement availability. This has the potential to result in placement capacity challenges for this programme in particular. The visitors explored their plans to address potential challenges to placement capacity for all programmes, and how they will monitor this. It is important the education provider is appropriately planning for the future of areas central to the delivery of their programmes, whilst considering external factors.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider acknowledged being the second physiotherapy programme provider in the region. They explained how this new programme was developed in response to requests from employers in the region to address recruitment challenges. Each programme has a placement development lead whose role is to ensure suitable placement capacity and monitoring. They also plan to develop an onside physiotherapy clinic which will provide more placements capacity for learners. Most of their academic staff are registered clinicians and provide onsite placement opportunities which helps to meet capacity requirements.

The education provider has a Memorandum of Understanding Agreements with several placement providers and have had discussions with others. They plan to expand their staffing numbers in line with the development and expansion of their healthcare programmes. This includes the placement admin team and employing a Compliance Manager to lead on quality and audit processes. The education provider has representatives on local boards and forums, where placement capacity issues are discussed. They also collaborate with other organisations to develop placement capacity. The visitors were satisfied with how the education provider has demonstrated they have considered and addressed the potential impact the planned expansion would have on placement capacity in the region. Their collaboration with practice partners in setting up the programme and plans for onsite clinic adding assurance around current placement capacity was noted. They were satisfied involvement in regional groups will appropriately support ongoing monitoring and development of placement capacity.

Section 4: Findings

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

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Resourcing, including financial stability:**
  - The education provider has a Strategic Growth Plan which outlines how their programmes plans to develop and align to regional needs. They have planned expansion of their School of Health and Wellbeing between 2023-25. They recognised challenges their learners face due to the increased cost of living. They have ensured learners have access to information about all financial support opportunities through

learner services and signposting. They also provided mechanisms to fairly distribute funding.
- o They noted they made considerable progress in launching new healthcare education programmes, Osteopathy and Physiotherapy, which both recruited learners well. The education provider outlined several successes during the review period, including their award of funding from the Office of Students (OfS). They stated this will be used for the development of the School's Healthcare Education plan, specialist facilities and an outpatient and wellbeing community hub.
- o The visitors agreed the education provider has committed to an ambitious plan to develop its health provision through appropriate monitoring of funding. They have demonstrated all new provisions are subject to appropriate reviews prior to internal and external validation. The visitors also agreed the funding from the OfS has allowed the development of specialist facilities to develop programmes.

- **Partnerships with other organisations**:
  - o The education provider had relationships with 48 practice placement providers and work closely with Health Education England (HEE). They recognised the challenges of being in a large geographical area, with a quickly expanding provision of healthcare programmes. These challenges include maintaining an offering of a diverse placement provision and service delivery. They have workplace agreements with all placement providers which are managed by a Placement Development Lead.
  - o They consulted widely with local employers both at a strategic and organisational level. This ensured the new provisions meets employers' future workforce needs. They initiated regular meetings with HEE, other higher education institutions and placement providers during the pandemic. They increased attendance and engagement at meetings with partners through introducing Microsoft Teams. They have recognised this increased engagement with placement providers as a success during the review period. They maintained relationships through regular dialogue, and clinical colleagues were routinely involved in recruitment and teaching activities.
  - o The education provider plans to seek new partnerships where appropriate to increase placement capacity. Workplace and Service Level Agreements will be centrally managed ensuring consistency of approach and avoiding repetition of work. The visitors were satisfied the expansion of the healthcare provision has strengthened relationships by necessitating further strategic partnerships. They agreed the education provider demonstrates having good partnerships with a range of practice providers.

- **Academic and placement quality:**
  - o External Examiners (EE) gave positive feedback on the quality of the programmes, the range of assessments and the links between theory and practice. The education provider acknowledged evidence from the National Student Survey (NSS) which showed positive learner feedback on quality of teaching.

- They had a Quality Audit cycle which reflected on feedback from learners, staff and placement providers to consider developments to programmes. They acknowledged the low learner response rates to feedback. They attributed this to 'feedback fatigue' amongst learners and responded by introducing initiatives to encourage learner feedback. For example, having specific time in teaching sessions for learners to complete module feedback. They also adjusted the academic calendar to reduce bottlenecks of assessments and timings of teaching sessions in response to learner feedback.
- Placement de-brief sessions are held after every practice placement to report on good practice and things that need to be addressed. They also request written feedback from learners and practice educators. They plan to develop their approach to placement quality auditing and quality monitoring processes. The visitors agreed they have reflected well about how they monitor and ensure the quality of their teaching and placements.

- **Interprofessional education (IPE):**
  - The education provider acknowledged IPE training/lessons was limited due to a limited provision of allied healthcare programmes up until 2022. Their Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) programme was the only allied health provision until 2022. They reflected on how timetabling opportunities for IPE across programmes, in particular with Initial Teacher Training learners was challenging. In 2022-23 they re-established joint learning sessions with Initial Teacher Training learners, recognising this as a success.
  - They developed a School of Health and Wellbeing Interprofessional Learning Strategy 2022-2025 which plans to support collaborative learning across multiple disciplines. They stated there are established IPE opportunities with dentistry and dietetic learners from Plymouth university which has been in place for ten years. The education provider outlined clear strategic plans to grow IPE opportunities with existing partner, learning resource and case-based IPE sessions. The visitors were satisfied there were an appropriate range of IPE opportunities for learners and agreed there is a clear, suitable strategy in place to develop further IPE.

- **Service users and carers:**
  - The education provider involved service users and carers (SU&C) in learner recruitment, teaching, guest lecturers and programme development. They reflected on the challenges of maintaining and supporting SU&C involvement during the pandemic. SU&C involvement with programmes became less formal and regular. They developed an 'expert by experience' group of service users during the review period. In 2022, they developed a new policy document 'People Who Use Services Involvement Policy' which described the appropriate training, monitoring and support for this group.
  - A new school Professional Advisory Group (PAG) was established with clear policies and procedures to ensure continued support for SU&Cs. The education provider plans to develop a Physiotherapy Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) group. This group will help

develop the physiotherapy programme, and the education provider is continually seeking feedback from SU&Cs to improve their provision.

- o The visitors were satisfied with the level of SU&C involvement and examples which were provided by the education provider. They agreed the education provider has clear plans to increase the support and monitoring of SU&Cs.

- **Equality and diversity:**
  - o The education provider had an inclusion coordinator who was responsible for ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for all processes. They produced an annual report which included EDI issues, data and an action plan.
  - o They reflected on challenges relating to ensuring teaching and learning materials reflected the global majority in terms of literature, research and practice examples used. They stated this was an ongoing project which all staff are involved in. They engaged with professional development activities and professional body discussions to develop approaches to de-colonising the curriculum. The SLT programme team engaged in EDI work with the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists (RCSLT) and contributed to the RCSLT Anti-racism survey.
  - o The education provider is planning to apply for the Athena Swan Bronze status in 2023 which requires them to have a detailed EDI plan.
  - o There was insufficient reflection on EDI in relation to the learner body or staff, so the visitors explored this in quality theme 1. The education provider outlined how they monitor EDI within their cohorts and staff and create action plans to address issues. The visitors were satisfied there are appropriate mechanisms in place to support learners and staff. They agreed the education provider has been involved with projects which demonstrates their commitment to EDI.

- **Horizon scanning:**
  - o The education provider reflected on how in 2019-20, their SLT programme moved from a three and a half year design to three years. This programme is due for internal revalidation in 2023. They plan to consider potential changes to the programme design to address student feedback on the intense nature of the three-year programme.
  - o They reflected on the success of starting their new Apprenticeship Assistant Practitioner programme in 2023, and how they developed onsite clinics for SLT and osteopathic learners. They also plan to develop a physiotherapy clinic in the future.
  - o The education provider is at the early stages of developing an SLT degree level apprenticeship and have engaged in both national and local discussions. The new programme lead plans to start the detailed consultation process in March 2023. They outlined how they have an extensive five-year plan for healthcare education. This includes the development of several new programmes to increase range and type of health provision. They stated the health programme expansion plan is employer-led; prioritising programmes in response to regional workforce needs. The visitors explored the impact of this on placement capacity through quality theme 2. The education provider outlined how placement capacity was being closely monitored to ensure

sustainability. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately planning for the future and reasonably considering the expansion of their provision.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- The visitors identified the development of new policy document (2022) 'People Who Use Services Involvement Policy' as good practice. It showed how they are reflecting on and addressing feedback and changes to SU&C involvement, particularly in response to the pandemic.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs):**
  - The education provider mapped programme delivery and curriculum content against the revised SOPs to ensure all were met as of September 2023 for new cohorts. They reflected how their programmes curriculums already covered the relevant themes and only needed minor changes.
  - For each programme, the education provider outlined how the revised SOPs are embedded within specific modules. These included details of what changes will be implemented to ensure the SOPs are appropriately covered. Where they have identified the SOPs are already being met by the current curriculum, they have specified the areas which will continue to be taught so learners meet their objectives.
  - The education provider has reflected on the key areas of change in the SOPs and identified where they already address these. The visitors were satisfied they have appropriately considered where they need to strengthen their approach or update assessments to meet the new standards.

- **Impact of COVID-19**:
  - The education provider moved all programmes to remote learning during the first lockdown and implemented a blended learning approach in subsequent lockdowns. They established a COVID response which was regularly updated throughout the pandemic, and staff were quickly trained in the use of Microsoft Teams. They cancelled placements in year 1 which were replaced with simulated learning tasks. They reflected how several learners didn't engage appropriately with this new approach. They increased the number placement sessions and simulated learning opportunities for this cohort in years 2 and 3 to compensate.
  - Assessments were adapted to coursework or online exams. The impact of this on learner attainment was reviewed and considered using formal procedures including external examiner reviews. Placements were changed to a tutor-led simulated model. An

innovative placement design was developed so learners could complete placement hours.

o The education provider developed support for learners and staff which was facilitated online. They have retained the most effective aspects of changes made during the pandemic in their programmes moving forward. They reflected on several successes during this period. This included no break in teaching despite challenges, innovative placements, blended teaching adaptations, and no delay to cohorts completing the programme. The visitors were satisfied with their response to the pandemic and developments moving forward.

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods:**
  o The education provider stated they have several platforms and resources for supporting learners. Their virtual learning environment (VLE) ensured learners had regular, current and easily accessible information. They reflected on the challenges with switching to a new VLE, and how they responded by offering support the learners and staff. They reflected how the VLE offered insights into learner interaction trends which helped them to increase learner engagement and offer appropriate support to learners.
  o The most effective uses of technology which were necessitated by the pandemic were adopted and embedded into the programmes. This included blended learning, asynchronous materials and online learning. A variety of simulated practice methods were embedded in the programmes and there are further developments planned. The education provider was successfully awarded grant funding from Health Education England to support the development of their simulation suites.
  o The visitors were satisfied the education provider has effectively managed technology within their programmes, and appropriately supported learners and staff.

- **Apprenticeships:**
  o The education provider has outlined how during the last three years, local SLT services have increased their interest in developing an SLT apprenticeship in the Southwest of England. They have been actively involved in both national and local discussion regarding the development stages of potentially developing a SLT apprenticeship.
  o A new Apprenticeship Assistant Practitioner programme started in January 2023. They have reflected this programme has recruited learners well. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is considering the needs of their region and responding appropriately.

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:

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Commented [SB1]: Question to the EP:
Can you confirm what is meant by your statement 'recruited well'. Was this to target, or exceeding target?

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education** –
  - o The education provider outlined how all programmes are reviewed though the annual monitoring process. Learner and graduate achievement, learner feedback, EE and professional body representatives' feedback and the expectations placed on the University by the UK Quality Code all inform this process.
  - o The education provider's Quality Cycle incorporated the processes by which they ensure the maintenance of the standards of their programmes. They stated how programmes were designed and developed in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). Their EEs were also responsible for reviewing and monitoring if their provision was in line with national qualification frameworks. The visitors were satisfied there are robust systems in place to ensure the education provider is appropriately reviewing their programmes against the UK Quality Code, and there is a strong institutional approach.

- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies:**
  - o The education provider reflected on how there no concerns have been raised relating to practice education providers from any external body in the past three years. They explained how they were part of an HEE network. This network notified them of Care Quality Commission (CQC) alerts, which would be shared with them when relevant to their practice education providers. The visitors were satisfied there were appropriate processes in place to ensure the education provider is monitoring their placement providers.

- **Office for Students (OfS) monitoring:**
  - o During the review period, the education provider mapped the revised OfS conditions to their University Regulations, appropriate Policies and Procedures and to the Quality Assurance Framework. They highlighted gaps and all appropriate policies and processes were reviewed to ensure full alignment. They updated and republished the Quality Assurance Framework and Student Regulations Framework. They have not been monitored by the OfS during the review period, however the visitors were satisfied they are aware of the requirements and have responded to the revised conditions appropriately.

- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies**:
  - o The education provider highlighted several positive reflections from the review period. Their SLT programme was accredited by RCSLT in 2020. Their osteopathy programme was approved by the General Osteopathic Council (GOSC) with a review scheduled for 2026.Their new physiotherapy programme was approved by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) in 2022.
  - o They plan to engage with other relevant professional bodies needed for the approval of their proposed physiological science programmes. They reflected on the challenges of entering the nursing education area in the Southwest of England. They attributed this to competition, regulatory requirements, workforce demand, and geographic barriers. To address this, they carried out careful planning to establish

themselves in the region and stated they have made a positive contribution towards nursing.
- o They also recognised the onboarding of an extensive portfolio of apprenticeships in the University has presented several challenges. This required them to adapt many of their wider processes, procedures, and policies. They developed marketing strategies to attract apprenticeships and promote programmes. This helped with engaging employers and developing partnerships for the apprenticeships.
- o The visitors were satisfied the education provider have conducted a good reflection of their engagement with a range of professional bodies and recognised the challenges and developments required. .

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:**
  - o The education provider reflected on changes they made to the curriculum in line with external requirements. For example, the RCSLT curriculum guidance was revised in 2021 to incorporate changes due to the introduction of new competencies and apprenticeship pathways. They were a national trailblazer for the work regarding the new eating, drinking and swallowing (EDS) competencies. They were confident their programme already covered the necessary curriculum content. They began working with placement providers to ensure they understood the new framework.
  - o They have also ensured their programmes have embedded the revised HCPC SOPs, and this was discussed in more detail here. The education provider has plans to map curriculum for internal revalidation and RCSLT revalidation planned for 2024. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately developing and revising their curriculum in a timely manner.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance:**
  - o The education provider noted the RCSLT updated their Standards for Practice-Based Learning in 2020-21. This included guidance during the pandemic to support adjustments to SLT practice placements. They have recognised there were challenges with ensuring appropriate practice placements were in place during the pandemic. They used RCSLT, the Council of Deans and HCPC guidance which was distributed to placement educators.
  - o The education provider reviewed the new EDS competencies, and the team were confident curriculum was being addressed. They put plans in place to consider how the most challenging aspect of the new framework, paediatric EDS placement hours, can be met. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is responding appropriately to relevant changes in professional body guidance.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning:**
  - The education provider has reflected on the challenges in relation to securing SLT placements. They have recognised a cause of this was the shortage of recruitment and retention of SLT practitioners. Placement staffing shortages has reduced education provider's ability to offer placement opportunities to learners. The education provider's SLT programme has a Placement Development Lead who works to increase placement capacity across the region.
  - There are Workplace Agreements in place for all placement providers to ensure stability. They were in the process of reviewing their offer-to-placement timeline at the time of this submission. This aims to ensure that as much notice is given for providers for when placements were not needed. This was to address the negative feedback from placement providers who were not used due to them getting more offers than needed for learner places.
  - The education provider considered local issues around placement challenges, including distance and associated costs. They received a one-off placement emergency fund from HEE which helped to mitigate this. They also have a hardship fund to support learners.
  - They noted there was an increasing number of interests from alternative placement provider settings (such as schools) wanting to host learner placements. We further explored the education provider's long-term plan to ensure placement capacity remains appropriate through quality theme 2. The visitors were satisfied the education provider has a number of initiatives to address challenges. They agreed it was apparent that they have processes to monitor placement capacity and work in partnership with placement providers to address potential concerns.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- The visitors noted the education provider's use of a 'fair share' model as good practice. This model enables them to plan placement capacity more efficiently. The education provider stated the fair share model is discussed at Professional Advisors in Clinical Education (PACE) and used by placement providers in discussion with their teams.

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Learners**:
  - The education provider outlined how they include learners in design, delivery and evaluation of their programmes. There were a range of opportunities for learners to provide feedback through panels, surveys and committees. They collected learner feedback on placement experience and gave examples of how they have addressed this. One example is working with learners to support their planning and creating

an online forum for learners to share placement accommodation tips and information. This was in response to feedback about placement being challenging to plan for when they received a late notification.

- o They have acknowledged challenges with a low learner engagement/ response rate to feedback. The education provider plans to improve the amount and utility of data collected. They will work with HEE to address the low feedback, and approach learners directly to complete surveys. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately responding to challenges regarding learner feedback.

- **Practice placement educators:**
  - o The education provider collects feedback from practice educators after each placement. Areas highlighted by feedback are discussed at the regular PACE meeting and within the SLT programme Clinical Education Team. A recurrent theme was the timeliness of notification of student specific information for placement. The education provider was working on a timeline with recommendations from offers to allocation to improve on current timings to address this.
  - o They have highlighted the successful and positive change to practice educator training. This was moved online, and feedback has been used to develop it. There were also changes made to the frequency, delivery and length of meetings in response to practice educator feedback.
  - o The PACE group provides a mechanism for listening to practice educators and responding appropriately. The education provider also developed a formal mechanism for learners with a disability to share information relevant to placement with practice educators. The 'form' was co-produced with learners who were experts by experience in their disability needs. The visitors were satisfied there were numerous examples of changes made to address feedback, and the development of online training was received positively.

- **External examiners:**
  - o The education provider has two external examiners (EEs) who meet with the programme team annually to explore curriculum developments and discuss feedback. They noted there was no significant concerns raised by EEs in the last five years. One example of the education provider responding to EE feedback was them implementing more tailored marking guidelines for some modules. They also reviewed and reduced the assessment load in the year three-year programme to reduce it, to response to EE feedback.
  - o They noted how EEs consistently comment on the clinical relevance of assessed work. This included the high standard of learner work; the quality of feedback given to learners and the level of pastoral support provided to learners. The education provider noted this as a success. The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's reflections on the involvement of EEs. They noted there have been clear responses to feedback which was evident in the portfolio.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Non-continuation rates:**
    - The education provider reflected on their positive rate of learner continuation. They stated they have a robust support system, and the offer of a part-time route for learners acts as an effective safety net for learners who are at risk of withdrawing. They reflected how learners have been impacted by the pandemic and cost of living crisis. They provided support to learners, and HEE provided a one-off funding for hardship payments to health learners. The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's reflection and actions regarding this data point.

- **Graduate outcomes:**
    - The education provider reflected how recruitment of their graduates to SLT posts has been excellent over the past three years. They put several mechanisms in place to support learners. This included an allocated personal career coach and personal development tutor.
    - Each year local employers and recent graduates came to talk to final year learners. During this they gave tips for job applications, interviews and being a newly qualified practitioner. This has received positive feedback from learners. The education provider has also developed a post-graduate Masters level short course 'Language and Mind: Understanding Language Development and Complex Trauma'. They state this offered an innovative CPD opportunity to learners.
    - The visitors were satisfied the education provider has utilised a number of initiatives support graduates to enter employment including links with local services and university career coaches.

- **Teaching quality:**
    - The education provider outlined they completed their 2023 TEF submission and have aspirations to retain their Silver Award. They maintain a research degree accreditation partnership with the University of Chichester and state they are actively working towards Research Degree Awarding Powers.
    - To support their recognition of high-quality teaching, they evidenced other awards they have achieved. These include number one university in England for Student Satisfaction (Complete University Guide 2023) and Teaching Quality (Good University Guide 2022). They were the third education provider in England for Learning Community and for Student Voice (NSS 2022) and fourth for Student Life and Teaching Quality.
    - The visitors were satisfied the education provider showed clear aspirations to maintain the Silver TEF award and have evidenced high teaching quality recognition through other awards.

- **Learner satisfaction:**
    - The education provider reflected on a drop in NSS scores in 2022. This lower score was based on the new three-year programme. They

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attribute this to impact of the new compressed programme format compounded by the pandemic, digital innovation changes and disruptive building work on campus.

- o To address this, they have produced a detailed action plan. They plan to improve communication on assessments to make expectations and marking procedures clearer. They have acknowledged the need for more communication with learners, to increase learner engagement with feedback mechanisms. They also made structural changes to the Academic year for all cohorts to relieve pressure points.
- o The visitors were satisfied with the education providers clear monitoring and responses to the feedback received from learners. They agreed there are appropriate actions in place to address issues.

- **Programme level data:**
  - o The education provider reflected how staff to learner rations are maintained through annual contribution modelling. This is where lecturer workload is modelled in fine detail, ensuring appropriate staff resources are in place to maintain the recommended rations.
  - o They recognised challenges during the pandemic to include interviewing new learners, due to restrictions. Interviews moved online to address this, and they continue to offer a blended approach to facilitate participation.
  - o They have reflected how their programmes continue to recruit well. They are developing multi-professional health recruitment events which showcase the range of health education opportunities available as their portfolio grows to ensure recruitment is sustained. The visitors were satisfied with this reflection.

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 2025-26 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 a number of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
  - The education provider engaged with OfS, NSS and other relevant regulators. 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 three-year monitoring period is:
  - This will give appropriate time for the education provider's new physiotherapy programme to have been running for a few years which will enable them to reflect upon performance. This is also impacted by the awareness that physiotherapy placement provider capacity is often challenging to sustain, therefore reviewing this in three years will allow a review of how the education provider is managing this and highlight any challenges. Further influenced by the education provider's acknowledgment of their own rapid expansion, which could create a risk to performance.

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 2025-26 academic year

Reason for this decision: The Education and Training Committee agreed with the visitors findings and recommendations during their panel meeting. They have confirmed the education provider will be next reviewed in 2025-26

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2008
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	PT (Part time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2008
Integrated Masters in Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			12/09/2022