
Performance review process report

Association of Clinical Scientists, Review Period 2021-2023

Executive summary

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

We have

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

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
 - Quality activity 1 – Visitors considered service user and carer involvement and explored how the education provider had developed this area with the aim of increasing service user and carer involvement within the programme. They noted some developments were taking place but these were in the early stages.
 - Quality activity 2 – Visitors noted some inconsistencies with the date the revised SOPs were implemented and therefore sought further clarification from the education provider. Through this clarification we noted there was a gap with when the revised SOPs were implemented and are recommending to explore this further through the focused review process.
 - The following areas should be referred to another HCPC process for assessment:
 - Service user and carer involvement – the education provider has made progress in this area, but this remains underdeveloped against our expectations linked to SET 3.7 (service users and carers must be involved in the programme). We should actively review this area to ensure the education provider has embedded service users in a sustainable way.
 - Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – there is a gap present where the education provider only required applicants from April 2024 onwards to demonstrate competence against the revised SOPs. To address this area, the education provider must demonstrate that all new applicants via the route from September 2023 were / are assessed against
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the revised standards of proficiency for clinical scientists, which may include remedial action.

- Learners – visitors acknowledged the efforts made to gather learner feedback, however recommended this area should be reviewed in the next performance review. The reason for this is to ascertain learner feedback once all relevant feedback has been considered from the recent responses they have received.
- The provider should next engage with monitoring in two years, the 2025-26 academic year, because:
 - Due to the lack of established data points. If the education provider is minded to supply data points to the HCPC, we will work with them to develop the required data. This data will then be available to be used at their next performance review (2025-26).
 - Service users and carers and embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) are both areas that have been referred to the focused review process for further consideration, as outlined in Section 5.

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

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

- when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be
- whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how

Next steps Outline next steps / future case work with the provider:

- Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2025-26 academic year
- Subject to the Panel's decision, we will undertake further investigations as per section 5

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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:

Beverley Cherie Millar	Lead visitor, Clinical Scientist
Natalie Fowler	Lead visitor, Clinical Scientist
Sarah McAnulty	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 advisory partners, beyond the service user expert advisor. We considered this because the lead visitors are both clinical scientists, and therefore had the required expertise to assess this submission.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers one HCPC-approved programme across one profession, clinical scientist. It is a professional body and has been running the HCPC approved programme since 2002.

They have the primary function to assess pre-registration clinical scientists under a competency-based assessment, for the award of the Certificate of Attainment for onward Health and Care Professions Council registration as a clinical scientist. The Certificate of Attainment is an assessment process learners may apply for once they have attained the necessary academic achievements and in-service training as a pre-registered clinical scientist. The programme involves building a portfolio of evidence, cross referenced to the competences, that is reviewed and assessed at interview by a HCPC registered clinical scientist, constituent member professional body nominated assessor. As such, the education provider has limited input in the academic and training provision of their learners who are only formally known to them at the point of application once their academic achievements and in service training has been acquired.

It is worth noting that the education provider's internal assessment and internal/external reporting mechanisms are built around calendar years rather than academic years, therefore their portfolio submission covered full calendar years 2021 and 2022.

The education provider engaged with the quality assurance model via performance review for the period 2018-2021 and there were no concerns to be referred to any further process.

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 2](#) of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Clinical scientist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2002

Institution performance data

Data is embedded into how we understand performance and risk. We capture data points in relation to provider performance, from a range of sources. We compare provider data points to benchmarks, and use this information to inform our risk based decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of institutions and programmes¹.

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Number of learners	69	88	2024	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners above the benchmark. We explored this further through the Data and reflections section</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	N/A	2020-21	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment.
Outcomes for those who complete programmes	93%	N/A	2020-21	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this

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

				and other data points through this performance review assessment.
Learner satisfaction	N/A	N/A	2023	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment.

Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

Quality theme 1 – Involvement of service users and carers

Area for further exploration: Visitors acknowledged there were plans in place for the new lay member role, however they appeared to be one off interactions, such as reviewing the website. It was not clear to them how frequently the education provider engaged with service users and carers and how this was monitored. Visitors therefore requested further reflections outlining how service user and carer engagement was planned on a regular basis across all areas of the programme and how its effectiveness would be monitored. It would be helpful for a timescale to be provided on this development.

In addition to this, visitors were concerned with regards to the challenges experienced with recruiting lay members previously and similar challenges being experienced again. This suggested the service user and care voice was not present, which raised concerns. Visitors have therefore requested further reflections outlining what the plan is if it is not possible to recruit lay members and confirmation of how many lay members are being recruited. It was also noted how the lay members will

have the opportunity to develop the role and service user and carer involvement. Visitors requested an explanation on how the education provider would support the lay members with this and if there were specific areas, they would be required to focus on developing.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We explored this through email clarification and additional evidence as we considered this the most appropriate and proportionate way to address the concerns.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider confirmed the recruitment campaign for new lay members closed in April 2024 and there were possibly two appointments that could be made. If unsuccessful in recruiting alternative advertising and agency support would be considered. They outlined how new lay members would develop a plan for regular service user engagement, which would initially focus on the assessment process for registration. The ACS Executive and Administrator and relevant Directors would support them with this work.

Visitors recognised how proactive the education provider had been with recruiting new lay members, however noted the education provider did not indicate how many applications they received and how many lay members were appointed. They acknowledged perhaps it was too early in the process for the education provider to share this level of detail. In addition to this, visitors also noted the education provider had not shared any reflections on the areas they would be involving lay members and where their voice would be considered to be a meaningful contribution. They acknowledged the education providers efforts to increase the number of service users and carers involved with the programme and acknowledged the progress made so far but noted they were still in the developmental stages of this. It was also noted this area had been identified as an area for further development in the previous review and the progress made was limited. Visitors therefore agreed this area would be explored further through the focused review process to review the progress made.

Quality theme 2 – Embedding the revised SOPs

Area for further exploration: Visitors recognised the education provider had considered the revised SOPs and had taken appropriate action to incorporate these into the ACS Generic competencies. However, it was not clear to them when the revised SOPs were embedded. They noted in the portfolio there was a link provided, however based on the information provided within this link it was not clear if they were embedded in September 2023 or if this was deferred to April 2024. Further clarification was therefore sought from the education provider.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We explored this through email clarification and additional evidence as we considered this the most appropriate and proportionate way to address the concerns.

Outcomes of exploration: In their response, the education provider explained how throughout the process of updating the ACS Generic competences they had emphasised to assessors and learners the requirement to adhere to the current HCPC SOPs for Clinical Scientists. The first draft of the updated competences was

reviewed and revised by the Board between May and September 2023, with the final version being published on 9 October 2023. A deadline of 1 April 2024 was set for applicants to use the updated competences. Professional bodies were asked to guide applicants on the new competences and update specific documents if necessary. Visitors noted these dates and commented that the education provider appeared to have permitted learners to be assessed under the previous ACS Generic competences. As the ACS Generic competences required changes it was evident, they did not fully align with the revised SOPs.

Due to the uncertainty with dates, the HCPC executive sought further clarification from the education provider. Through this clarification, it was noted that 'from 1st April 2024 the revisions to the ACS Generic competences were mandatory for candidates to submit their portfolios against, however in the notice published on 9th October 2023 there was strong emphasis that irrespective of what competences document candidates submit their portfolio against they must be able to demonstrate that they have read, understand and follow the latest Standards of Proficiency for Clinical Scientists as published by the Health and Care Professions Council applicable at the time of submission for the ACS Certificate of Attainment'. Based on this clarification it was clear there was a gap, which was further explored through a conversation between the HCPC executive and education provider. Through this conversation it transpired that the education provider had verbally informed all learners and assessors of the revised SOPs and the changes, however there was no official statement published on the website to indicate these were implemented on 1 September 2023. There was a clear gap that suggested the revised SOPs had not been implemented on the 1 September 2023. We therefore agreed this area would be explored further through the focused review process.

Section 4: Findings

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

Overall findings on performance

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability**
 - The education provider reflected on their financial viability and sustainability and acknowledged there had been an increase in income over the years. Due to them being a registered charity they recognised it was not appropriate to have excess funds and therefore froze all application fees. An independent financial examiner was also appointed to ensure income and expenditure were independently monitored. This audit also ensured the income was not excessive in view of their charitable status.

- They highlighted how low their expenditure was due to electronic portfolio submissions and remote assessment interviews. However, they noted there was a need to invest in updating the website, online submission portal and increase service user involvement, which would require some financial support.
- They acknowledged the importance of maintaining their service level agreement with the Association for Laboratory Medicine who provide them with administrative support.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - Reflecting on recent activities, it was clear they regularly engaged with national bodies, such as the National School of Healthcare Science, AHCS, and NHS England. Their involvement in the NHS England AHP Preceptorship Standards and Framework, as well as the HCPC Principles for Preceptorship, highlighted their commitment to improving healthcare standards and demonstrated they were engaging with the appropriate organisations. In addition to this, they participated in the National School of Healthcare Science’s collaborative event and contributed to the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.
- **Academic quality –**
 - As a non-HEI the training is provided in a live service environment and is guided by the Academic Requirements outlined in the Guidelines for Application. The education provider therefore only officially acknowledged candidates when they apply for assessment.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Placement quality –**
 - As a non-HEI the training is provided in a live service environment and is guided by the Academic Requirements outlined in the Guidelines for Application. The education provider therefore only officially acknowledged candidates when they apply for assessment.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - The education provider do not offer an educational route to registration. Training is in the live service environment and the education provider are involved with applicants at a stage where they believe they already possess the academic and clinical experience. To fulfil the assessed competencies, learners have to supply evidence of multidisciplinary involvement.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - The education provider explained how the training is delivered in the live environment, which was where service user and carer involvement took place. However, there was a lay member on the Board who was involved with meetings, reviewing learner feedback and making recommendations for improvements. It was noted this member was no longer in post and the education provider was in the process of recruiting.

- Through [Quality theme 1](#) we explored how the education provider would increase service user and carer involvement and the process of recruiting a new lay member. The education providers efforts with developing this area were acknowledged, however due to the slow progress made it was agreed this area would be explored further through the focused review process.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The education provider published a new Diversity and Inclusion Statement during this period. In addition to this, the application forms were also updated to include data relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. To support learners further the education provider accommodated any specific support requirements that were disclosed to them through reasonable adjustments.
 - They recognised the importance of implementing a continuous monitoring process for the Diversity and Inclusion Statement. The purpose of this process would be to ensure the objectives of the statement are being achieved.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - Reflections were provided on the challenges experienced with the uncertainty of knowing who the learners would be until they applied for assessment. This uncertainty, however offered a pathway for those not on traditional training programmes, such as the National School of Healthcare Science Scientist Training Programme to achieve registration, which addressed service needs. To manage this the education provider understood there was a need to ensure they had the capacity to assess learners within appropriate timeframes.
 - Professional bodies, such as the Association for Clinical Genomic Science (ACGS), played a vital role. For example, in response to increased applications in Genomics, the ACGS expanded its pool of assessors and maintained detailed records of their expertise. Regular meetings and varied assessor pairings further enhanced the consistency of the assessment. This proactive approach helped maintain high standards with learner assessments.
 - In future, the education provider plans to encourage professional bodies to forecast the number of applications that they can expect. This approach should enable the education provider to prepare for the applications and provide appropriate support where necessary.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: As noted above, there is a risk with service user and carer involvement with the programme. This is picked up in below, as an area we need to follow up.

Outstanding issues for follow up: Service users and carers – Visitors acknowledged the education providers efforts to increase the number of service

users and carers involved with the programme and acknowledged the progress made so far but noted they were still in the developmental stages of this. It was also noted this area had been identified as an area for further development in the previous review and the progress made was limited. Visitors therefore agreed this area would be explored further through the focussed review process to review the progress made.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
 - As a non-HEI, the education provider focused on ensuring the competences for learner assessment aligned with the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) for Clinical Scientists. The professional bodies were involved with this consultation, where they reviewed the revised SOPs and guidance from the HCPC. A mapping exercise was completed to ensure the revised SOPs were embedded within the existing competences and where necessary changes and updates were made.
 - The education provider intended to share this updated information with professional networks and through modality specific assessor sessions. They had also planned to update the competence documents and identify areas of improvement in the application process.
 - Through [Quality theme 2](#) we explored when the revised SOPs were implemented, as there were some inconsistencies with the dates provided in the portfolio. The outcome of this exploration was to review this further through the focused review process.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the education provider adopted online submissions and remote assessment interviews to ensure continuity during this period. In 2022/23 surveys were conducted with learners and assessors to identify if they had a preference for continuing to use these digital methods. The outcome of the survey was positive and they continued to use these processes, however it was noted this could be adapted on a case-by-case basis to accommodate specific candidate needs.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**
 - The education provider currently has no plans to develop apprenticeships in the HCPC regulated professions.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – Visitors noted some inconsistencies with the date on which the education provider implemented the revised SOPs. This was therefore further explored and

through this we noted there was a gap with the implementation of the revised SOPs. We noted the education provider had verbally informed all learners and assessors of the revised SOPs and the changes, however there was no official statement published on the website to indicate these were implemented on 1 September 2023. There was a clear gap that suggested the revised SOPs had not been implemented on the 1 September 2023, which required further exploration. We therefore agreed this area should be explored further through the focused review process.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
 - Due to the nature of their provision, the education provider was unable to provide a reflection in this area.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Office for Students (OfS) –**
 - Due to the nature of their provision, the education provider was unable to provide a reflection in this area.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - Reflections were provided on their engagement with the HCPC and they outlined the work they had undertaken to respond to the recommendations from the previous review.
 - The education provider did not highlight any other engagement with professional bodies, in this section of their portfolio. However, it was noted they actively engaged with their constituent member professional bodies and involved them in meetings and consulted with them on any updates relating to standards.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Curriculum development –**
 - As outlined above in the embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) section, the education provider made updates to the competences. It was noted the constituent member professional bodies were also actively involved in updating the modality specific competences in-line with the revised HCPC SOPs.
 - No further updates to the curriculum were reflected upon.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - The education provider worked closely with constituent member professional bodies and encouraged them to offer modality specific

sessions for assessors, learners and supervisors. Some of the recent sessions delivered included the Association for Clinical Biochemistry & Laboratory Medicine Microbiology Group (ACB MG), the Institute of Physics & Engineering in Medicine (IPEM) and the Association of Reproductive & Clinical Scientists (ARCS), which have all received positive feedback. Based on this feedback, the education provider will continue to support the delivery of these sessions.

- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
 - Due to the nature of their provision, the education provider was unable to provide a reflection in this area.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.

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 reflection outlined the surveys the education provider used to gather learner feedback, which included the electronic submissions and remote interviews survey. The responses received through these surveys enabled the education provider to take appropriate action and consider learner feedback for website, submissions portal, and documentation improvements and publish more example portfolios. This highlighted their commitment to continuous improvement and responsiveness to candidate needs.
 - Visitors acknowledged the efforts made to gather learner feedback, however recommended this area should be reviewed in the next performance review. The reason for this is to ascertain learner feedback once all relevant feedback has been considered from the recent responses they have received.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - Due to the nature of their provision, the education provider was unable to provide a reflection in this area.
 - Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section.
- **External examiners –**
 - The review of external examiner reports revealed some discussion points with the relevant Board member and at Board meetings. However, no concerns were identified regarding the assessments.
 - To enhance the assessment process, newly appointed Lay Members will be given the opportunity to observe assessments and provide feedback. They, along with the Administrator, will also be responsible for collecting and reviewing third-party evaluations of the assessments to identify areas for improvement.

- Through clarification, we noted the external examiner reports highlighted satisfaction with the interview assessment process. It was noted the reports did not raise any concerns or suggestions for improvement.
- Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section, which demonstrated the education provider was performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: Visitors acknowledged the efforts made to gather learner feedback, however recommended this area should be reviewed in the next performance review. The reason for this is to ascertain learner feedback once all relevant feedback has been considered from the recent responses they have received.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learner non continuation:**
 - As a non-HEI education provider and due to the uncertainty with learner numbers it is not feasible for them to monitor non continuation rates. They recognise the challenges this creates and are aware of the barriers it creates with them securing a longer monitoring period than two years.
 - In order to address this, the education provider is working with the HCPC to establish a regular supply of data points that can be used to assess their performance going forward.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area and acknowledged they were engaging with the HCPC to develop a regular supply of data points.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - The education provider noted it was not within their remit to collect data in relation to the employment of Clinical Scientists in the UK. They recognise the challenges this creates and are aware of the barriers it creates with them securing a longer monitoring period than two years.
 - In order to address this, the education provider is working with the HCPC to establish a regular supply of data points that can be used to assess their performance going forward.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area and acknowledged they were engaging with the HCPC to develop a regular supply of data points.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - As above, the education provider recognises the challenges with the lack of data and are working with the HCPC to establish a regular supply of data points that can be used to assess their performance.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area and acknowledged they were engaging with the HCPC to develop a regular supply of data points.
- **Programme level data:**

- The data provided captured the status of learners at different stages over a period of two years, which included completion rates and number of learners unsuccessful at interview stage. The education provider noted the data aligned with data from previous years and there was no significant change in this. However, they recognised the sample size was small and were therefore mindful that it may not be an accurate reflection.
- The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area and acknowledged they were engaging with the HCPC to develop a regular supply of data points.

Proposal for supplying data points to the HCPC: The education provider confirmed they will continue to work with the HCPC to develop a regular supply of data points. The new updated guidance for establishing data points will be used, as this guidance has been designed to support education providers in this position where data is not captured through the same sources as HEIs due to the nature of their provision.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

Referrals to the focused review process

Service users and carers

Summary of issue: Visitors acknowledged the education providers efforts to increase the number of service users and carers involved with the programme and acknowledged the progress made so far but noted they were still in the developmental stages of this. It was also noted this area had been identified as an area for further development in the previous review and the progress made was limited. Visitors therefore agreed this area would be explored further through the focussed review process to review the progress made, to ensure our expectations linked to SET 3.7 (service users and carers must be involved in the programme) are met in a sustainable way.

Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs)

Summary of issue: Visitors noted some inconsistencies with the date on which the education provider implemented the revised SOPs. This was therefore further explored and through this we noted there was a gap with the implementation of the revised SOPs. We noted the education provider had verbally informed all learners and assessors of the revised SOPs and the changes, however there was no official statement published on the website to indicate these were implemented on 1

September 2023. There was a clear gap that suggested the revised SOPs had not been implemented on the 1 September 2023, which required further exploration. We therefore agreed this area would be explored further through the focused review process.

To address this area, the education provider must demonstrate that all new applicants via the route from September 2023 were / are assessed against the revised standards of proficiency for clinical scientists. This may mean reviewing individuals who applied from 1 September 2023, to ensure this was always the case. We will be seeking evidence to ensure this has / will happen, which may include remedial action for anyone who has concluded the programme who applied after this date.

Referrals to the performance review process

Learners

Summary of issue: Visitors acknowledged the efforts made to gather learner feedback, however recommended this area should be reviewed in the next performance review. The reason for this is to ascertain learner feedback once all relevant feedback has been considered from the recent responses they have received.

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
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report

Reason for next engagement recommendation

- Internal stakeholder engagement
 - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider were learners, service users, practice educators, partner organisations, external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with a range of professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
 - The education provider did not engage with any other regulators other than the HCPC. They considered the findings of the HCPC in improving their provision
 - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way
- Data supply

- Through this review, the education provider has not established how they will supply quality and performance data points which are equivalent to those in external supplies available for other organisations. Where data is not regularly supplied, we need to understand risks by engaging with the education provider on a frequent basis (a maximum of once every two years)
- The education provider is willing to work with the HCPC in accordance with our guidance on establishing data points. This data will then be available to be used at their next performance review (2025-26).
- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a two year monitoring period is:
 - Due to the lack of established data points. As detailed above we shall work with the education provider to develop the required data. This data will then be available to be used at their next performance review (2025-26).
 - Service users and carers and embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) are both areas that have been referred to the focused review process for further consideration, as outlined above in Section 5.

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
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out through the focused review and next performance review process.

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

Appendix 1 – summary report

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

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Review period recommendation	Reason for recommendation	Referrals
Association of Clinical Scientists	CAS-01383-Q6P7D7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beverley Cherie Millar Natalie Fowler 	Two years	<p>In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a two year monitoring period is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the lack of established data points. As detailed above we shall work with the education provider to develop the required data. This data will then be available to be used at their next performance review (2025-26). 	<p>Focused review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service user and carer involvement – the education provider has made progress in this area, but this remains underdeveloped against our expectations linked to SET 3.7 (service users and carers must be involved in the programme). We should actively review this area to ensure the education provider has embedded service users in a sustainable way. Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) – there is a gap present where the education provider only required applicants from April 2024 onwards to demonstrate competence against the revised SOPs. To address this area, the education provider must demonstrate that all new applicants via the route from September 2023 were / are assessed against the revised standards of proficiency for clinical

					<p>scientists, which may include remedial action.</p> <p>Performance review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learners – visitors acknowledged the efforts made to gather learner feedback, however recommended this area should be reviewed in the next performance review. The reason for this is to ascertain learner feedback once all relevant feedback has been considered from the recent responses they have received.
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Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
Certificate of Attainment	FLX (Flexible)	Clinical scientist			01/01/2002