![hcpc health & care professions council]

Approval process report

University College London, Hearing Aid Dispensers, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve programmes at University College London. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programme(s) against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programme(s) are fit to practice.

We have:
- Reviewed the institution against our institution-level standards and found our standards are met in this area.
- Reviewed the programme(s) against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programme(s) should be approved.

Through this assessment, we have noted:
- Quality activity one examined the education providers alignment with NHS England's curriculum standards. As part of this the education provider supplied mapping to the required standards.
- The programme meets all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

Previous consideration	This approval case is to assess the proposed programme that will replace the existing non-approved HAD programme of the education provider.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: • whether the programme is approved.
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: • Subject to the Panel's decision, the programmes will be approved and added to our list of approved programmes online.

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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programme(s) detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programme(s) approval / 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 approval process

Institutions and programmes must be approved by us before they can run. The approval process is formed of two stages:
- Stage 1 – we take assurance that institution level standards are met by the institution delivering the proposed programme(s)
- Stage 2 – we assess to be assured that programme level standards are met by each proposed programme

Through the approval process, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess whether providers and programmes meet standards based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. Our standards are split along institution and programme level lines, and we take assurance at the provider level wherever possible.

This report focuses on the assessment of the self-reflective portfolio and evidence.

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 this review:

Joanna Lemanska	Lead visitor, Hearing Aid Dispenser / Educationalist
Claire Langman	Lead visitor, Hearing Aid Dispenser / Educationalist
Alistair Ward-Boughton-Leigh	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers nine HCPC-approved programmes across five professions plus an Independent and Supplementary Prescribing programme. It is a Higher Education provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1995.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

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

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Dietitian	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2021
	Hearing Aid Dispenser	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2014
	Orthoptist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2021
	Practitioner psychologist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	1995
	Speech and language therapist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2000 (closing)
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2014
	Prescription Only Medicine – Sale / Supply (Part of OR programme)			2021

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.

This data is for existing provision at the institution, and does not include the proposed programme(s).

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	192	303	2022	The value number is higher than the benchmark figure suggests. This may reflect the overall growth of the education providers programmes. This value will also factor in learner numbers on their proposed programmes being considered for approval. This is not something we considered as part of this review as we looked at this as part of a focused review in 2024.

				We shall also look at this again through our normal periodic performance review process at the education providers next performance review.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	2%	2020-21	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered based on HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 1% We did not need to explore this data point through this assessment because this is within the range of standard deviation and the education provider is performing above the benchmark level.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	91%	2020-21	This data was sourced from a data. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered based on HCPC-related subjects The data point is below the benchmark, suggesting the provider performs below sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 3%

				We did not need to explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is still performing near the benchmark level. This is something we shall also explore further with the education provider at their next performance review due in 2025-26.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award		Silver	2023	The definition of a Silver TEF award is: "Provision is of high quality, and significantly and consistently exceeds the baseline quality threshold expected of UK Higher Education." We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider has done well in achieving a silver award. They have maintained this silver-level award, having also achieved silver in 2019.
National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score	79.4%	73.0%	2024	This data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects. The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms. When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has dropped by 5% We did not explore this data point through this assessment because we shall be reviewing this during the education providers upcoming performance review in 2025-2026

HCPC performance review cycle length		2025-26		The education provider has engaged with our performance review process in 2022-23. They are next due to engage with this process in 2025-26, having been awarded a three-year ongoing monitoring period in 2023.

The route through stage 1

Institutions which run HCPC-approved provision have previously demonstrated that they meet institution-level standards. When an existing institution proposes a new programme, we undertake an internal review of whether we need to undertake a full partner-led review against our institution level standards, or whether we can take assurance that the proposed programme(s) aligns with existing provision.

As part of the request to approve the proposed programme(s), the education provider supplied information to show alignment in the following areas.

<u>Admissions</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Information for applicants** –
    - o The education provider has stated that information is available for applicants via their academic manual on their website. This sets out the learner recruitment and admissions policies with information relating to recruitment, entrance requirements, and the application process and offers confirmation.
    - o They have also explained how a range of learner recruitment communications are published in print and digital media to inform prospective learners about the programmes. Their programme prospectus can be seen on their website too.
    - o This approach is in line with their existing programmes and is a regulation set at the institutional level and applies to all programmes.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health** –
    - o The education provider has discussed how their English language requirements are detailed in their academic manual. They have also noted the English language requirements for BSc Audiology are the same as those for their MSc-level programmes (minimum level 4).
    - o The education provider has also stated that because the learners on the programme will be working with patients, they must undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)check. A compulsory occupational health check screening is taken before placement with a

health questionnaire and immunisation records submitted by the learners.
  - o These rules and policies are all detailed in the education provider academic manual and are in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L)** –
  - o The education provider has existing policies in place relating to recognition of prior learning and these are set out in their academic manual. They have described how these are institutional level polices and will apply to the new programme.
  - o They have detailed how applicants seeking recognition of prior learning are directed to contact Admissions in Student & Registry Services. If required, the education providers admissions team would then coordinate with the respective programme teams. This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and aligns with their existing approved programmes.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - o The education provider's Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are set out in their existing academic manual and will apply to the proposed programme. These regulations are set at the institutional level and apply to all programmes.
  - o The education provider has also discussed how they are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity regulations, in relation to applicants, are implemented and monitored at an organisational and individual level.
  - o This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Management and governance

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register[1]** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how their university governance sets overall expectations for threshold entry routes, acknowledging that many qualifications are recognised or accredited by Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies. These qualifications must meet both their threshold qualification requirements and the PSRB's requirements which may include additional learning hours, credits, assessments, and Fitness to Practice procedures.
  - o This is set out in their academic manual's section on Qualifications and Credit Framework. This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate.
- **Sustainability of provision** –

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[1] This is focused on ensuring providers are able to deliver qualifications at or equivalent to the level(s) in SET 1, as required for the profession(s) proposed

- o The education provider has explained their plans for the funding of the programme and how learner recruitment plays into this is set out below: .
- o The finance committee reviews the financial strategy and policies to ensure they align with overall objectives and sustainability.
- o The Estates Management Committee oversees governance and management of estate issues, including asset management, capital projects, maintenance, facilities, and environmental concerns.
- o The education providers 'Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee' reviews performance in learner marketing, recruitment, admissions, and funding at an institutional level. They also advise on institutional risk management strategies related to these key areas.
- o The education provider's Institute Director and Institute Manager are responsible for managing the Institute's budget and reporting to the Institute Executive Board and Faculty of Brain Sciences (FBS). The Institute (the Institute) is a department within the UCL structure and a part of the FBS. They hold meetings regarding learner number planning and the monitoring of admissions regularly. The Institute director and manager report to the executive board on the outcome of these meetings. on this. Any risks related to the sustainability of the Institute's programmes are managed through both the Institute and Faculty of Brain Sciences Risk Registers. These would ultimately feed into the education provider's central Committee structure.
- o This aligns with how we understand how the education provider operates.
- **Effective programme delivery** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how faculties are responsible for ensuring that their programmes are effectively managed and that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.
  - o , They also have an institutional-level recruitment and selection procedure and set overall expectations for the duties and responsibilities of Programme Leaders and Heads of Departments. The Head of the Department is responsible for the organisation and general conduct of the Department. They are expected to participate in teaching, examining and administrative work (including academic planning and finance) and to pursue research.
  - o The education provider has detailed how programme leaders are responsible for organising and managing a named programme. They are also responsible for the academic experience of the learners on the programme. The education provider has also stated that all Institute Programme Leaders are fully appointed current members of UCL staff in which teaching responsibilities are clearly articulated.
  - o This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Effective staff management and development** –
  - o The education provider has stated how staff management and development policies are in place and set at the institutional level.

- o They explained how regular meetings ensure teaching staff have the necessary information, training, and that standards are monitored. This includes an annual teaching and learning meeting that is held off-site, as well as regular operational meetings.
  - o , They have discussed how access to institution-wide support for staff development and training is ensured by having the relevant resources on the Institute's Human Resources (HR) Intranet pages.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how they have thorough and effective systems at the institutional level for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.
  - o Their regulations are set at the institutional level and will apply to the BSc Audiology Programme. Their placement relationships are managed by the Lecturer (Teaching) and by the Placement Co-ordinator. The education provider's academic partnerships framework is also set out in their academic manual.
  - o This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Academic quality** –
  - o The education provider has stated that they set the institutional-level expectations for programme monitoring and evaluation systems. The Quality Review Framework integrates all key processes for monitoring standards, the learner experience and strategic quality enhancement activities. They have also detailed that the proposed BSc Audiology is subject to and abides by these regulations.
  - o The department responsible for the programme has a Departmental Action Plan created by the Director of Education and monitored termly by the Departmental Teaching Committee. This plan feeds into the Faculty of Brain Sciences (FBS) Action Plan.
  - o They have also detailed how learner academic representatives sit on all the relevant departmental committees, and the 'Staff-Student Consultative Committee' is held termly. Their Continuous Module Dialogue (CMD) is used to help monitor the programme. Feedback is collected at least twice on a module and module staff adapt module delivery in response to learner comments if possible and appropriate. This feedback will be collected and collated and reported to the Institute's Departmental Teaching Committee.
  - o The BSc Audiology External Examiner meets the specified qualification requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, and was appointed through the UCL process for appointing External Examiners.
  - o This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.

- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments** –
  - The education provider has explained how their academic partnerships framework outlines expectations on the inception, approval, operation, and contractual framework of academic partnerships with other institutions.
  - Learners receive information and guidance about practice-based learning in the programme handbook and through a Moodle site set up to support the BSc Audiology's placement activity. Learners and placement providers are required to complete agreement forms. An accreditation form is also completed with the placement provider during site visits to ensure a high-quality and supportive environment for learners.
  - One-to-one meetings are held with learners before they attend placement and when they return. Before placements, they undertake a learner induction and outline expectations for placement alongside discussing support from the university (including safety). Feedback is collected on the placement experience from both learners and the placement providers and reported to the Institute's Departmental Teaching Committee.
  - Policies are in place to ensure learner wellbeing and safety on placement. Learners are also paired with a personal tutor who they can go to for support and are required to meet at least termly.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Learner involvement** –
  - The education provider's structure and Students' Union (SU) provide opportunities for learners to engage with their policy and decision-making in all areas of teaching, learning and support.
  - Learner representatives are elected to sit on the required Departmental Committees: the Departmental Teaching Committee and the Staff Student Consultative Committee. Their learner academic representative scheme is managed by the SU.
  - These policies are detailed in the education provider's academic manual and aligns with how we understand the education provider to operate.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Service user and carer involvement** –
  - The education provider has existing service user and carer policies that will apply to this programme. This includes the Institute's own Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) policy. They state that the PPI policy has also been extended to include service user involvement in the proposed programme.
  - They have also detailed how they involve service users in teaching and assessments, inviting feedback about learners and course content.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

<u>Learners</u>

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Support** –
  - The education provider has discussed how they have effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the well-being of learners. These arrangements are set at an institutional level, which applies to all programmes. Details can be found in the Student Support Framework. There is also an institutional-level process for learner complaints, which applies to all programmes.
  - The education provider has discussed their personal tutoring policy, stipulating that each programme must ensure every taught student is assigned a personal tutor. The Institute has a Personal Tutor Lead who oversees this function and ensures that regulations are followed. All learners are allocated a personal tutor on arrival and asked to arrange a meeting within the first 2 weeks of term. At the Institute, the personal tutor provides pastoral support and advice and signposts learners to academic and other resources available to support them whilst on their programme.
  - They have also explained that the SoRA (Statement of Reasonable Adjustments) scheme is institution-wide and applies to undergraduates.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Ongoing suitability** –
  - The education provider has explained how they set expectations at an institutional level that faculties or departments may publish local fitness to practise policies covering learners professional placements in their programmes.
  - They also set expectations at an institutional level that learners registered on programmes leading to membership in a professional body. Learners should demonstrate appropriate behaviour and standards required for entry into that profession. Alleged misconduct, which may be judged to fall short of the professional codes of conduct, will be considered under the relevant Fitness to Practise Procedures.
  - The Institute Fitness to Practice Board meets at least once per term and- additionally- prior to the final exam board meeting. Any reports of concern are considered at these meetings and a course of action decided upon. Fitness to Practice Board members are Director of Education, BSc Audiology Course Director and Clinical placements co-ordinator.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E)** –
  - The education provider has stated that they have no specific institution-wide policies or procedures relating to interprofessional education / learning (IPE).
  - They have longstanding links with other departments within their institutional family / network (other parts of the education provider outside of the school / faculty that will run this programme).

- They have specifically referred to other programmes they work alongside that also have a clinical element. These include ophthalmology, speech and language therapy and pharmacy programmes. Multidisciplinary learning on the proposed programme will, therefore, take place with learning alongside learners on these programmes.
- As this is not provided at the institutional-level and will instead occur on a programme level, the SETs related to this area will be referred to stage 2 of this case.

- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** –
  - The education provider has stated that they monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to all their learners. The policies related to this are all set at the institutional level and apply to all programmes. These policies are in place and detailed on the education provider's website.
  - In addition to this, the Institute also has an Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead. They state that learners are also encouraged to join the institute's EDI committee and participate in EDI activities.
  - This is in line with how we understand the education provider to operate and is in line with their existing approved programmes.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: We are referring the SETs relating to IPE to stage two of this case. This is because the education provider has stated that they do not have institutional-level policies and procedures for IPE but instead have special arrangements in place with other programmes. We shall ask the education provider to provide further information relating to IPE in their stage 2 submission for the visitors to assess.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:
- **Objectivity** –
  - The education provider has discussed how they have institutional-level policies in place to ensure objectivity. These overarching principles of assessment provide a framework and reference point for the continuing development and enhancement of taught assessment practices. These are detailed in the section of their academic manual on the assessment framework for taught programmes.
  - The education provider states that their central administration sets the expectations for equality and transparency in the assessment processes. The Institute adheres to these policies, which are communicated to all stages involved in assessment and monitored by the departmental teaching committee, exam boards, and external examiners.
  - These policies are set at the institutional level and follow how we understand the education provider to operate.
- **Progression and achievement** –
  - The institutional policies apply to all programmes and set expectations that qualifications must meet institutional threshold requirements and any Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body (PSRB)

requirements. The education provider's Assessment Framework and Qualifications and Credit Framework specifies the requirements for progression and achievement within their programmes.

- o The education provider has a 'Student Engagement Monitoring Policy' at the institutional level. Minimum attendance requirements are still set at the faculty level and published in local programmes and learner handbooks. For example, the Institute has a minimum attendance policy of 70% for the BSc Audiology programme, which is clearly communicated to learners through the programme handbook. The Fitness to Study Policy details the policy and process for learners who fall below the 70% attendance threshold.
- o The details in the education provider academic manual follow how we understand how the education provider operates.
- **Appeals** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how they have processes for learners to make academic appeals. These policies are set at the institutional level and shall apply to the proposed programme.
  - o These are detailed in the education provider academic manual and follow how we understand the education provider to operate.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None

Outcomes from stage 1

We decided to progress to stage 2 of the process without further review through stage 1, due to the clear alignment of the new provision within existing institutional structures, as noted through the previous section. There is one area that we are referring to stage 2. The education provider do not have processed to manage IPE at the institutional. This standard will be assess by the visitors at the programme level.

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Audiology	FLX	Hearing Aid Dispenser	20 learners, 1 cohort per year	22/09/2025

Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

The education provider was asked to demonstrate how they meet programme level standards for each programme. They supplied information about how each standard

was met, including a rationale and links to supporting information via a mapping document.

Performance data

We also considered data and intelligence from NHS England as part of this review. NHS England's team in London did not make us aware of any specific challenges relating to the field of Hearing Aid Dispensers that would affect the approval of this programme.

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided, and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their submission. 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 met our standards.

Quality theme 1 – insufficient information or evidence about meeting the NHS England's (NHSE) curriculum requirement.

Area for further exploration: We noted from the education provider submission that they have discussed meeting NHS England (NHSE) curriculum requirements. These requirements have been used by the education provider as evidence for them to ensure that the proposed programmes' learning outcomes are sufficient. Additionally, the education provider has used the meeting of these standards as evidence that they are meeting SET 4.1, which requires that the programme's learning outcomes ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register. But the visitors did not find any evidence to show their mapping / meeting of these standards. It is important we understand how the education provider has met / meets these standards, as this is linked to their meeting of standard 4.1. It is important that we ensure that the education is mapped to these standards where required. We therefore chose to explore this via a quality activity.

Quality activities agreed to explore the theme further. We asked the education provider to submit information/documentation showing alignment / mapping to the standards where available. We chose to explore this by requesting additional documentation, as this allows the education provider to map to all standards and provides hard evidence for the visitors to assess.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider responded to our quality activity and request for further information by submitting additional documentation. This included the completed mapping document approved by NHSE. The visitors assessed this as part of the response to the quality activities.

This comprehensive document details the learning outcomes achieved in each year of the programme and the level to which they map. This includes the subject-specific knowledge learners will gain and be able to demonstrate following each year of the programme, the intellectual, Academic, and Research Skills they will gain and be able to demonstrate, and the practical and transferable skills.

This includes specific skills around clear oral and written communication as well as complete routine clinical procedures. Additionally, learners will be equipped to be able to accurately explain and discuss the role science plays in the programme and the service delivery of audiology

The visitors assessed this mapping document against the SETS. They found the additional information this provided to demonstrate the education providers meeting of the associated SET.

Section 4: Findings

This section details the visitors' findings from their review through stage 2, including any requirements set, and a summary of their overall findings.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before providers or programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is an issue with the education provider's approach to meeting a standard. This may mean that we have evidence that standards are not met at this time, or the education provider's planned approach is not suitable.

The visitors were satisfied that no conditions were required to satisfy them that all standards are met. The visitors' findings, including why no conditions were required, are presented below.

Overall findings on how standards are met

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings against the programme-level standards. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment
- **SET 2: Programme admissions** –
  - o The education provider detailed how they have standards and entry criteria requirements that are in place for entry onto the proposed programme. This includes the requirement of applicants having studied a science qualification to A-level / BTEC level.
  - o The education provider has also explained how their existing admissions policy will be utilised for the proposed programme. The full entry requirements and admissions process is detailed on the education providers website.
  - o The visitors noted the information supplied here and found the SETS in this area to be met. The visitors found the admissions criteria to be appropriate for the level of study and clearly explained.
- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership** –

- o The education provider has detailed how they have a dedicated placement coordinator that arranges all practise-based learning placements. The education provider has also highlighted the importance of working with their placement providers and ensuring a strong, robust relationship remains in place. They aim to do this by being adaptable, ensuring regular communication between them and by centralising placement-related information through a dedicated email and University College London (UCL) Extend page. They have also discussed how placement providers' requirements are prioritised through feedback loops, accreditation visits, and signed agreements outlining mutual expectations. Additional support includes offering Continuing Professional development (CPD)-focused masterclasses to strengthen relationships and formalising roles through clinical placement agreements.
  - o The education provider has detailed how they have 16 members of staff at their Institute who will be involved in the running of the proposed programme. Specific subject specialists will also be brought in as guest lecturers to provide additional content and teaching. The education provider has also stated that all teaching staff are qualified to at least MSc level and have undertaken training in teaching in higher education. The education provider has also discussed how this ensures that subject areas are taught by those with the associated clinical skills.
  - o The education provider clarified how collaboration is maintained throughout the year in various ways, some of which stems from the feedback they obtained from placement sites. They have detailed how they have a dedicated email address for placement queries. This is used to send updates when needed to keep all sites informed of any changes. They also hold 1-2-1 meetings when needed or upon request and conduct face-to-face placement visits. They maintain that there is open communication between them and their sites, which has fostered strong relationships, and they obtain feedback from sites throughout placement periodically.
  - o The education provider also clarified how confidential meetings are held on a 1-2-1 basis between staff and learners and these are documented. Feedback is sought from staff, learners and placement educators via Microsoft Forms. Supervisors and learners are also made aware that they can also request a meeting at any point to discuss placement. Suggestions for improvement from this feedback is considered and taken forward, there is also an escalation process in place for more serious concerns.
  - o The visitors noted the information provided in this section and through the expansion. The visitors considered this information and found the SETs relating to this area to be met.
- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery** –
  - o The education provider has described how the programmes learning outcomes has been designed to ensure that learners will graduate with the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of both HPCP and NHSE England (NHSE). The learning outcomes are also designed to ensure that learner understand the professional behaviour

they are expected to display and maintain. These are introduced in first year of their programme and revisited in the programmes third year. They have also stated that their placement code of conduct ensures that placement behaviours are maintained by learners.

- o The education provider has also detailed how the programme is being delivered in accordance with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) code from 2023. It is also mapped to the NHSE BSc Healthcare Science Neurosensory Sciences curriculum and is accredited by Association of Safety Compliance Professionals (ASCP). They have also stated that the curriculum is designed to equip learners to meet at least the threshold competencies for an audiologist defined by the British Audiology Association (BAA). It aligns with key areas that the BAA highlights as critical for good practice (knowledge, skills and performance, safety and quality, communication, partnership and maintaining trust).

- o The education provider has stated that they have a full range of up-to-date equipment in their skills lab. They have also detailed how they have accessible teaching spaces to accommodate staff and learners with restricted mobility. All disabled learners also work with a welfare officer to create a Statement of Reasonable Adjustments which sets out any accessibility requirements.

- o The education provider has also explained that all the clinical teaching staff on the proposed programme are practising audiologists or hearing therapists. They are members of the key professional bodies and attend relevant conferences as part of their professional development. They will be aware of any changes in research or clinical current practice that need to be implemented in the proposed programme.

- o Through clarification, the education provider has detailed how an Interprofessional Learning (IPL) structured activity is integrated into the second term in collaboration with their School of Pharmacy, forming part of their study skills first and second modules. First and second-year learners also participate in a joint lecture alongside pharmacy learners, providing a further opportunity for both cohorts to engage and interact.

- o As part of this initiative, students explore a significant healthcare-related issue, such as sustainability in healthcare, and collaborate to address a given problem. Working in interdisciplinary groups of 8–10, comprising both pharmacy and audiology students, they are tasked with developing a poster presentation

- o We noted from the education provider submission that they have discussed meeting NHSE curriculum requirement. But have not found evidence to show their mapping / meeting of these standards. We therefore chose to explore this further via quality activity one.

- o Following this exploration we found all the SETs related to this area to be met.

- **SET 5: Practice-based learning** –
  - o The education provider has detailed how as part of the programme, learners are required to attend at least 30 weeks of clinical placements split over the three years of the programme. They must complete a log book detailing these placements and the completion of clinical tasks.

They also hold regular, compulsory practical sessions in their skills lab for learners to build on their practical skills.

- They described how the proposed programme is structured to enable learners to build and gain competence in clinical skills step-by-step. In year one, they begin by practising skills using models such as otoscopy heads and plastic ears and progress towards practising on each other. Clinical placement consists of three days of observation of experienced audiologists at work. In year two, learners learn further skills and practise first on each other, then on volunteers, including members of the public with hearing loss. A longer clinical placement of 10 weeks allows them to gradually take on more responsibility for different aspects of an audiology appointment under supervision.
- The education provider has detailed how placement supervisors must be a senior audiologist or hearing aid dispensers, registered with AHCS or HCPC either as a HAD or a clinical scientist. They must also have suitable clinical experience and be willing to take on an element of pastoral care. Supervisors will be identified when a department is accredited, and a register of placement supervisors will be maintained by the Placement Co-ordinator and this register will be updated annually. Supervisors will be required to undertake supervision training once every 3 years. Supervision training will cover models of supervision, expectations of the clinical supervision role, how to structure a training plan, how to identify and troubleshoot problems, how to provide pastoral care for learners.
- The education provider has also detailed how their placement coordinator visits all potential placement centres prior to setting up a placement agreement. This is to ensure supervisors are suitably qualified and the centre has suitable facilities.
- Through clarification the education provider has described how staff chosen to be clinical supervisors is at the discretion of the leads within placement sites. They monitor this with their accreditation forms to ensure that they meet requirements for relevant qualifications and experience. The education provider also hosts a supervisor training / partnership board day annually which includes training on giving feedback, introduction to the logbook, how to learners' wellbeing.
- They also clarified that constituency in placement supervision is monitored in a variety of ways. This includes;
  - Initial accreditation and its associated forms which ensures that staff training meets the requirements for relevant qualifications.
  - Placement site visits are also conducted to check the resources available.
  - The monitoring of learner progress with their logbook)and obtaining feedback from learners. This will mean the education provider can assess the quality of supervision.
- The education provider also detailed how supervisors are asked to provide feedback in logbooks and this is assessed to ensure that it is constructive for learners.
- Considering all the information presented, the visitors found all SETS related to this area to be met.

- **SET 6: Assessment** –

- The education provider has detailed how learners are currently assessed using a variety of assessment strategies including online quizzes, reflective journals, essays, practical examinations, presentations and formal written examinations. These methods are used to demonstrate the learner's adherence and understanding of the standards of proficiency for Hearing Aid Dispensers. Learners are assessed as per above on the use of evidence-based practice principles. The type and number of assessments attached to each module has been laid out in the supporting documents as part of the education providers sage 2 submission. The education provider has also detailed how all modules must be passed in order to obtain the BSc Audiology qualification.

- They also explained how all practical examinations must also be passed in order to gain the qualification. They have also stated that all learners must show adherence and understanding of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics in order to pass these assessments.

- The education provider has stated that the assessments for each module are aligned to the learning outcomes of that module. All new assessment sets are reviewed and commented on by their external examiners.

- Through clarification, the education provider has explained how all learners have the same logbook and assignments to complete, the contents of which are possible to complete at all placement sites. The education provider works to ensure consistency in feedback by informing the supervisors of the requirements and checking that these are understood prior to the learner starting on placement. This is included in the supervisor training that the education provider provides. The education provider periodically monitors the logbooks and if needed, devises action plans to ensure that all standards / requirements are met.

- The education provider has also clarified the support they provide to learners where needed. This includes support through these action plans, extra tutorials for learners needing extra support and also opportunities / options to retake their final examination. They also explained how learners have access to Student Support and Wellbeing Services, and this extends to learners whilst on campus or on placement.

- The education provider also clarified how assessments are spread across the length of the programme. This includes practical examinations in years one and two that include assessment of professional behaviour. Clinical skills are also assessed in year one with volunteer patients (service users). This is not formally assessed, but the volunteers are asked to provide feedback on the learner's conduct. Placement behaviour is assessed in the second year of the programme through the use of placement logbooks. These logbooks require learners to demonstrate adherence to professional standards, including compliance with HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics, its also ensures effective communication, and proper procedures for gaining patient consent.

- o Considering all the information presented, the visitors found all SETS related to this area to be met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Section 5: Referrals

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:
- All standards are met, and therefore the programme should be approved.

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 programme is approved

Reason for this decision: The Education and Training Committee Panel accepted the visitor's recommendation that the programme should receive approval.

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 approval. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation, and the nature, quality and facilities of the provision.

Education provider	University College London		
Case reference	CAS-01587-Z0R3G8	Lead visitors	Claire Langman, Joanna Lemanska

Quality of provision

Through this assessment, we have noted:
- Quality activity one examined the education providers alignment with NHS England's curriculum standards. As part of this the education provider supplied mapping to the required standards.
- The programme meets all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.

Facilities provided

Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:
- Staffing
  - Approximately 17 members of Ear Institute staff are involved in convening modules, teaching and assessments.
  - Two members of administrative staff support the programme.
  - One course director.
  - (Note all teaching and admin staff work on other programmes as well; nobody works full-time on the BSc).
- Physical resources: The Ear Institute has a dedicated teaching space (lecture theatre, large seminar room, small seminar room). They also have a fully equipped audiology skills lab. These are already in place.

Programmes

Programme name	Mode of study	First intake date	Nature of provision
BSc (Hons) Audiology	FT (Full time)	22/09/2025	Taught BSc (Hons) Degree

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
D.Ed.Psy Educational and Child Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Educational psychologist		01/01/2005
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DclinPsych)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Clinical psychologist		01/01/1995
Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DEdPsy)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Educational psychologist		01/09/2011
MSc Audiological Science with Clinical Practice	FT (Full time)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/09/2014
MSc in Dietetics (Pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/10/2021
MSc Orthoptics (pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Orthoptist		POM - Sale / Supply (OR)	01/09/2021
MSc Speech and Language Sciences	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2000
PCGert in Independent and Supplementary Non Medical Prescribing with Enhanced Clinical Assessment	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	23/09/2024
Postgraduate Diploma Audiological Science with Clinical Practice	FT (Full time)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/09/2014