

Performance review process report

University of Southampton, 2021-22

# **Executive summary**

This report covers our performance review of the programmes offered by the University of Southampton. Through our review no quality themes were identified. As this referral, constitutes a low risk to how the approved programmes continue to be delivered, our recommendation for the performance review period is five years.

This report will now be considered by our Education and Training Panel who will make the final decision on the on the review period.

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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 <u>approved on an open-ended basis</u>, subject to ongoing monitoring. Programmes we have approved are listed <u>on our website</u>.

# 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 <u>partner visitors</u> 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:

Garrett Kennedy	Lead visitor, Practitioner psychologist
Jo Jackson	Lead visitor, Physiotherapist
Rachel O'Connell	Service User Expert Advisor
Saranjit Binning	Education Quality Officer

# Section 2: About the education provider

## The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 16 HCPC-approved programmes across 6 professions. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1993.

This is the first time the education provider is going through the performance review process; however, they have previously completed annual monitoring audit in 2018/19. The outcome of this monitoring process concluded that the programmes continued to meet the standards and ongoing approval was reconfirmed.

# 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 <u>Appendix 1</u> of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level	Approved since		
	Chiropodist / podiatrist	⊠Undergraduate	□Postgraduate	1993	
Pre-	Hearing Aid Dispenser	⊠Undergraduate	□Postgraduate	2013	
registration	Occupational therapy	⊠Undergraduate	⊠Postgraduate	1994	
	Physiotherapist	⊠Undergraduate	⊠Postgraduate	1994	
	Practitioner psychologist	□Undergraduate	⊠Postgraduate	1994	
Post-	Independent Preso	ndependent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			
registration	Prescription Only N	1993			

## Institution performance data

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

Data Point	Bench- mark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	433	545	2022	The number of learners enrolled is higher than the benchmark. The provider has reflected on this in the portfolio and provided a programme level breakdown of learner numbers.  Visitors were satisfied with the information and reflection provided in the portfolio by the education provider.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	1%	2018/19	The percentage of learners not continuing is lower than the benchmark, which suggests learners are satisfied with their studies. Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in the portfolio.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	93%	91%	2018/19	The percentage in employment / further study is 2% lower than the benchmark The provider has provided a narrative in the portfolio in relation to this data point and visitors were satisfied with this.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	N/A	Silver	2018	This award rating is good and indicates consistent high quality teaching and learning. Visitors noted there was clear evidence of the education provider taking every opportunity to engage with developments thus positioning themselves well to respond to new requirements.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	75.8%	82.1%	2021	This score is above the benchmark. It is worth noting how the education provider has maintained their learner satisfaction levels during the pandemic and how they adjusted to remote teaching/learning.  Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in the portfolio.

# 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 <u>thematic areas reviewed</u> 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

Visitors reviewed the portfolio and the supporting documentation. During their review, the visitors recognised that a small number of documents referred to in the portfolio were missing. These were requested. Once the submission was complete, the visitors reviewed the full portfolio information and no quality themes were identified.

The level of detail and reflection in the submission was noted by the visitors. In addition to this the visitors acknowledged the team had produced a high quality document with appropriate evidence to indicate good performance.

# Section 4: Summary of 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 provider provided an
  overview of the University's Business Planning approach, which captured
  financial and non-financial objectives. The business plan is prepared annually
  and requires each Faculty and Professional Service to submit a plan which
  aligns with the providers strategy and allows them to consider staffing and
  resourcing requirements when allocating the budget. Visitors were satisfied
  with the information provided in this section and had no concerns about the
  resourcing and financial stability of this provider.
- Partnerships with other organisations The education provider is the main provider of healthcare programmes across the Hampshire and Isle of Wight

area and therefore have strong relationships with the NHS trusts in the region. Recently this has become a challenge, as other providers in the region are also developing Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy programmes, which has led to local placement providers working with eight different education providers. To ease the pressure a new Practice Learning Advisory Group was established to support the development of new placements and develop shared placement related policies. In addition to this, Health Education England (HEE) introduced a new 'NHS Education Contract' which will have a significant impact on placement capacity.

Visitors recognised the breadth of provision requires a significant range of partnerships with other organisations. They also noted how the reflective statement evidenced a proactive approach to pressure on placement capacity and viewed the support HEE provided to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), addressed issues collaboratively as a strength. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

 Academic and placement quality – Feedback was obtained from all learners through the evaluation forms, which was fed back to placement organisations. Placement organisations have raised an issue about the number of evaluations to complete and they how differ for each provider. This issue has been raised with the Practice Learning Advisory Group (PLAG) who are looking at how a common approach could be adopted by all HEIs.

The provider recognised the importance of a balanced workload for learners on placement and the need for boundaries with placement providers when allocating work. To ensure placement providers are working within the boundaries, a model has been implemented which specifies the correct workload allocation for learners.

The impact of the pandemic on technology has been viewed as a success, as education delivery methods have changed. As a result of this a blended approach to teaching and learning has been adopted and well received by learners.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and noted how a clear plan was implemented to address the issue with workload allocations and how the use of technology was identified as a success. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Interprofessional education – The provider recognised the benefits of interprofessional education, however the logistical problems were also recognised in terms of the requirement for larger spaces to teach large groups. Learners on the Allied Health Professions (AHPs) programmes join Nursing and Midwifery and other professions on joint modules. Several programmes are due for revalidation and both the provider and visitors noted how important it is to maintain the current high standards through this process.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and acknowledged the logistical problems with delivering interprofessional education. Despite the logistical problems there was evidence of good joint working in this area, which demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

• Service users and carers – A service user and carer forum was established in 2013, however the pandemic impacted on this group significantly and service user and carer involvement was limited. Where possible, some programmes involved the group via MS Teams, but this was not the same as face to face interactions. In January 2021 the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) revalidated the BSc Midwifery programme and a condition for approval was a review of this forum to ensure it was meeting the requirements of healthcare programmes. This resulted in the education provider identifying a School wide Strategic Plan for Patient and Public Involvement During this process the education provider also acknowledged the impact the NMC condition could have on the HCPC approved programmes. This review was completed in November 2021 and a document was produced 'Refocussing the EbE [Experts by Experience] Group' which outlined the desired level of involvement with service users across the School.

Visitors noted the providers approach to improving engagement with service users and carers in their programmes and how the provider was responding to the need to continue developments in this area. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Equality and diversity – The provider are committed to equality, diversity
and inclusion for all learners and these policies are embedded in the
University Strategy. This included an objective to develop performance
indicators to measure the progress of equality, diversity and inclusion. The
purpose of this performance indicator is to allow staff and learners to view
progress in this area and for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
to review progress and report accordingly to the University Council.

Visitors noted the detailed equality, diversity and inclusion plan and noted the clear objectives placed the education provider in a strong position. For example, they acknowledged the detailed use of the EDI plans in the Clinical Psychology documentation and were satisfied with the information provided, which demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Horizon scanning – Part of the providers submission was its commitment to
working in partnership with learners by providing support and creating a more
flexible teaching and learning experience. Currently, decolonising the
curriculum and equality, diversity and inclusion were a priority for most of the
programmes. In 2023-24, the visitors noted Occupational Therapy programme
will go through an internal re-validation process.

Visitors thought the Triple Helix Approach was an ambitious plan and noted how this approach was embedded not just at University level but at programme level as well. This approach combines education, research,

knowledge exchange and enterprise to develop collaborative partnerships to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Visitors acknowledged the profession specific examples and noted the plans to continue improvements in teaching provision. Evidence of development plans and funding to support this work were provided in the supporting documentation, which showed the education provider was performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: Visitors noted that the Triple Helix Approach was an ambitious plan and noted how this approach was embedded not just at University level but at programme level as well. The visitors therefore considered this to be an example of innovation good practice.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

## Findings of the assessment panel:

• Impact of COVID-19 – During the pandemic, the provider revised the delivery, teaching, award and progression processes to align with the guidance issued by the Office for Students (OfS), which enabled them to deliver teaching and assessments fully online. These policies and processes were also subject to review and approval through the educational governance structures, such as the University's Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Centre for Higher Education Practice. During this period, learners were provided with additional support in the form of online learning grants, covid related illness was considered, digital access to library resources and reasonable adjustments for remote assessments were introduced. Some of the policies and processes implemented during this period are continuing to be used as they have been effective in the delivery of meetings online.

Visitors were satisfied with the response in this section and noted how adaptations had been made for learners to access additional mental health and wellbeing support. They recognised these adaptations were made to support learners during the pandemic and noted how the education provider has continued to provide this support to learners after the pandemic. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

 Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods – Engagement with the IT systems accelerated due to COVID-19 and the use of the Virtual Learning Environment became a core delivery method for staff and learners. The pandemic also encouraged staff to engage with IT systems and tools that had previously been seen as challenging. The use of technology (MS Teams, Blackboard and Zoom) have changed the way teaching is delivered and the provider recognised the benefits of this. However, it was noted for some programmes, face to face teaching is required and shifting back to this is proving to be a challenge, as learners prefer distance learning. Visitors noted the education providers comments regarding the 'foundations for digital education' and how they would like to benefit from this further and not replicate previous practices and viewed this as good practise. Visitors noted good practice in this section. The programme specific examples provided sufficient detail to outline how adaptations were implemented and demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: Visitors noted the education providers plans about how they would like to benefit from the learning contained in 'foundations for digital education' further and not replicate previous practices. This was considered as good practice.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

## Findings of the assessment panel:

Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education – The last Quality Assurance review of the provider was carried out in 2015. The education provider has responded to changes from the Office for Students (OfS) and have moved away from the core practices in the UK Quality Code, as there is no longer a requirement to meet these. Despite this change the provider continues to use the UK Quality Code as a framework to ensure academic standards are maintained and all policies, processes and procedures are robust. This change has also allowed the provider to use different approaches with the Quality Monitoring and Enhancement policies and processes with a view to adding value to the education provision.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and acknowledged how the provider had responded to changes related to the OfS and continued to maintain their own robust approach to quality and enhancement. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies – The
provider uses Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports regularly for
information to ensure learners are receiving high quality educational
experiences, however this information is not accessible for the provider until
the report is made available publicly. To address this issue, the provider are
working with Trust partners to encourage placement providers to share areas
of concern with them at the end of the CQC inspection. This will enable them
to prepare learners and implement action plans in a timely manner.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and noted the use of CQC reports by the education provider where necessary. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

- National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes Difficulties were experienced
  by the education provider during the pandemic, however despite this the
  outcome of the NSS score was very positive in comparison to the benchmark
  values. Visitors recognised this and noted how the provider was in a positive
  position. They noted how well the provider had performed in this area, despite
  the difficulties arising from the pandemic. This demonstrated the education
  provider is performing well in this area.
- Office for Students monitoring Engaging with the Office for Student (OfS) consultations has resulted in the provider understanding the revised conditions of registration and evidencing the requirements against the current activities being delivered. Alignment with the revised conditions of registration has also been demonstrated. It is a requirement for education providers to report events that could affect their ability to comply with their conditions of registration. It is therefore worth noting the provider have only submitted five 'low risk' reportable events to the OfS since it's inception.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and acknowledged how positively the provider was engaging with developments and positioning themselves to respond to new requirements. The evidence was clear and appropriate references were made to metrics and compliance procedures. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Other professional regulators / professional bodies – Local programme teams and Schools are responsible for engaging with professional bodies. Visitors noted a supportive and collaborative approach being promoted with practice partners. They recognised the success of the Practice Learning Advisory Group (PLAG) across the region and the need to receive information about CQC outcomes in a timely manner. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: None.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

## Findings of the assessment panel:

Curriculum development – Adapting the delivery of the programmes to
online platforms and using alternative approaches to traditional teaching was
challenging during lockdown. However, the alternative approaches have had
a positive impact on teaching and learning and will be retained and developed
further. The provider is currently using a hybrid method, which combines online and on-campus teaching. Specific programmes have been given priority
to return to the campus for clinical skills teaching. COVID impacted all
placement activity and alternative approaches were sought to ensure learning

outcomes were met across all programmes. Programme teams recognised there were gaps with the placement experience during lockdown and increased skills and clinical sessions, which were aided by simulated models.

During this period the provider experienced some challenges with staffing and had to recruit staff on a short term basis to deliver teaching. However other aspects of the provision such as placement coordination were harder to cover. There was evidence of new developments such as the new BSc in Audiology degree, updating the research approach for the Occupational Therapy programmes and reviewing and aligning modules with other research modules (Physiotherapy and Podiatry).

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and noted the open and detailed reflections provided for each professional group and the good evidence, which highlighted good developments and future plans. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

 Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance – The education provider demonstrated their engagement with the professional bodies during the pandemic and how they responded to advice and recommendations.

Overall, the visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section. They noted the developments with combining the requirements of the NMC and HCPC when the Independent Prescribing programme was revalidated in 2019. The visitors also acknowledged how actively the education provider engaged with professional bodies and with the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) in particular, regarding the number of hours that can contribute to overall placement hours from Simulation Based Education. The reflections indicated the teaching teams have a development process for programmes and are aware of professional body requirements. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Capacity of practice-based learning – Many services were impacted during
the pandemic, which resulted in the suspension and cancellation of
placements. To ensure learners had access to appropriate learning
opportunities, additional learning activities were made available via MS
Teams such as simulated online interactions and case studies. Some services
closed permanently as a result of COVID, which resulted in there being a
need to develop new opportunities and work collaboratively with other HEIs
and HEE.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and acknowledged the challenges the education provider were experiencing with practice-based learning and how this was a sector wide issue. The profession specific reflections were helpful, as they provided extensive evidence of how the education provider had responded to and met the challenge and worked towards solutions. This demonstrated the education provider is performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: None.

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

# Findings of the assessment panel:

 Learners – The provider demonstrated a commitment to receiving and responding to feedback and worked closely with student representatives and the Students' Union to encourage learners to engage with the processes and have input into policies, programme approvals and reviews. There are various systems by which learners can feedback e.g., module feedback and Student Staff Liaison Committees. The Student Staff Liaison Committees also help with resolving student complaints at the earliest opportunity.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and recognised how there was clear information about how the provider wanted to listen and learn from learners and to evidence a response where appropriate. The range of internal monitoring was comprehensive, which complements any additional external requirements. They also noted the involvement of learners in student feedback exercises, liaison committees and other internal quality processes, which demonstrated the provider is performing well in this area.

• Practice placement educators – There are eight education providers sharing the same geographical footprint, which is a challenge for placement educators to manage placement capacity. To resolve this issue HEE have purchased a Placement Management System – InPlace, which will ensure all placements are utilised. The Practice Learning Advisory Group are reviewing placement quality and the processes to monitor the quality of education in placement environments. In addition to this, a working group has been created to develop a new questionnaire for practice placement learners to complete when they finish their placement. This group is made up of placement representatives and HEI staff who feedback to the Practice Learning Advisory Group.

Visitors noted again the involvement with the Practice Learning Advisory Group and how this group was clearly a strength and the support HEE provided. They also recognised the challenges the provider was experiencing due to sharing the geographical area with several other HEIs and acknowledged their established partnerships with external providers. This demonstrated the provider is performing well in this area.

External examiners – There are robust processes in place to ensure external
examiners are involved with the teaching and assessment of learners and
provide appropriate feedback. External examiners have complimented the
provider on how quickly they adapted to a different method of teaching and
continued to maintain standards and have commended the programme teams
for their hard work.

Visitors were satisfied with the information provided in this section and noted the positive feedback from the external examiners. They recognised the provider had a good relationship with them, which was used to good effect, for example, to seek support by the Podiatry Team during the pandemic. This demonstrated the provider is performing well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review: Visitors acknowledged the strength of the Practice Learning Advisory Group (PLAG) and the support this group provided with increasing placement capacity. This was considered as good practice.

#### Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process

# Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

# **Assessment panel recommendation**

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:

 The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2026-27 academic year

**Reason for this recommendation:** We are making this recommendation as no quality themes were identified for further consideration and no significant risks were identified through this performance review.

# Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Podiatry	FT (Full time)	Chiropodist / podiatrist		POM - Administration; POM - sale / supply (CH)	01/06/1993
BSc (Hons) Audiology	FT (Full time)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/08/2019
Hearing Aid Aptitude Test	DL (Distance learning)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/07/2014
MSci Audiology	FT (Full time)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/08/2019
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/01/1994
MSc Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			01/01/2021
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/1994
MSc Physiotherapy (Pre- registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2004
Pg Dip Physiotherapy (Pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/10/2009
Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DclinPsychol)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Clinical psychologist		01/01/1994
Doctorate in Educational Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Educational psychologist		01/01/2005
Health Psychology Research and Professional Practice (MPhil)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Health psychologist		01/09/2011

Health Psychology Research and Professional Practice (MPhil)	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Health psychologist		01/09/2011
Health Psychology Research and Professional Practice (PhD)	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Health psychologist		01/01/2007
Health Psychology Research and Professional Practice (PhD)	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Health psychologist		01/01/2007
Independent and Supplementary Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014