Performance review process report

University of Central Lancashire, 2018 - 2021

Executive summary

- A 4-year monitoring period was advised by the visitors following their review. This provider shall next go through Performance Review in academic year 2025-26.
- Visitors identified both some areas of good practice and some areas that required further investigation via a quality activity.
- The areas requiring further investigation included: placement capacity, the virtual learning environment, feedback from learners and support for struggling learners.
- The visitors considered that the provider's response to the quality activities was good and that they did not have any further concerns or areas for further exploration.
- Areas of good practice identified by the visitors included the provider's very strong ongoing relationships with regional stakeholders, their approach to innovation, and their proactive approach to continuous improvement and response.

Previous consideration	N / A – this is the provider's first time in performance review.
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	Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2025-26 academic year.

Included within this report

Section 1: About this assessment

About us

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

This is a report on the performance review process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the institution and practice areas(s) detailed in this report continue to meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the institution and programme(s) ongoing approval.

Our standards

We approve education providers and programmes that meet our education standards. Individuals who complete approved programmes will meet proficiency standards, which set out what a registrant should know, understand and be able to do when they complete their education and training. The education standards are outcome focused, enabling education providers to deliver programmes in different ways, as long as individuals who complete the programme meet the relevant proficiency standards.

Our regulatory approach

We are flexible, intelligent and data-led in our quality assurance of programme clusters and programmes. Through our processes, we:
- enable bespoke, proportionate and effective regulatory engagement with education providers;
- use data and intelligence to enable effective risk-based decision making; and
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards.

Providers and programmes are approved on an open-ended basis, subject to ongoing monitoring. Programmes we have approved are listed on our website.

The performance review process

Once a programme institution is approved, we will take assurance it continues to meet standards through:
- regular assessment of key data points, supplied by the education provider and external organisations; and
- assessment of a self-reflective portfolio and evidence, supplied on a cyclical basis

Through monitoring, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess how an education provider is performing based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. We take this assurance at the provider level wherever possible, and will delve into programme / profession level detail where we need to.

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

Thematic areas reviewed

We normally focus on the following areas:
- Institution self-reflection, including resourcing, partnerships, quality, the input of others, and equality and diversity
- Thematic reflection, focusing on timely developments within the education sector
- Provider reflection on the assessment of other sector bodies, including professional bodies and systems regulators
- Provider reflection on developments linked to specific professions
- Stakeholder feedback and actions

How we make our decisions

We make independent evidence based decisions about programme approval. For all assessments, we ensure that we have profession specific input in our decision making. In order to do this, we appoint partner visitors to design quality assurance assessments, and assess evidence and information relevant to the assessment. Visitors make recommendations to the Education and Training Committee (ETC). Education providers have the right of reply to the recommendation. If an education provider wishes to, they can supply 'observations' as part of the process.

The ETC make the decisions about the approval and ongoing approval of programmes. In order to do this, they consider recommendations detailed in process reports, and any observations from education providers (if submitted). The Committee takes decisions through different levels depending on the routines and impact of the decision, and where appropriate meets in public. Their decisions are available to view on our website.

The assessment panel for this review

We appointed the following panel members to support a review of this education provider:

Alexander Harmer	Lead visitor, Operating Department Practitioner
Clare Attrill	Lead visitor, Speech and Language Therapist
Sheba Joseph	Service User Expert Advisor
Niall Gooch	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 14 HCPC-approved programmes across 8 professions and including two Prescribing programmes. It is a Higher Education Provider and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2002.

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	Biomedical scientist	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2017
	Dietitian	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2022
	Hearing Aid Dispenser	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2022
	Occupational therapy	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2019
	Operating Department Practitioner	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2012
	Paramedic	☒Undergraduate	☐Postgraduate	2018
	Physiotherapist	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2018
	Speech and language therapist	☒Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2020
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			2006

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	451	466	2022	The close correspondence here suggests that there are unlikely to be issues around over- or under-recruitment, or sustainability. This is because the provider is recruiting to the HCPC-regulated provision at about the level that we would expect given the cohort numbers we have recorded and which formed the basis of our approval.
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	5%	2019-2020	The fact that 2% of learners are not completing their programmes is a potential concern but the visitors did not find any reason to consider that there were issues around retention on the HCPC-regulated provision.
Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study	94%	98%	2019-2020	This is a very strong score suggesting that the provider is highly effective in moving learners on to next steps appropriately.
Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award	Silver		June 2019	This suggests that teaching is of a good standard. The TEF measures how effective the provider staff are at delivering programmes and how well they are supported by the provider.
National Student Survey (NSS) overall satisfaction score (Q27)	74.0%	69.3%	2022	The provider are a little below the expected value in this area and this was explored through the portfolio and is partly due to COVID-19 affecting learner experience.
HCPC performance review cycle length				N / A – this is the provider's first time through the performance review process.

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 – Development of placement capacity

Area for further exploration: In the portfolio the provider were transparent about their ongoing need to gain additional capacity from existing practice education partners, and to obtain new settings in practice-based learning The visitors noted these efforts, which included making contacts with a wider range of placement providers and employers in their region, and seeking to develop the placements that were already available. This development of already existing placements involved the provider finding ways to maximise the number of learners who could be taken on by existing practice educators, and to ensure that the time available to a given practice educators for supervision of learners was being filled as effectively as possible. The visitors considered that this was an example of the provider being "creative" and showing good stakeholder engagement.

However, the provider also mentioned that they were trying to develop new relationships with new placement settings. They did not go into detail about what exactly was involved in the development of these new relationships, so the visitors wished to explore in more detail how this development would proceed. This would enable them to gain a full understanding of the provider's performance in the area of practice-based learning capacity.

With this in mind, the visitors decided to explore what exactly the provider intended to do to secure additional placement capacity in their region, with regard to both new placements and existing ones.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We sought clarification on this point via additional information to allow the provider to elaborate on the previous information they had sent. We agreed this approach with the provider as they considered that the visitors' exploration could easily be facilitated by submitting additional narrative and evidence.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider submitted a narrative explaining that they were collaborating with Health Education England and other providers to provider better placements in allied health professions. They noted the existence of a steering group chaired jointly with the University of Liverpool, which sought to make the sharing of placements more equitable and more responsive to the needs or providers.

The provider reported that this approach has already been implemented in some areas and is being expanded into others currently. At the same time the provider is also working with regional stakeholders on developing support for practice educators, as part of the North West Practice Education Group Educator (PEGE) project.

In light of this information the visitors considered that the provider were working well to develop practice-based learning. This is because there were clear measures in place which would both expand the capacity available and make better use of existing capacity.

Quality theme 2 – Effective implementation of StudentHub virtual learning environment

Area for further exploration: In the 'Academic and placement quality' section of the portfolio, the provider stated that learner access to the StudentHub virtual learning environment (VLE) was going to be established, to make online submission and feedback more streamlined and effective. The visitors considered that this sounded like an important and useful initiative, which would build on some of the lessons learned from adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they considered that they would like to explore when the VLE would be fully implemented, and accessible by learners. This was because the effective functioning of a VLE is crucial to learners being able to participate in the programme appropriately, and to achieve the theoretical and practical learning required to obtain the award.
Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We sought clarification on this point via additional information to allow the provider to elaborate on the previous information they had sent. We agreed this approach with the provider as they considered that the visitors' exploration could easily be facilitated by submitting additional narrative and evidence.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider stated in their response that StudentHub became operational for all learners at the start of the 2022-23 academic year.

They also noted that they have recently gained funding – from the university-level RePAIR funding stream – for further developments to online learning, specifically a site which will improve access to programme information and information about support for learners.

The visitors considered that this response demonstrated that the provider would be able to maintain learners' effective participation in programmes following digital innovation. They were especially confident of this given the information they had seen elsewhere in the portfolio about the provider's quality and feedback mechanisms.

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Quality theme 3 – Feedback on new assessment approaches

Area for further exploration: In the 'Impact of COVID-19' section of the portfolio the provider reported that they had made extensive changes to assessment as a result of the pandemic including "a significant reduction in the number of formal written examinations". Some of these changes have been made permanent, and the provider stated that "These projects will be evaluated by both staff and students". The visitors considered that the changes made were reasonable under the circumstances and were a good example of adaptation.

However, the visitors were not able to see evidence relating to the evaluation of the projects, and so they were not clear how the provider would know whether the new assessment approaches were working effectively and appropriately. The visitors wanted to explore the outcome of the quality evaluation mentioned in the portfolio in order to be confident that the provider was able to monitor its assessment approaches, and adapt them where necessary.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We sought clarification on this point via additional information to allow the provider to elaborate on the previous information they had sent. We agreed this approach with the provider as they considered that the visitors' exploration could easily be facilitated by submitting additional narrative and evidence.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider noted that all changes made during the pandemic had been the result of consultation of all relevant stakeholders including learners, external examiners and practice-based learning providers.

The provider stated that external examiners had commented that the new assessment methods had not affected the meeting of appropriate standards. Learners had also reported back favourably in module evaluations They noted also that clinical partners were happy that online assessments were an appropriate test of learners' knowledge, problem solving and clinical reasoning, and prepared the learners adequately for clinical placements. The response from the provider stated that all students successfully completed their clinical placement blocks. This included demonstrating appropriate clinical skills.

This feedback reassured the visitors that the provider had taken appropriate steps to evaluate new approaches used during the review period, and that they were continuing to assess learners effectively and appropriately.

Quality theme 4 – Support for struggling learners in occupational therapy

Area for further exploration: In their reflections on practice placement educators in the portfolio, the provider noted an ongoing effort to support learners who were struggling in the practice-based learning aspects of the occupational therapy provision.

The visitors considered that it was good that the provider was seeking continuous improvement in this area. However, they were not clear from the portfolio about how exactly the provider would identify "failing learners", and how they were supported. They therefore wanted to explore in more detail the provider's arrangements for determining which learners were struggling, and how the provider decided what kind and level of help to offer these learners. This was because they wanted to have a clear understanding of what arrangements the provider had in place to ensure that learners were supported to complete the programme.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We sought clarification on this point via additional information to allow the provider to elaborate on the previous information they had sent. We agreed this approach with the provider as they considered that the visitors' exploration could easily be facilitated by submitting additional narrative and evidence.

Outcomes of exploration: The provider noted a number of ways in which learners who were struggling might be identified – either through poor performance in assessments or through individual interactions with staff or practice educators. They also noted that all learners have an allocated personal tutor from the occupational therapy teaching staff, who have regular scheduled meetings with learners, and are available for them on an informal basis at any time.

The provider response stated that there are specific services available at the institutional level for struggling learners, including support for particular additional needs. This includes a Faculty Academic Coach and the WISER service, available to all learners at the provider, which develops academic skills. Learners are given detailed feedback on their work. In the specific context of placement, the provider stated that there is a halfway report to monitor learner progress, and this is used to generate action plans where necessary.

In light of the above information, the visitors considered that the provider was providing good support to struggling learners and that they had sufficient means available to identify problems at an early stage.

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 is closely involved with regional initiatives to ensure the sustainability of individual programmes

in the allied health professions (AHP) field, especially with regard to practice-based learning capacity. For example, they have regular meetings with other healthcare education providers to discuss the placements available to each and to exchange placements where possible or necessary. They have gained funding from Health Education England (HEE) to employ additional staff to develop the use of clinical simulation as a standard and significant part of all programmes going forward, which will help to ensure that the programmes remain professionally relevant and effective. There is centralised university-level oversight of individual programme sustainability, and all HCPC-approved programmes are meeting the appropriate targets from this oversight.

- **Partnerships with other organisations** –
  The provider notes a number of external organisations with whom they work, including the Ministry of Defence, other local HEIs, and their practice-based learning providers. For example, they are closely involved with local profession-specific manager's meetings, which is overseen by the North West Placement Management Network (NWPMN). They are also involved with a regional steering group of allied health professions, the Lancashire and South Cumbria AHP Faculty. There are regular meetings between provider representatives and organisations with whom they work, at both strategic and operational level. The visitors considered that performance in this area was good.

- **Academic and placement quality** –
  The provider note several different approaches to this area, including individual module evaluations, weekly staff meetings, and a more systematic approach to learner induction to help learners understand how they can contribute to the programme quality. A digital placement management system is in place. The visitors considered that there were many strengths in this area, including good transparent reflection on the COVID-19 impact, an understanding of the importance of site visits to placement quality assessment, and a commitment to bringing in high quality new placements on a regular basis.

- **Interprofessional education** –
  The visitors considered that performance was good in this area as the provider makes good use of digital technology to enable interprofessional education (IPE), and has been "creative" in its approach to enabling access to IPE from learners such as biomedical scientists who are not normally working closely with other professions. The overall responsibility for IPE at the provider lies with the Health IPE group, which has representatives from the faculties of Health and Wellbeing, Health and Care, and Clinical and Biomedical Sciences. This group develops and enables IPE events and experiences for students from the AHP programmes, social work, nursing, midwifery, and medicine.

- **Service users and carers** –
  The key organisation at the provider in this area is the long-standing COMENSUS (Community Engagement and Service User Support) group. This has a wide role at the provider in delivering service user and carer services for all programmes, including in admissions, teaching and learning, and programme quality. The service user expert advisor considered that the performance of COMENSUS was good and that strong examples were given of its co-operation with individual programmes. For example a new project to

involves service users in interviews across the HCPC-approved provision was underway.

- **Equality and diversity** –
  The provider note that they have centralised equality and diversity monitoring, and that individual programmes are also required to gather and submit data around this area. They mention initiatives that are responses to the gathering of such data, for example a project to improve the ethnic diversity of staff so that it more closely reflects the ethnic composition of the learner body. The provider also notes that they have a strong set of policies in place to ensure a good experience and good support for learners who report a disability. The visitors mentioned in their portfolio review that they are confident in the provider's approaches in these areas, especially with regard to the embedding of equality and diversity considerations.
- **Horizon scanning** –

The key area highlighted here by the provider is the broadening of their practice-based learning provision to include non-clinical placements or non-patient facing experiences as valuable placement experiences. This is a work in progress but the visitors considered that it was an important and appropriate exercise.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- Good embedding of equality and diversity practice
- Creative approach to involving learners in appropriate IPE
- Excellent regional co-operation and stakeholder relationships

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Impact of COVID-19** –
  The provider identified several areas in which the pandemic had affected their work: assessment, staff availability, and considerable difficulties in arranging placements. They also had a requirement to vaccinate staff and learners in certain settings and manage safety in clinical placements. The visitors considered that adaptations in this area had been good, and that the challenge of COVID-19 had been met. In particular, they considered that the provider was learning important lessons about assessment and hybrid learning models, and commended the way in which academic staff at the provider had supported critical clinical efforts against the pandemic.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods** –
  As noted elsewhere, in the portfolio the provider make clear that the main impetus for technological innovation over the review period has been adaptations to the COVID-19 pandemic. The examples noted include greater reliance on virtual meeting and programme management software such as MS Teams and Padlet, development of virtual placements and use of online resources, and more virtual teaching. The visitors considered that the innovation and improvement in this area meant that performance was good,

especially in relation to their co-operation with practice partners and bespoke use of software.

- **Apprenticeships** –
  The provider has one existing apprenticeship, in operating department practice (ODP), and is moving forward to approval of two further ones, in physiotherapy and occupational therapy. The provider has described their approach to preparation for the additional apprenticeships. This includes identifying appropriate resourcing and employer partners. The ODP apprenticeship is reported to be proceeding well. The visitors had no concerns about 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:
- The provider has built strong on its adaptations to COVID-19 and incorporated the key changes into its permanent approaches.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education** –
  All programmes at the provider are required to follow the appropriate benchmarking. The visitors noted through the assessment that the individual programmes all appear to them to be aligning themselves appropriately with the UKQCHE.
- **Assessment of practice education providers by external bodies** –
  The main external body referenced in the portfolio in this area is the Northwest Practice Education Group (NWPEG). The NWPEG is an umbrella group for education providers and practice education providers in the north west and maintains its own standards for placement settings based on the relevant professional body standards. The portfolio shows that it has a process of ongoing review of its work and that providers involved in it are expected to respond to its reports and recommendations. The visitors considered that performance in this area was good.
- **National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes** –
  The provider noted in the portfolio a significant drop in NSS scores and reflected on why this might have occurred, including relevant data and mentioning feedback returned by learners. They suggested that COVID-19 was a key factor and the visitors considered that this was a likely explanation given the information available. The provider also outlined the steps they were taking to improve NSS scores, including careful consideration of what particular parts of the learner experience had been negatively impacted by the pandemic and how this had affected learner satisfaction. The visitors considered that overall performance in this area had been good and noted the persistently high scores on the physiotherapy programme which the provider had highlighted.
- **Office for Students monitoring** –

In the portfolio the provider included some strong reflection on some of their issues with retention of learners, which had been highlighted by Office for Students (OFS) data. The provider noted that this was a challenge for all providers of allied health profession (AHP) education, and the visitors accepted that this was the case. The visitors considered that this was useful reflection, showing a good direction of travel, although they did note a disparity between the OFS data and some of the data held by the HCPC. We clarified with the provider before the quality activity stage that they had a formal internal action plan for taking forward the necessary actions in this area. The visitors considered that this was appropriate and reasonable. They also took into account in their assessment that the provider had excellent graduate outcomes despite the problems with retention and achievement in some areas of the provision.

- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies** –
The provider noted through the portfolio that they co-operated closely with relevant professional bodies and that this was a requirement for individual programmes. They stated also that it is a requirement for faculties to ensure that professional body expectations feed into individual programme's quality assurance. The visitors had no concerns about the provider's ability to ensure that programmes align with the appropriate professional standards.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- The provider were extremely transparent about challenges in certain areas, such as NSS scores, and appear to have a strong expectation of compliance with relevant professional standards and guidelines.

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Curriculum development** –
In the portfolio the provider gave a number of examples of curriculum development during the review period. Some of these have been noted elsewhere in this report, for example the adaptations to teaching and to the use of virtual learning environments (VLEs). Two further examples are the use of external experts from clinical practice in teaching and assessment to provider additional depth, and the incorporation of interview practice into the final year curriculum, to help learners going into first professional posts. The portfolio also notes extra-curricular opportunities for learners who wish to enrich their practice. The visitors considered that performance was good in this area, noting that the provider has been very responsive to learner needs, to changing professional expectations, and to the demands of health education after COVID-19.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance** –
The provider noted through the portfolio their engagement with appropriate forums where professional expectations and guidance are discussed. They stated that there are institutional requirements for programmes to maintain

compliance with professional bodies, and they gave an example of this. The occupational therapy programme had updated its assessment regulations in line with a new guideline from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists. (RCOT). The visitors considered that performance in this area was good as they were enabled by the evidence submitted to understand how the provider adapted to professional body guidance across the provision.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning** –
  The provider noted through the portfolio that there were issues with capacity as a result of the disruption from COVID-19. They also note the ways in which these issues are being addressed. These include: amendments to the placement supervision model, which will allow more efficient use of existing capacity; seeking out new placement providers; expanding the use of virtual placements; and collaborating with regional stakeholders to ensure fair sharing of available capacity. The visitors reviewed the actions taken across all curriculum areas, and they considered that the provider was taking appropriate action across a number of fronts to maintain capacity. They did also explore this area further through quality activity 1 above.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- As in other areas the visitors noted that the provider was transparent and straightforward about challenges faced.
- They also noted a coherent and proactive approach to gaining and maintaining placement capacity and keeping programmes aligned with professional expectations.

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Learners** –
  The portfolio sets out the ways in which feedback is gained from learners, and some of the actions taken in response. The main avenues for such feedback are mid-module reviews, and also regular meetings with programme staff. The examples of responses to learner feedback include more interprofessional education (IPE) and more integration between different years on programmes. The provider notes too that learners are generally satisfied with levels of communications and feel they are given appropriate support when necessary. Prior to quality activity we clarified with the provider that there was an action plan for improvements to NSS scores, and that there was faculty-level monitoring of learner feedback, as the visitors requested. The visitors considered that performance was good in this area, although they did use quality activity to explore some issues relating to learner experience.
- **Practice placement educators** –
  The portfolio outlined the ways in which the provider has oversight of practice educators and the methods used to maintain and develop their skills and suitability. For example the training offered is given in a variety of ways to suit individual practice educators, and there is strong positive feedback on this

training. Practice educators also have access to the Common Assessment Tool (CAT), which brings uniformity and accountability to their work. The provider noted examples of issues they are addressing related to practice educators and this reassured the visitors that they are proactively working on areas for improvement, and have ways of knowing what those areas are. The visitors' quality activity 1 was relevant to this area, but overall performance was good in their judgment.

- **External examiners** –
  Examples were given in the portfolio of comments made by external examiners and what action was taken in response (if applicable). For example, the assessment load on the undergraduate occupational therapy programme was adjusted in response to external examiner concerns about how heavy it was. External examiners have also given positive comments about the use of innovation at the provider and their mitigation of risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The visitors therefore considered that there was strong evidence of constructive engagement with the external examiner and that performance in this area was good.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: The visitors did consider that it might be appropriate for the provider to reflect on how they gather feedback from practice educators about the specific issue of how supported they feel by the provider. This is linked to the comments in the portfolio about some practice educators feeling less confident in their assessment abilities.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- The provider is taking clear steps with regard to the dip in NSS scores.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel: There were no particular concerns identified through data analysis. As noted through the table in section 2 above, the institutional NSS score was significantly lower than benchmark. However, the provider did explore some of the possible reasons for this through their submission and the visitors were satisfied with the reflection.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:
- The provider has taken a proactive approach to addressing the NSS score declines and has been transparent about the data.

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2025-26 academic year

Reason for this recommendation: The provider has provided a transparent submission which engages well with the performance review process and offers a clear picture of performance during the review period.

The visitors are confident that, despite some issues, which are mostly related to managing COVID-19, overall performance is good and that where the provider does have work to do, there are clear mechanisms in place for completing that work. The provider responded to quality activity and to requests for clarification in a timely way. The length of the review period – four years – reflects the visitors' confidence in the provider.

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
Advanced Certificate Non Medical Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/10/2006
Advanced Certificate Non Medical Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/01/2014
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science	FT (Full time)	Biomedical scientist			01/09/2014
BSc (Hons) in Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2012
BSc (Hons) in Operating Department Practice	WBL (Work based learning)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2019
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	FT (Full time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2019
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	PT (Part time)	Occupational therapist			01/09/2019
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2018
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2005
Dip HE Paramedic Practice	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2009
FdSc Hearing Aid Audiology	DL (Distance learning)	Hearing aid dispenser			01/09/2022
MSc Dietetics (pre-registration)	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Dietitian			01/01/2022
MSc Occupational Therapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Occupational therapist			01/08/2018
MSc Physiotherapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Physiotherapist			01/08/2018
MSc Speech and Language Therapy	FTA (Full time accelerated)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2020