
Approval process report

University College Birmingham, Paramedic, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve paramedic programmes at University College Birmingham. 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:

- The programme(s) meet all the relevant Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) education standards and therefore should be approved.

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This was not referred from another process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) (ETP) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whether the programme(s) are approved
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The education provider's performance review is in this academic year (2023-24). It has been recommended there shall be five years until the next interaction with our performance review process. The final decision will be made by ETP in August.

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

We are the 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:

John Donaghy	Lead visitor, Paramedic
Matthew Catterall	Lead visitor, Paramedic
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers three HCPC-approved programmes across two professions. It is a higher education institution and has been running HCPC-approved programmes since 2020. The education provider's dietetics programme was approved in January 2024, and started in February 2024.

These programmes sit within the Department of Health at the education provider, alongside other programmes such as physiotherapy and nursing.

The programme management document is at school level and details how programmes are operationalised with key staff and functions.

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2024
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2020

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	70	110	2024	<p>The benchmark figure is data we have captured from previous interactions with the education provider, such as through initial programme approval, and / or through previous performance review assessments. Resources available for the benchmark number of learners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision.</p> <p>We reviewed the education provider's documents to ensure</p>

				<p>there are sufficient resources for the proposed programmes. The visitors were satisfied with the information and did not have any questions to explore further in this area.</p>
<p>Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing</p>	<p>3%</p>	<p>3%</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider’s performance in this area is in line with sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year’s data point, the education provider’s performance has improved by 7%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests the provider’s performance in this area is in line with sector norms.</p>
<p>Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study</p>	<p>94%</p>	<p>88%</p>	<p>2019-20</p>	<p>This data was sourced from summary data. This means the data is the provider-level public data.</p> <p>The data point is below the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing below sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year’s data point, the education provider’s performance has improved by 3%.</p>

				<p>We explored this by reviewing learner’s ability to meet our standards of proficiency through completing the programmes. The visitors were satisfied with the information and did not have any questions to explore further in this area.</p>
Learner satisfaction	78.5%	81.7%	2023	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the education provider is performing above sector norms.</p>

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.

Admissions

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Information for applicants –**
 - The education provider’s admissions policy and procedures are set at institutional level and will apply to these programmes. The policy will reflect all admissions criteria and expectations for the programmes. For example, entry requirements, the application process, interviews and the process for applicants with additional support needs.

- Programme information will be clearly published on the webpages of the education provider.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
 - The education provider requires all applicants to demonstrate their level of English is sufficient to allow successful completion of their chosen course of study. The level of attainment required is normally a GCSE English qualification at grade 4-5 or above or equivalent English qualification.
 - A declaration of health and good character will need to be submitted as part of the application process. Applicants are required to have enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) clearance.
 - These requirements will be clearly published to applicants on the webpages of the education provider.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - The education provider's policy for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) clearly outlines the requirements in this area. They take into consideration the relevance and level of the previous learning and how it links to current practice. All RPL applications are assessed by the Programme Leader and mapped to the standards of proficiency (SOPs) to ensure these are met by all learners at the end of the programmes. This policy is set at an institutional level.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider is committed to fairness and anti-discriminatory practice. They have an equality of opportunity policy. This policy is set at an institutional level.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

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 Register¹ –**
 - The education provider's academic regulations give information about the awards which they may offer, and the processes and criteria for obtaining an award. The education provider's Validation and Approvals Committee approves the introduction of all programmes of study and provision of a particular qualification on behalf of the Academic Board. This Committee oversees and regulates the qualification portfolio of the education provider.
 - The education provider delivers education across a range of professions. An external examiner is appointed to provide an external overview of academic and professional standards.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Sustainability of provision –**
 - The education provider makes investments in staffing and resources to support new programmes. New programmes are designed to meet the needs of the regional healthcare workforce.
 - The proposed programmes are being designed to meet the needs of emergency care and urgent, primary, and secondary paramedic services. This is reflected in the investment the education provider continues to make to support healthcare simulated facilities, such as the development of a new health hub and simulance (an ambulance set-up), in addition to established spaces.
 - The education provider's strategic plan sets out an outline for their future direction. It establishes a number of objectives, and how they will achieve them. For example, to 'maintain and develop a strong programme of investment in our staff, their development and progression'.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective programme delivery –**
 - The education provider's Learning and Teaching Strategy 2021-24 ensures effective programme delivery. The strategy informs the strategic planning process, curriculum plans and programme plans.
 - The programmes will take a blended approach to academic study. This will be enhanced with simulation and immersive learning.
 - Interprofessional education will be a key component of the academic and practical elements of the course. Practice-based learning will be

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

embedded throughout the programmes. The education provider has the support from the practice-based learning lead for Birmingham and Solihull (BSOL), as well as other partners.

- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
 - The programme management document is at school level and details how programmes are operationalised with key staff and functions.
 - The annual planning cycle is conducted at institutional level. Each year, Heads of Department submit their annual planning documentation to executive management team. This document details staff and other resource requests for the forthcoming academic year. This provides the opportunity to highlight predicted learner numbers against existing resources and provide requests for any further staff or resources.
 - The programmes have a designated programme leader who is a registered paramedic. The education provider will also have a designated Placement Coordinator for practice-based learning. They will recruit additional staff for the programmes with the relevant subject specialism required. The programme team includes a head of interprofessional learning, simulation and immersive technology.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
 - The education provider is well-established within the BSOL practice-based learning network. They also have strong partnerships with several private healthcare providers. The education provider works with practice education partners to establish practice-based learning provision, structure, and timings.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider has a programme quality review, enhancement, and monitoring process at institutional level. Senior lecturers lead this process collaboratively with the head / deputy head of department.

There is input from relevant deputy deans, module leaders and teaching teams, personal tutors, professional services, and practice-based learning providers. The learner voice is also a part of this process.

- At mid-module review, programmes seek learner feedback. Programmes act on any academic issues within the module to ensure they respond to issues of concern as they arise.
- The education provider has institutional codes of practice to ensure academic rigour and quality in assessment and feedback:
 - Code of Practice on Programme and Module Assessment and Feedback; and
 - Code of Practice on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct.
- Programmes have an external examiner who provides advice and comments on academic standards and learner achievement. They oversee the assessment process at module and programme level.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - The education provider has annual programme review days with practice education partners, learners, and other key stakeholders.
 - The education provider works with the BSOL Placement Capacity and Forecasting Allied Health Professions group, as well as the NHS England Clinical Placement Stakeholder Group Midlands to ensure there is sufficient and appropriate practice-based learning for learners.
 - The executive dean of the School of Health, Sport and Food holds the role of vice chair of Birmingham and Solihull quality group. This group monitors the quality of practice-based learning across the Birmingham and Solihull region. The group includes all education providers and hospital and community trusts providing practice-based learning in the region.
 - The education provider has practice education governance processes which cover all aspects of practice-based learning quality. The nursing and allied health programme quality assurance processes document covers practice-based learning audit, Care Quality Commission monitoring and reporting, evaluations, raising and escalating concerns, and incident reporting. It also covers all aspects of pre-practice-based learning requirements such as occupational health and DBS clearance, monitoring of accidents and incidents, complaints, and reasonable adjustments.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

- **Learner involvement –**
 - The subject board is the main formal board for staff and learner liaison for individual programmes. Any matters relevant to the academic management or the running of the programmes may be brought forward to the subject board. On the subject board there is at least one learner who represents each year of the programme. The board of studies considers matters of common or particular importance brought forward from the subject boards.
 - Learner representatives are included as part of the annual quality monitoring and enhancement process for their academic programme. Learners are also a key part of the consultation process on new programme development.
 - Learners have regular opportunities to have an informal, online or face to face, discussion with the executive dean of the school, as well as with other key staff based on learner feedback on issues of interest.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - The education provider has an active Service User Collaborative Group (SUCG) who meet four times per year. This group supports curriculum development, learner recruitment process, and assessment. Service users provide specialist input into specific elements of the curriculum. They participate in approval events to provide their perspective on the effectiveness of working collaboratively with the education provider.
 - The composition of SUCG reflects the education provider's consideration of equality, diversity, and inclusion, with members of different ages, genders, ethnicities, and backgrounds.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**
 - The education provider's Centre for Academic Skills and English offers tailored support to learners. A range of support and resources are available to learners to support their learning, and these are delivered by Academic Development Tutors or Academic Librarians.
 - The education provider has a free and confidential health and wellbeing service which is open to all learners and staff. The service

promotes and encourages healthy lifestyles and positive mental health. The team is available to help learners manage any difficulties or concerns they may have.

- In addition, learners have access to the Student Assistance Programme who provide mental health support. This is a free and confidential service, designed to help learners deal with personal or academic problems which could be affecting their home life, health, or general wellbeing.
- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - The education provider's policy on Assuring Student Fitness to Practise will apply to the new programmes.
 - The Code of Practice on Discipline applies to all learners and works in conjunction with General Student Regulations, Code of Practice on Plagiarism, and Academic Misconduct, Assuring Students Fitness to Practice and the Student Charter.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - The education provider's interprofessional learning (IPL) document has guidance for the embedding of IPL. This ensures learners learn from, and with, other health care professionals and wider health and social care professionals.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education provider's access and participation plan sets out how they will improve the equality of opportunity for under-represented groups to access, succeed and progress in higher education.
 - The education provider employs a Director of Inclusive Curriculum. They are developing a curriculum framework which builds upon racial equality training of staff. The framework will be used to design and deliver new programmes, as well as addressing issues such as anti-racist curriculum.
 - The education provider's institutional strategy builds on their reputation for supporting a diverse learner body.
 - The education provider has a learning and teaching strategy. It has three pillars, one of which is providing accessible and inclusive teaching and learning.

- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - The Moderation Code of Practice sets out the parameters and minimum requirements regarding internal moderation. It is an institutional code.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - The education provider's Code of Practice on Programme and Module Assessment and Feedback applies to all programmes. Academic regulations: Part 2 Assessment, Progression and Award sets out the regulations for:
 - assessing learners;
 - progression from one stage of a programme to the next;
 - granting and calculation of awards; and
 - the conduct of degree congregations.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Appeals –**
 - The education provider's Assessment Appeals Procedure is an institution-level policy which sets out the assessment appeals procedure available to all learners.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

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.

Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:

- The education provider has recruited a paramedic as programme lead who is leading on the development of the programmes, and two Lecturers. The education provider will have access to specialist guest speakers from the paramedic profession to support the delivery of the programmes. They can appoint additional permanent staff as learner numbers grow.
- The education provider has a range of facilities to support training, including a purpose-built Health Skills and Simulation Suite, and a new health hub which incorporates a simbulance. Learners will be able to practise and develop clinical and academic skills in clinical spaces, using up to date equipment and manikins. The education provider has invested in virtual reality (VR) technology to ensure they have the most up to date equipment.
- The education provider has commitment at Executive level to ensure the recruitment of appropriately trained staff is in place as required.
- The physical resources are already in place and any additional staffing required will be in place by the start of the programmes.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

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) Paramedic Science	Full time	Paramedic	20 learners per cohort, one cohort per year	30 September 2024
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	Work based learning	Paramedic	20 learners per cohort, one cohort per year	30 September 2024

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.

Data / intelligence considered

We also considered intelligence from others (eg prof bodies, sector bodies that provided support) as follows:

- NHS England Midlands - We received information considering current pressures regarding practice-based learning for physiotherapy in the Midlands. The information was reviewed but we considered it would not impact on this assessment.

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.

We have reported on how the provider meets standards, including the areas below, through the [Findings section](#).

Quality theme 1 – ongoing collaboration between the education provider and practice-based learning providers

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the education provider outlined the development of the programmes through collaboration with practice-based learning providers. However, they did not receive information about the arrangements which reflected an ongoing relationship. The visitors only received information about the work which happened around a specific time or issue, in this case, the development of the programmes. They were therefore unsure how the education provider will collaborate with practice-based learning providers to ensure there will be regular and effective collaboration moving forward. They sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by requesting an email response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined the proposed programmes will reflect and follow the same approach as other approved programmes regarding collaboration between the education provider and practice

education providers. There will be regular meetings between the education provider and various groups. For example, the education provider's Director of Workforce Development and Apprenticeship meets regularly with practice partners.

The visitors also recognised the education provider is developing an institution-level Practice Education Group meeting. This meeting will involve the education provider engaging with practice partners throughout the Midlands about the programmes and practice-based learning.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated the meetings between the education provider and practice-based learning providers were ongoing and effective collaboration. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 2 – how learning outcomes are assessed

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the education provider had provided documentation such as a SOPs mapping document and module descriptors to evidence this standard. They recognised the SOPs mapping had details of modules and learning outcomes, and the module descriptors had details of the learning outcomes and assessments. However, the visitors were unsure how each learning outcome is assessed. For example, for the module 'Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology for the Paramedic' on the apprenticeship programme, learning outcome 1 was 'Identify the key systems of the human body'. The visitors were not able to identify how this learning outcome was assessed. The visitors were therefore unclear how the education provider ensured learners who complete the programmes have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practice their profession safely and effectively. They sought more information about this.

Quality activities agreed to explore theme further: We decided to explore this by requesting an email / documentary response from the education provider. We thought this was the most effective way to explore the theme as we decided it was a query to which we needed to clarify our understanding.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider updated the module specifications to ensure the visitors were able to identify which assessment is assessing the specific learning outcomes. For example, for the example above, learning outcome 1 was assessed by a 90 minute online exam of both multiple-choice and short answer questions.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated the education provider ensured learners who complete the programmes have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practice their profession safely and effectively. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

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** –
 - Applicants who apply for the direct entry programme need 112 - 120 UCAS points, plus GCSEs in Mathematics and English at grade C or above. Applications from candidates with relevant experience are considered on an individual basis.
 - Apprenticeship learners are recruited as part of a collaboration between the education provider and employer. Potential learners are selected by the employer and interviewed in collaboration with the education provider using a values-based approach.
 - All applicants undertake occupational health screening to determine their suitability to undertake the programmes. Applicants need to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service clearance.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership –**
 - The proposed programmes have been developed with practice education partners and wider stakeholders including service users and carers. The education provider has engaged with WMAS to identify the needs of the paramedic workforce across the region. The education provider has partnerships with, and collaborated with, the independent sector, such as Elite emergency medical services (EMS). As discussed in [quality theme 1](#), there will be regular meetings between the education provider and various groups. The programme leader will liaise with all practice-based learning partners on a quarterly basis.
 - Each of these partners has committed to offering the education provider practice-based learning opportunities for both the full-time and apprenticeship programmes.
 - The Programme Management document details the staff members involved in management and delivery of the programmes. The education provider has appointed a Programme Leader and a further two Lecturers. The programmes will draw upon the paramedic professional expertise and knowledge of the programme staff. They will also use staff within the education provider who have experience of other related areas, such as healthcare, apprenticeships, nursing, midwifery, and physiotherapy. There is specific support for the apprenticeship programme, from Senior Lecturer for Apprenticeship Quality and Compliance, and the Support Administrator for Compliance.
 - Learners have access to a range of resources. For example, simulation facilities including a 'simulance'. They are sourcing an ambulance which learners will be able to use within practical sessions. The education provider's Higher Education Student Handbook details everything learners need. There are a range of support teams available for learners who can give them advice, skills, and practical tools.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - The learning outcomes for the new curriculum have been mapped to the Standards of Proficiency for paramedics outlined by the HCPC.
 - The curriculum learning outcomes have been developed to meet the revised standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs) and professional requirements of the HCPC. The module specifications show how the SCPEs are explicitly taught. The practice assessment documents are also aligned to the SCPEs to ensure learners are taught these in practice.
 - The programmes aims and learning outcomes have been developed in line with the College of Paramedics' Paramedic Curriculum Guidance. The programmes are also aligned to the University Learning and Teaching Strategy.

- The curriculum was developed in consultation with a range of key stakeholders including service users, carers, practice educators and recently qualified paramedics to ensure it is relevant, fit for purpose and appropriate for the paramedic of the future. The education provider's Programme Quality Enhancement and Monitoring Process (PQEM) ensures programmes remain current and evidence based.
 - The programmes' structure and curriculum design ensure theory and practice are integrated throughout the programmes. Learners are prepared for practice during academic teaching to ensure patient centred care.
 - The programmes offer a range of assessments and teaching styles to support learners to achieve the learning outcomes. For example, there are simulated learning and multiprofessional learning opportunities within modules across the programmes.
 - Reflection skills are embedded within module learning outcomes, practice-based learning outcomes and in the programme learning outcomes. The College of Paramedics' spiral curriculum builds on knowledge and skills throughout the programmes to develop critical thinking and autonomous decision-making.
 - Research and evidence-based practice skills are embedded throughout the programmes. This includes an evidence-based practice and research module, Research for Health and Care Professionals.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - Practice-based learning is integral to the programmes. Practice-based learning hours are mapped to the standards of proficiency for paramedics.
 - The design of practice-based learning allows learners to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme and the SOPs. Learners receive a wide range of practice-based learning experiences. They have to complete a maximum of 1800 hours in practice-based learning across both programmes. Learners on the direct entry programme complete two blocks of practice-based learning in each year. Those on the apprenticeship programme complete 20% in academic study, 20% in external practice-based learning, and 60% in work-based learning.
 - The programme team will ensure there is an adequate number of appropriately qualified staff involved within practice-based learning. The education provider has created their own practice educator training for those who are either new to the role or experienced. The programme leader keeps a record of those practice educators who have completed the training. The education provider offers practice educators a bespoke package of continuous professional development (CPD) based on their needs. Their programme Introduction to Teaching and Learning in HE is available to practice educators, to gain an understanding of teaching and supporting learning. Practice

educators from West Midlands Ambulance Service Foundation NHS Foundation Trust (WMAS) will have also completed either an Associate Mentor or Named Mentor course.

- The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - Assessments are designed to be relevant to assess the skills and knowledge to meet the standards of proficiency and requirements for the profession of paramedic science. There are a range of assessment types. This aims to be inclusive to meet the needs of a diverse range of learners. The assessment strategy is underpinned by the education provider's Learning and Teaching Strategy and Inclusive Assessment, and Inclusive Assessment Guidance.
 - The module specifications show how professional behaviour including the SCPEs are assessed. The practice assessment documents are also aligned to the SCPEs to ensure learners are assessed in practice.
 - There are a range of assessments as part of the programmes. The Programme Specification and Module Descriptors outline the range of assessments both formative and summative as well as the Programme Assessment Mapping Strategy by Module. For example, the module 'Paramedic as the Reflective Practitioner' has an assessment of a 2000-word reflection and action plan. As discussed in [quality theme 2](#), module specifications demonstrate the way learning outcomes are assessed is appropriate to and effective at measuring the learning outcomes.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area 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.

Recommendations

We include recommendations when standards are met at or just above threshold level, and where there is a risk to that standard being met in the future. They do not need to be met before programmes can be approved, but they should be considered by education providers when developing their programmes.

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

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 programmes 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 programmes are approved.

Reason for this decision: The 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	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
University College Birmingham	CAS-01437-J2T3D9	John Donaghy and Matthew Catterall	<p>Through this assessment, we have noted:</p> <p>The programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.</p>	<p>Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:</p> <p>The education provider has recruited a paramedic as programme lead who is leading on the development of the programmes, and two Lecturers. The education provider will have access to specialist guest speakers from the paramedic profession to support the delivery of the programmes. They can appoint additional permanent staff as learner numbers grow.</p> <p>The education provider has a range of facilities to support training, including a purpose-built Health Skills and Simulation Suite, and a new health hub which incorporates</p>

				<p>a simbulance. Learners will be able to practise and develop clinical and academic skills in clinical spaces, using up to date equipment and manikins. The education provider has invested in virtual reality (VR) technology to ensure they have the most up to date equipment.</p> <p>The education provider has commitment at Executive level to ensure the recruitment of appropriately trained staff is in place as required.</p> <p>The physical resources are already in place and any additional staffing required will be in place by the start of the programmes.</p>
Programmes				
Programme name			Mode of study	Nature of provision
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science			Full time	Taught (HEI)
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science			Work based learning	Apprenticeship

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MSc Dietetics (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/02/2024
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2020
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy (Apprenticeship)	WBL (Work based learning)	Physiotherapist			01/09/2020