Performance review process report

Institute for Arts in Therapy and Education, Review Period 2021-2023

Executive summary

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

We have:
- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission against quality themes and found that we did not need to undertake further exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Recommended when the institution should next be reviewed.

Through this assessment, we have noted:
The following areas should be referred to another HCPC process for assessment:
- o The ongoing development and implementation of their Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) plan. This is a process still in progress, we have therefore referred this to their next performance review.
- The education provider should next engage with monitoring in 2 years, the 2025-26 academic year, because:
  - o This is because their ongoing EDI project will have come to a close and has been introducing (2024-25). This will have then been in place one year and we shall be able to gain an insight into its progress and request reflections from the institution.
  - o We also do not have established data points in place for the education provider that allow for longer than 2-year ongoing monitoring periods. We are open to working with the education provider over the review period to embed new data practices that allow for longer than 2-year periods.
  - o

Previous consideration	The education provider was scheduled to complete their performance review in this academic year (2023-24). This concludes the two-year ongoing monitoring period since their last review in 2021-22.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: • when the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be • whether issues identified for referral through this review should be reviewed, and if so how

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

- Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2025-26 academic year.
- Subject to the Panel's decision, we will refer one area to their next review as per section 5.

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:

Rosie Axon	Lead visitor, Arts therapist
Rachel Bell	Lead visitor, Arts therapist
Ann Johnson	Service User Expert Advisor
Alistair Ward-Boughton-Leigh	Education Quality Officer
Jonathan Isserow	Advisory visitor, Arts therapist

We encourage reflections through portfolios to be made at the institution level wherever possible. The performance review process does not always require profession level scrutiny which requires all professionals to be represented in the assessment panel. Rather, the process considers how the education provider has performed at institution level, linked to the themes defined in section 1. Lead visitors have the option to appoint additional advisory partners where this will benefit the assessment, and / or where they are not able to make judgements based on their own professional knowledge.

In this assessment, we considered we did not require additional professional expertise across all professional areas delivered by the education provider. We considered this because the lead visitors were satisfied, they could assess performance and risk without needing to consider professional areas outside of their own and the support visitors expertise.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 1 HCPC-approved programme across 1 profession. It is a Higher Education Institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2007.

The education provider engaged with the performance review process in the current model of quality assurance in 2021. Due to the lack of comparable data points available for this provider, we recommended the maximum review period of two years.

The education provider engaged with the annual monitoring assessment process in the legacy model of quality assurance in 2019.

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	Arts therapist	☐Undergraduate	☒Postgraduate	2007

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[1].

Data Point	Bench-mark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	75	60	2024	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 leaners was assessed and accepted through these processes. The value figure was presented by the education provider through this submission. The education provider is recruiting learners below the benchmark, meaning we should explore the potential impact on the sustainability of the provision. We explored this furtherby making the visitors aware and asking the education provider to reflect on this. This is reflected In section 4 of this report.
Learner non continuation	3%	N/A	2020-21	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment.

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

Outcomes for those who complete programmes	93%	N/A	2020-21	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment.
Learner satisfaction	N/A	N/A	2023	There is no data available for this data point. We asked the education provider to consider if they wanted to establish ongoing data reporting for this and other data points through this performance review assessment.

Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided, and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their portfolio. Based on our understanding, we determined that we did not need to set formal quality activities. We instead explored all areas and have included these details in section 4 of this report.

Section 4: Findings

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

Overall findings on performance

<u>Quality theme: Institution self-reflection</u>

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Resourcing, including financial stability** –
    - The education provider has discussed how they are experiencing a decrease in learner numbers across their institution. The exception to this is for their MA Integrative Arts Psychotherapy program, which has maintained stable recruitment. They reflect that it is too early to measure the impact of recent implementations. The state that the programme continues to be delivered to a high standard, and the current actions will be maintained. They reflected that with rising building, energy, and resource costs, this results in less fee income to maintain current provisions and develop new ones. To address this, they plan to implement robust financial and course planning processes and review its marketing strategies.
    - In 2023-2024, new financial and course planning processes were implemented, and marketing strategies were reviewed and put into action, with regular monitoring of recruitment figures. These measures serve as an early warning system, allowing them to swiftly address any issues. Moving forward, the education provider will continue to implement these processes.
    - Through clarification, the education provider submitted further context regarding their decrease in learner numbers. This includes how learners' numbers were down previously due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They reflected that learner numbers remain below their peak (2020-21) and that this new dip may be related to the ongoing cost of living crisis.
    - They discussed how they have put in place a system for reviewing programmes with consistently low recruitment figures. This is led by the Directors, the Finance Manager, and the Head of School. Recruitment figures are discussed with Programme Directors, and targets are put in place. They explained that programmes that are consistently recruiting below the expected targets are either suspended pending further review, or mitigation put in place. Other strategies for improving recruitment have been put in place, for example, a weekend route for a non-HCPC programme that previously was a two-year part-time programme. This change has had a significantly beneficial effect on recruitment to this route for that programme.
    - The visitors welcomed this expansion in information and found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Partnerships with other organisations** –
    - The education provider has reflected that there are ongoing issues with learner records and data sharing between themselves and the University of East London (UEL). This is due to manual data exchange via spreadsheets and different learner record systems. This has led to inaccuracies and a backlog of learner award data. To address this, regular data checks have been implemented, and efforts will be made to clear all backlogs by the end of the academic year. Additionally, the

education provider has requested access to the UEL learner record system (SITS) to ensure efficient data sharing.

- o Key contacts have been established at both the education provider and UEL, with regular meetings set up with the link tutor and a medium-term technical project by UEL to access SIT. This has led to greater clarity on policy and procedures, a stronger relationship with the link tutor, and a better understanding of organizational structures. Moving forward, the focus will be on maintaining and developing relationships with UEL and improving accurate data sharing, particularly access to 'E-Vision', the web front end of SITS.
- o The education provider reflects that in May 2023, a Collaborative Partnership Review with UEL led to the establishment of an Advisory Board comprising members from placement organizations and potential employers like the NHS, schools, and charities. The Advisory Board's role is to advise IATE on curriculum and employability issues and to strengthen relationships between the Institute and potential placement and employment providers. The first meeting of the Board was scheduled for May 2024.
- o Through clarification the education provider submitted further information on their relationship with their validating institution UEL. This includes how they continue to work closely with UEL on issues related to data accuracy and learner records. Additionally, there has been a restructuring at UEL, and the lines of communication are now clearer.
- o The visitors noted their reflections in this area and are satisfied with their performance.

- **Academic quality** –
  - o The education provider has reflected that the main challenge for them during the Covid pandemic was transitioning back to in-person learning while accommodating remote work as per government guidelines, without compromising academic quality. Changes in timetabling also posed difficulties. As a practice-based course, there was a risk that online delivery could affect academic quality and student engagement. Moving forward, the education provider aims to develop delivery methods that maintain high levels of learner satisfaction and academic quality assessment.
  - o The education provider has discussed several developments developed in the review period that assure academic quality. This includes.
    - integrative approaches to using the seven art forms in therapy,
    - adaptation of teaching methods for online delivery,
    - use of Zoom for experiential learning,
    - and the inclusion of additional teaching / theory to address pandemic-related grief and trauma.
  - o These ensured that the programme was delivered on time and helped learners adapt to a new way of learning.
  - o They discussed that feedback from last year's teaching highlighted the high regard for the integrative theoretical approach and responsiveness to learner feedback. The training's strengths included ample opportunities for questions, experiential learning, and updated

resources on Moodle, such as assessment preparation videos and online library access. The feedback showed that learners appreciated the return to in-person training, multi-professional learning, and service user involvement, which emphasized collaboration and co-creation. It also showed that there was no significant loss of academic quality, and ongoing monitoring of feedback will help identify areas for improvement.

- o Through clarification the education provider detailed how learner feedback is collected and how this is used to develop and ensure academic quality. This includes the recent 'you said, we did' exercise that is conducted each year and the learner committee that are in place for the programme.
- o The education provider also discussed how they ensure their educators / staff on the programme are trained / supported to keep their knowledge up to date. This includes initially recruiting experienced and qualified staff and providing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes to refresh / update their knowledge.

- **Placement quality** –
  - o The education provider has stated that placement evaluations have highlighted both strengths and challenges in learners' experiences. Several actions have been implemented over recent years to address these issues. These include;
    - encouraging placements to provide a range of art materials,
    - arranging placements for pairs of learners to support each other,
    - and emphasizing the importance of evaluation forms for feedback.
  - o Additionally, all placement organizations now share their assessment processes with students during induction.
  - o To ensure consistency in training, the education provider has introduced a series of online courses have been made available to all students. These courses cover a wide range of topics, examples of these include;
    - child protection,
    - safeguarding adults,
    - health and safety,
    - equality and diversity,
    - first aid,
    - risk assessment,
    - teamwork, motivation,
    - leadership,
    - bullying and harassment,
    - GDPR,
    - trafficking and modern slavery,
    - the Prevent Duty,
    - fire safety, and more.
  - o Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs) have been embedded into the program for Year 1 and 2 students. These groups meet twice a term with a facilitator to connect course teachings with placement experiences. RPGs provide a platform for discussing common issues and dilemmas in therapeutic journeys, addressing concerns, and

fostering deeper relationships with academic advisors. Additionally, a video on supervision using the Seven-Eyed Model has been developed to support learning and self-supervision.

- o The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area. They noted how learners' feedback is used to ensure placement efficiently. Additionally, how the programme supports parity across placement settings with supporting induction training.

- **Interprofessional education** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how they are a small training provider specialising in high-quality, innovative counselling and psychotherapy courses. While they don't offer other professional training programmes and thus lack interprofessional learning opportunities, they ensure that all learners access interprofessional learning through practice placements.
  - o They reflect that the programme focuses on preparing learners for roles in multi-disciplinary teams through three practice placements in community / voluntary organizations, the NHS, and a setting of their choice. Learners receive input from various experts, including service users, social workers, researchers, and psychiatrists. Additionally, a day of preparation for NHS work is provided, team-taught by NHS Trust partners. These steps ensure graduates have experience in NHS multi-disciplinary teams, understand various professional roles, and can integrate perspectives from both professionals and service users. We will continue to monitor feedback and learning outcomes to ensure these goals are met.
  - o They discussed that despite challenges like the pandemic, NHS changes, cost of living, and competitive recruitment, all second-year learners have secured NHS placements. Additionally, they find that many NHS providers request additional learners after hosting a learner for a year, indicating effective staff liaison and the value placed on learners. This success shows learners are well-prepared for interviews, demonstrate strong clinical skills, and work well in multi-disciplinary teams. Moving forward, we will continue to build and nurture relationships with NHS Trusts across the UK and adapt to sector changes affecting AHP learner placements.
  - o The visitors noted how, despite learners not learning interprofessionally in the programme. They have the opportunity to gain interprofessional education on three of their placements. Different professions are involved in teaching, and the education providers' approach to this is robust. The visitors are satisfied with the education provider's approach to this area.

- **Service users and carers** –
  - o The education provider has stated that service users play a crucial role in their programme. Their involvement includes teaching learners, reviewing course documents, and providing feedback across the programme. To address the challenges of sharing lived experiences, they collaborate with organisations that offer training and support to service users. They also run practice sessions and provide additional resources to manage last-minute delays or cancellations. Follow-up telephone discussions help address any issues that arise. The

education provider also discussed how they do not collect feedback from practice placements as these organisations have their own methods for gathering data.

- o In response to feedback, the education provider has introduced additional teaching sessions on various mental health models, critical thinking about diagnosis, and psychotherapeutic approaches from different cultures. They also support learners in considering intersectionality and power dynamics in therapeutic relationships. Additionally, they explore resources to help learners use inclusive language in their note-keeping and reports on therapeutic work.
- o Through clarification, the education provider detailed how, in choosing service users to invite to contribute to the programme, they consider the clinical areas in which learners practice. Additionally, they have found it particularly helpful to have input where understanding the issues from the service users' perspective may support safe practices, such as psychosis, suicidality, and addiction. They reflect that they usually engage service users who have already chosen to take up a role as a service user representative or advocate. They reflect that all service users they engage with have already gained experience and relevant training before being selected.
- o The education provider also stated that learners engaged in small group discussion and reflection as part of their preparation for placement. This contributed to them considering how they understood / determined what they needed to know about the organisation and the service they were working in. This is important for them to understand how service users and carers inform clinical services.
- o The visitors welcomed this expansion, finding the additional reflections helpful for their assessment. They found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.

- **Equality and diversity** –
  - o The education provider has discussed that monitoring the progress of their BAME Bursary recipients has revealed that the ongoing cost of psychotherapy training is a significant barrier for students from BAME backgrounds. This leads to a higher risk of course non-completion for these learners. To address this, the bursary terms have been revised to provide partial funding throughout the course duration, encouraging learners to persist in their studies.
  - o In response to the last Performance Review which highlighted the lack of a formal mechanism for monitoring equal opportunities compliance. A draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and action plan have been created and are set for formal ratification in May 2024. Informal monitoring continues, leveraging the close learner knowledge of Course Directors and tutors. Additionally, a new EDI advisor is being appointed following the previous advisor's resignation. This formal mechanism will enable swift mitigation of any identified equal opportunities risks.
  - o Through clarification the education provider reiterated that EDI developments remain a work in progress at their institution. The

current EDI plan has been developed in June 2024 and is ready to be implemented at the next academic year (2024-25).

- o The visitors welcomed the expansion but also noted how the EDI plan remains a work in progress. We therefore recommend the education provider continue to work and implement this. We are referring this matter to the next PR. We recommend this is reflected on and assessed as part of their next PR.
- **Horizon scanning** –
  - o In the last performance review, the development of an apprenticeship programme in collaboration with their university partner was identified as a potential initiative. However, due to their size, this idea has not progressed beyond the initial stages and remains under consideration.
  - o Through clarification the education provider detailed how they been approached their validating institution and another institution about potential academic collaborations. They reflect that as well as this there is an ongoing discussion about adding online courses to the current provision.
  - o The visitors found this section to be limited but are satisfied that the education provider is performing satisfactorily in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: The education provider is developing and embedding a new EDI plan. We are referring this matter to the next PR. We recommend this is reflected on and assessed as part of their next PR.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
  - o The education provider reflected on both profession-specific and overarching changes to the SOPS, reviewing these until their implementation in September 2023. They developed a matrix to identify where the programme meets specific standards and where changes are needed. They held team meetings with programme staff and the Senior Management Team (SMT), reviewed all course documentation, and examined all areas of the programme. They discussed that changes were and continue to be implemented.
  - o The education provider discussed that they explored the changes in the SOPS to ensure learners actively implement the standards in their clinical practice. They amended the programme documentation to reflect the new SOPS, providing updated module and course specifications and a new SOP tick list for learners to monitor their implementation. The new SOPs were integrated into the academic year for all three years, with specific focus during the first day of term for years one and two, and during practicum preparation and dissertation writing for year three. They completed a revalidation, updating learning aims and assessment components to meet the new HCPC standards, with revalidation with their validating body due by the end of this academic year.

- They have integrated the theme of meeting new standards across the programme by ensuring learners actively engage with public health and prevention of health deterioration through various components. This includes completing a mental health familiarisation report, three placements, and adhering to NHS occupational health and immunisation requirements. The programme also features a social injustice module where learners explore the impact of social, economic, and environmental factors on health. Additionally, the education provider incorporated insights from experts by experience throughout the training. These measures align with the new standards, and a review will ensure continued compliance.
- The education provider discussed that they have enhanced the programme by centralising service user (SU&C) experiences. They are incorporating SU&C feedback into programme design and delivery, and involving experts by experience in teaching. Service users engage with the education provider to provide feedback, and the education provider annually updates consent forms to address consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and ethics. Moving forward, they will continue to develop the programme with annual reviews involving service users and experts by experience.
- The education provider reflects that the programme encourages learners to develop leadership skills and become autonomous professionals. This is supported by their validating partners educational framework, UKCP guidelines, and HCPC standards. They reflect that throughout the training, learners hone their leadership skills by serving as learner representatives, developing their third-year placements, preparing for reflective practice, and understanding their professional autonomy. They also develop a sense of agency through assessments and learn to apply the IAP framework in their clinical practice. Moving forward, the program will continue consulting with professional and educational bodies to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.
- Through clarification, the education provider detailed how Working collaboratively is intrinsic to the integrative arts psychotherapy model. This model uses Orlans and Gilbert's 6-relationship framework to underpin clinical thinking. It includes partnership work with the service user to develop a working alliance. The representational relationship can only be explored and understood if the service user, their experience, and intersectional identities are at the centre of meaning-making.
- They also clarified how the dissertation in year three requires learners to demonstrate significant proficiency in using this framework. This includes exploring each relationship in the framework and showing how this was explored in therapy. They also shared service user feedback, showing how they have reviewed and adapted work with service users to meet their needs and expectations and how they have worked together with the service user to evaluate therapy.
- The visitors welcomed this expansion, finding the additional reflections helpful for their assessment. They found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.

- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods** –
  - The education provider discussed that learner feedback highlighted the need for more accessible information and creative, visually engaging materials. In response, all documentation on the Moodle platform was updated for easier access, and more clinical skills building days were implemented. Additionally, the institution began addressing the potential uses of AI in academic work. For the 2024-25 academic year, Turnitin plagiarism software will be installed on Moodle to detect AI-generated content, with cases of misuse handled under the 'Student Academic Misconduct policy'.
  - Developments included recorded presentations on Moodle covering assessment preparation, clinical log requirements, and placement preparation, which were particularly beneficial for students with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). The focus on technology development was crucial for maintaining learner satisfaction and course delivery. Moving forward, the institution aims to increase learner feedback to further enhance the course. Successes included the effective delivery of teaching, learning, and assessment, along with positive student feedback.
  - Through clarification the education provider how they offer continuing professional development (CPD) programmes ot staff on the use of new technology. They also discussed how their staff are drawn
  - They also detailed how at the start of each academic year the programme director and team meet to think about the needs of the learner groups to ensure that learning and teaching supports learners and this is continually improved from termly feedback.
  - They also detailed that they are considering the impact of AI and also new way of creatively enhancing technology in their provision. Thet state that this is something being worked on but also needs to be agreed with their all partners including their validation institution, external examiner and the UKCP. This is to ensure that they maintain rigorous assessment methods and work in tandem with their partners / regulators.
  - The visitors welcomed this expansion finding the additional reflections helpful for their assessment. They found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Apprenticeships in England** –
  - In the education provider last performance review, they highlighted that a possible initiative for them is developing an apprenticeship programme. In view of their size, this would have to be done in collaboration with their university partner. The idea remains interesting, but it has not progressed beyond the initial stages. This will be an area the education provider continues to monitor going forward.
  - Through clarification, the education provider detailed how their senior management team has explored the possibility of apprenticeships and that this is an area of ongoing exploration. They further sought connections with NHS trusts such as ELFT as a potential partner for such a programme.

- o The visitors welcomed this expansion and found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education** –
  - o The education provider has reflected that they faced challenges in maintaining academic and clinical standards as mandated by their validating partner, UKCP, and HCPC. Tensions have arisen due to their validating partners regulations concerning the duration of study intermissions, learner status during intermissions, and the maximum registration period. These regulations do not adequately support learners in clinical training, who often need breaks to complete their clinical hours. To address this, the Institute is collaborating with their validating partner to request a suspension of these regulations for clinical practice-based courses.
  - o The education provider states that as of March 2024, the Institute has reviewed the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Process, as highlighted in the last Performance Review feedback. The report on this review has been completed, and its recommendations have been approved for implementation in the 2024-25 academic cycle.
  - o Through clarification, the education provider submitted more insight into different areas discussed by the code. This included their regulations regarding an interruption to a learner's progression. Here, the education provider defers to their validating partner institutions' regulations that allow for a maximum period of interruption of one year. They also discussed how they look at this on a case-by-case basis and that there can be several reasons for interruption, including family and health reasons. They also stated that those who take a one-year break generally have a minimal impact on their studies and also discussed their extenuating circumstances policy.
  - o The visitors welcomed this expansion in information and found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.
- **Office for Students (OfS)** –
  - o The education provider has stated that they are not monitored by the Office for Students. This is due to the education provider having only one approved programme, which is a masters-level programme. This is, therefore, out of the scope of the OFS' monitoring.
  - o The visitors recognise that the education provider is not monitored by the OfS but has other mechanisms in place to assess education quality. The visitors found the education provider's reflections in this area satisfactory.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies** –
  - o The education provider has discussed how they actively collaborate with the British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) and the United

Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). Additionally, they periodically liaise with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) to support learners who complete at least two years of part-time training and 100 supervised placement hours, enabling them to register as counsellors. BAAT, a small professional membership body, focuses on supporting HCPC registrants and does not provide curriculum guidelines or feedback on art therapy trainings. The provider attends BAAT Educators' group meetings quarterly and uses BAAT's published policies and guidance to inform their own.

- o The education provider also engages with the UKCP by attending Humanistic and Integrative College meetings five times a year. The UKCP, is a professional membership body with a voluntary register accredited by the PSA, reviews the provider's work on a five-yearly cycle to ensure compliance with UKCP and college-based policies. This engagement they reflected ensures that the standards of education and training are met, maintaining the quality and integrity of their programs.
- o The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's performance in this area, noting the ongoing collaboration with other art psychotherapy providers and the sharing of best practice.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Profession specific reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Curriculum development** –
  - o The education provider has reflected that in clinical psychotherapy training, it is crucial to keep the curriculum updated with the latest research findings, best-practice guidelines, and changes in health and social policy. This ensures learners are well-prepared for the workplace, capable of working in multi-disciplinary teams, and equipped to support service users effectively. They stated that each year, their curriculum is reviewed against standards and guidelines from bodies like HCPC, BAAT, and UKCP, and feedback from various stakeholders, including service users, learners, and staff, is considered. Publications from art therapy journals and international research are also reviewed to ensure the curriculum remains relevant and comprehensive.
  - o The education provider has discussed that balancing the curriculum content is challenging due to the broad nature of art therapy, which spans multiple sectors and practices. The integrative approach of the training allows flexibility to meet the specific needs of clients, groups, or settings. However, the varying experiences of staff and learners, as well as differing focuses of professional bodies, can impact the curriculum. Feedback from learners, who may have limited exposure to the wider professional landscape, and the compatibility of guidance from different professional bodies, are also taken into account.

- The education provider reflected that past two years have brought significant changes due to the global pandemic, conflicts, climate change, and societal inequalities. The curriculum, they reflect, has been adapted to equip learners to face these challenges, including online therapy training and developing new practice guidelines. The program has also responded to movements like Black Lives Matter and climate change, and implemented new Standards of Proficiency (SOPS). These changes aim to ensure learners are prepared to engage with contemporary issues and continue their studies effectively.
- The visitors recognise the development that has taken place since the education providers last review. They recognise the embedded process to annually review the curriculum and to factor in feedback from service users, learners, practice educators and staff. The visitors found the education provider to be performing well in this area.

- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance** –
  - The education provider has discussed how they align our policies with the guidance from BAAT and UKCP, ensuring the arts in therapy are fully considered. Additionally, they have integrated new teachings into their curriculum to address climate change, intersectionality, new SOPS, and broader equality and diversity issues as highlighted by their professional bodies.
  - The visitors recognise the developments and progress the education provider has made since their previous review. This includes the new teaching being implemented in response to PSRBs. They are satisfied with the education providers performance in this area.

- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level)** –
  - The education provider has discussed how planning placements for their learners is challenging due to their varied geographic locations across the UK, despite consistent learner numbers. This, they reflect, often necessitates developing new placements that may not be used again for several years. Moving forward, they have discussed the need to plan and develop new placements that accommodate the changing requirements of both learners and placement providers.
  - The education provider has discussed how their placement coordinator has developed methods to identify new placement opportunities and build strong relationships with existing providers. This allows them to respond to varying recruitment processes and provide updates on course changes. Active participation in the National NHS & HEI Arts Therapies Leads Strategic Forum and collaboration with NHS and other HEIs help develop new working methods, share best practices, and support placement expansion. Additionally, the education provider hosts two annual placement managers'/clinical supervisors' days to help partners understand the programme and assessments. As a result, they have a solid and successful placement programme. Moving forward, increased weekly time for placement coordination will enable sourcing and approving new placements and deepening relationships with existing providers.
  - The education provider reflects that current learners are in placements appropriate for their modules, leading to increased satisfaction among

both students and placement providers. Moving forward, the goal is to continue building upon this success.

- o Through clarification, the education provider detailed how they collect feedback from all their placement providers within the academic year. They explained that their placement coordinator collates this feedback and provides a report to the programme team. Actions are then addressed and discussed for the programme provision and placement provision.
- o The visitors found this expansion detailing how feedback is collected and acted on. The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Quality theme: Stakeholder feedback and actions

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Learners** –
    - o During the two-year review period, students raised various issues in their feedback forms, though overall satisfaction remained high. Challenges, they reflected, included the ongoing impact of Covid-19 at the start of the term, with some frustration over adjustments that changed in line with government guidance. While many learners valued the practical, creative, and responsive teaching style, some preferred a tighter structure. Issues were also noted with workshops using the floor, making note-taking difficult, and mixed feedback on lectures. Additionally, learners with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) questioned the lack of dyslexia support at the validating institution and requested scheduled time for assignment queries. Improvements in learning resources, particularly the library and access to e-journals and e-books, were also highlighted, along with concerns about the cost of training.
    - o The education provider detailed that in response to these challenges, several developments were made. They completed a library development project in June 2022, enhancing learning resources and access to digital content. A policy was created to support the 10% of the learner population with learning support agreements, primarily learners with SpLDs. Designated support was implemented, and Learning Support Agreements (LSAs) were provided to all learners with an SpLD. These measures aimed to address the feedback and improve the overall learner experience.
    - o Successes during this period included the implementation of a library management system and subscription to the EBSCO Psychology and Behavioural Sciences journal database, providing access to over 400 journals. Key texts in eBook format were purchased, and provisions for learners with disabilities were developed, including access to the RNIB Bookshare scheme, low-cost dyslexia assessments, and a list of free

assistive technology. Additionally, a new funding guide was issued to all students, further supporting their academic journey.

- o Through clarification the education provider detailed how learners are supported after disclosing a SPLD. They detailed the process for the learner to meet with the head of school and agree the support mechanisms needed.
- o The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area.

- **Practice placement educators** –
  - o The education provider discussed how they have recently implemented an annual evaluation / feedback form for practice educators to gather general feedback about their experiences with learners on placements. Regular contact is maintained to collect ongoing feedback. They discussed that as they are active participants in the National NHS & HEI Arts Therapies Leads Strategic Forum, they use this network to identify issues in NHS practice placements and understand necessary training adjustments. This includes universal contracts and verification processes for HR data and learner vaccination status.
  - o Practice placement educators highlight issues or concerns about individual learners in biannual placement manager and clinical supervisor reports. The education provider discussed how they conduct placement manager / clinical supervisor days twice a year. This is aimed to help placement educators understand the education providers unique training environment, modules, assessment strategies, and their role in supporting learners to meet proficiency standards. These sessions, they reflect, provide a platform for educators to raise questions or identify issues.
  - o To improve future placements, the education provider plans to ensure all placement managers and clinical supervisors are informed about the Placement Managers' / Clinical Supervisors' Days via direct emails and learner notifications. They will develop an introductory video about the education provider as an institution, their programme, modules, programme requirements, and common placement issues. This is aimed to be shared with placement managers before taking on learners. Additionally, they will consider scheduling a review meeting three months into placements and creating a video featuring learners who have successfully navigated NHS and statutory sector placements, to provide peer support and preparation for future placements.
  - o The visitors were satisfied with the education provider performance in this area noting robust feedback mechanisms in place for placement educators to provide feedback.

- **External examiners** –
  - o The External Examiner's report for 2021-22 identified no issues requiring action, as noted in the Cam report. In 2022-23, they education provider states that a new examiner was appointed, and their feedback now helps inform their processes. The education provider has provided reflections on how they review the external examiners reports and how this feedback is used to develop actions. In

their 2022-23 report they have reflected on the positive feedback they have received from the examiner on their grading and assessment.
- o Through clarification the education provider highlighted how actions and developments have been acted on following the external examiners report.
- o The visitors found the education provider to be performing satisfactorily in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:
- **Learner non continuation:**
  - o The visitors were satisfied with the education providers performance in this area. They noted how on average only one learner per year exits the programme prior to completion.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
  - o The visitors were satisfied with the education providers reflections in this area. Here the education provider also detailed how they support learners to gain sufficient clinical hours. This includes a detailed breakdown of how the clinical hours are broken up and a statutory service placement (in NHS or in His Majesty's Prison And Probation Service HMPPS) in the second year.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
  - o The visitors are satisfised with the education provider performance in this area noting the progress that has been made to improve learner satisfaction since the last review
- **Programme level data:**
  - o The visitors are satisfied with the education providers performance in this area. They found the inclusion of staff-to-learner ratio data to be helpful but in general found the reflections in this area brief.

Proposal for supplying data points to the HCPC: The education provider and the HCPC executive plan to work together across the review period to establish a supply of usable data. The education provider will have the opportunity to upload useable and externally verified data on a yearly basis or to submit data to a suggested third party for scrutiny.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None

Outstanding issues for follow up: None

Section 5: Issues identified for further review

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

Referrals to next scheduled performance review

The development and implementation of a new EDI plan.

Summary of issue: As part of this review, we have asked the education provider to reflect on their approach to EDI and any developments that have taken place during the review period. The education provider has explained that they have a new EDI plan that remains a work in progress and is due for implementation in the academic year 2024-25. We are, therefore, referring this matter to their next PR. We recommend that this be reflected on and assessed as part of the education provider's next PR.

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that:
- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2025-26 academic year
- The issues identified for referral through this review should be carried out in accordance with the details contained in section 5 of this report

Reason for next engagement recommendation
- Internal stakeholder engagement
  - The education provider engages with a range of stakeholders with quality assurance and enhancement in mind. Specific groups engaged by the education provider include learners, service users, practice educators, partner organisations, and external examiners.
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
  - The education provider engaged with one professional bodies. They considered professional body findings in improving their provision
  - The education provider [engaged with [other relevant professional or system regulators. This includes the BAAT, UKCP and periodically with the BACP. They considered the findings of these organisations in improving their provision
  - The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way
- Data supply [use one of the following bullet points]
  - Through this and a previous review, the education provider has not established how they will supply quality and performance data points which are equivalent to those in external supplies available for other organisations. Where data is not regularly supplied, we need to understand risks by engaging with the education provider on a frequent basis (a maximum of once every two years)
- What the data is telling us:
  - From data points considered and reflections through the process, the education provider considers. data in their quality assurance and enhancement processes and acts on data to inform positive change.

- In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a 2-year monitoring period is:
    - To allow for their EDI project to come to a close and be introduced (2024-25). The next review will then coincide with this having been in place one year and we shall be able to gain an insight into its progress and request reflections from the institution.
    - We also do not have established data points in place for the education provider that allow for longer than 2-year ongoing monitoring periods. We are open to working with the education provider over the review period to embed new data practices that allow for longer than 2-year periods.

Education and Training Committee decision

Education and Training Committee considered the assessment panel's recommendations and the findings which support these. The education provider was also provided with the opportunity to submit any observation they had on the conclusions reached.

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:
- The education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2025-26 academic year

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended two-year ongoing monitoring period for the reasons noted in the report.

Appendix 1 – summary report

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

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Review period recommendation	Reason for recommendation	Referrals
Institute for Arts in Therapy and Education	CAS-01405-G9N8J1	Rosie Axon Rachel Bell	2 years	• In summary, the reason for the recommendation of a 2-year monitoring period is: ○ To allow for their EDI project to come to a close and be introduced (2024-25). The next review will then coincide with this having been in place one year and we shall be able to gain an insight into its progress and request reflections from the institution.	**Referrals to next scheduled performance review** The development and implementation of a new EDI plan. **Summary of issue:** As part of this review, we have asked the education provider to reflect on their approach to EDI and any developments that have taken place during the review period. The education provider has explained that they have a new EDI plan that remains a work in progress and is due for implementation in the academic year 2024-25. We are, therefore, referring this matter to their next PR. We recommend that this be reflected on and assessed as

				o We also do not have established data points in place for the education provider that allow for longer than 2-year ongoing monitoring periods. We are open to working with the education provider over the review period to embed new data practices that allow for longer than 2-year periods.	part of the education provider's next PR.

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MA Integrative Arts Psychotherapy	PT (Part time)	Arts therapist	Art therapy		01/10/2013