

Performance review process report

University of South Wales, 2018-2023

Executive summary

This is a report of the process to review the performance of University of South Wales. 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 needed to undertake further exploration of key themes through quality activities.
- Reviewed the institution's portfolio submission to consider which themes needed to be explored through quality activities.
- Undertaken quality activities to arrive at our judgement on performance, including when the institution should next be reviewed.
- Recommended when the institution should next be reviewed.

Through this assessment, we have noted:

- The areas we explored focused on:
 - Quality theme 1 – The education provider outlined their partnerships with other organisations at a local, regional and national level. The visitors noted their reflections did not demonstrate or explain fully their roles in relation to teaching and learning. Through quality activity we noted we were satisfied with the plans in place to develop partnerships specifically in relation to teaching and learning.
 - Quality theme 2 – We noted the education provider had described their interprofessional education and learning strategy through simulation activity and a challenge/problem-based approach. We wanted to understand how different professional groups are involved in the simulation immersive centres and how learners are using this to inform their future practice. Through quality activity we noted an appropriate level of interprofessional learning within the programme for all learners to learn with, to, and from one another.
 - Quality theme 3 – The education provider had reflected on their engagement with Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), and British Psychological Society (BPS), but there was no reflection on any engagement with the
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College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP). We wanted to understand the education provider's engagement with the CODP and how any assessments and feedback from them had impacted provision, and therefore how this may have affected learners. Through quality activity we were reassured that there is an appropriate level of engagement with other professional regulators and professional bodies, particularly regarding College of Operating Department Practitioners.

- The following are areas of best practice:
 - Partnerships with other organisations - The visitors noted evidence of good practice, particularly continuous monitoring and the risk register that has identified potential issues before they happened. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) report is very positive in this area. The Connected University Engagement Plan 2030 provides a good example of integration across different levels.
 - Academic quality – The visitors noted the QAA report indicates appropriate academic standards, and several impressive commendations. The education provider's documentation reflects on a circle of feedback from external examiners, providers, and learners with other mechanisms across the institution providing oversight. The visitors also noted that the education provider's emphasis on addressing the "awarding gap" concerning minority and minoritised groups is to be commended. In particular they noted the thoughtful change of assessment types is important, as is enhanced staff training.
- The provider should next engage with monitoring in five years, in the 2028-29 academic year. This recommendation is because they are performing well across all the key areas. They have reflected well throughout their portfolio, and have strong relationships with external stakeholders. There are strong internal drivers of quality and learner support, and external quality mechanisms are also being used effectively. They have taken steps to make the programme as accessible as possible.

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This is the education provider's first interaction with the performance review process.
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.
Next steps	Subject to the Panel's decision, the provider's next performance review will be in the 2028-2029 academic year.

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Section 1: About this assessment

About us

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), a regulator set up to protect the public. We set standards for education and training, professional knowledge and skills, conduct, performance and ethics; keep a register of

professionals who meet those standards; approve programmes which professionals must complete before they can register with us; and take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

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

Our standards

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

Our regulatory approach

We are flexible, intelligent and data-led in our quality assurance of programme clusters and programmes. Through our processes, we:

- enable bespoke, proportionate and effective regulatory engagement with education providers;
- use data and intelligence to enable effective risk-based decision making; and
- engage at the organisation, profession and programme levels to enhance our ability to assess the impact of risks and issues on HCPC standards.

Providers and programmes are [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:

Jennifer Caldwell	Lead visitor, Occupational therapist
Joanna Finney	Lead visitor, Operating department practitioner
Richard Kwiatkowski	Support visitor, Practitioner psychologist
Prisha Shah	Service User Expert Advisor
Louise Winterburn	Education Quality Officer

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 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.

Section 2: About the education provider

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers nine HCPC approved programmes across five professions and two programmes for the post registration prescribing annotations. The professions currently covered are arts therapist, occupational therapist, operating department practitioner, physiotherapist, and practitioner psychologist. It is a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 2013.

This is the first time the education provider has engaged with the current HCPC quality assurance model.

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2013
	Occupational therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2022
	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2022
	Physiotherapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2022
	Practitioner psychologist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	2018
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing		2014	

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 programmes¹.

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date of data point	Commentary
Numbers of learners	242	198	2023	<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 was presented by the education provider through this submission.</p> <p>The education provider is recruiting learners below the benchmark.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing information related to resourcing of the education provider's provision. We were satisfied their financial and resource planning/ modelling has ensured sustainability of their provision.</p>
Learner non continuation	3%	3%	2020-21	<p>This Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</p> <p>The data point is equal to the benchmark, which suggests</p>

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

				<p>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 been maintained.</p> <p>We did not explore this as the education provider's performance in this area had been maintained and is therefore in line with sector norms.</p>
<p>Graduates – Aggregation of percentage in employment / further study</p>	<p>93%</p>	<p>89%</p>	<p>2020-21</p>	<p>This HESA data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke HESA data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.</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 dropped by 4%</p> <p>We explored this through the assessment and were satisfied with processes in place to ensure employability focussed curriculum through continuous improvement and reflection.</p>
<p>Learner satisfaction</p>	<p>75.5%</p>	<p>90%</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced 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 as the education provider's performance in this area is above the benchmark.</p>
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Section 3: Performance analysis and quality themes

Portfolio submission

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

We reviewed the information provided and worked with the education provider on our understanding of their portfolio. Based on our understanding, we defined and undertook the following quality assurance activities linked to the quality themes referenced below. This allowed us to consider whether the education provider was performing well against our standards.

We sought out clarification on each quality theme via email communication to allow the education provider to elaborate on previous information they had sent or send further evidence documents to answer the queries.

Quality theme 1 – The role of partnerships with other organisations

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined their partnerships at a local, regional, national, and international level. They stated these include, industry, commissioners, health boards, employers, professional bodies, and service users and carers. The visitors noted that, while the education provider had described policies regarding partnerships with other organisations, their reflections did not demonstrate or explain fully their roles and relationships in relation to teaching, research, and entrepreneurial activities, and how their relationships have developed. The visitors agreed to further explore the education provider's plans in more detail to determine how the role of partnerships and collaborative relationships have developed across teaching, research and entrepreneurial activities.

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 and to seek clarification of our understanding on the above query.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined the work taking place in relation to their health portfolio which demonstrates the strategic role of partnerships, and the operational activities that are in place. The education provider also supplied additional information in relation to the strategic context in their University of South Wales (USW) 2030 Strategy, and in the Cwm Taf University (CTM) Health Board Summary document. They stated how partnerships have been prioritised as the central theme of the USW 2030 Strategy, which focusses on making a positive impact on the communities they serve, being a trusted partner, and making a difference within their region. This is achieved via objectives which include, developing a portfolio co-designed with industry and the development of professional identity which is connected to regional, national, and global challenges.

They also referenced how they work in partnership, not only in relation to curriculum development and placements, but also in relation to identifying issues, problems, and challenges that can be fed into the curriculum to increase the connectivity of the learner experience to practice. A key project is the development of collaboration with Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB). USW are currently the only University collaborators. Programme teams are in discussions with the Executive Director of Therapies at CTMUHB about developing an Allied Health Professional (AHP) Mental Health Pathfinder project. This aims to develop mental health services for AHP service-users and to develop the knowledge and skills of the AHP workforce in relation to mental health.

The visitors were satisfied with the plans in place to develop partnerships in relation to teaching and learning, and therefore satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Quality theme 2 – Ensuring effective process are in place to ensure the effective management on of interprofessional education.

Area for further exploration: The education provider described their interprofessional education and learning strategy through simulation activity and a challenge/problem-based approach. The visitors noted that, whilst they had described the simulation centre, and some of the difficulties of combining different professional groups, their reflections could have been more detailed. The education provider did not effectively reflect on their approach to interprofessional education. The visitors wanted to understand how different professional groups are involved in the simulation immersive centres and how learners are using this to inform their future practice in relation to interprofessional learning. It was important for the visitors to understand how learners across different professions learn with and from one another.

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 referred to their 'USW 2030 Strategy' to demonstrate their approach to embedding interprofessional education. They stated that they use scenarios, which are clinically challenging, and work together with the different professional groups involved. Learners are provided with a scenario brief and a learning activity. The activities take place in the simulation centre and the education provider's own dedicated space, the Hydra Minerva Facility. All learners have clear and identified learning outcomes, and a structured debriefing concludes the activity. Where possible, depending on the scenario being used and the learning involved, service users and carers are actively involved in the sessions, through links with the education provider's service user group. Learners are also required to record their interprofessional learning opportunities during their practice placements.

They are required to produce reflective portfolio logs to demonstrate their understanding of the value of working collaboratively with other professions for the benefits of people who use services. Learners are asked to reflect on how this can lead to a more integrated care approach, and how this can enhance understanding of each other's roles. The education provider also stated that further developments are planned to increase the scope of interprofessional education with more professional groups included policing, social work, and psychology learners. The visitors were satisfied there is an appropriate level of interprofessional learning within the programme for all learners to learn with and from one another. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.

Quality theme 3 – Approach to engaging and collaborating with other professional regulators / professional bodies

Area for further exploration: The education provider reflected on how, due to the recent approval and commencement of the HCPC accredited undergraduate programmes in Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Operating Department Practice, feedback from relevant professional bodies remained in its infancy. However, the education provider had reflected on their engagement with Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), and British Psychological Society (BPS), but there was no reflection on any engagement with the College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP). The visitors wanted to understand the education provider's engagement with the CODP and how any assessments and feedback from them had impacted provision, and therefore how this may have affected learners. The visitors specifically wanted to explore reflections around the engagement with CODP and any plans for programme accreditation.

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 and to seek clarification of our understanding on the above query.

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider, in their response, stated that they had had a recent joint approval event with CODP in May 2022 and had received confirmation of endorsement of the programme in June 2022. The education provider stated that the Chair of the Education and Standards Committee for the CODP was part of the panel at the validation and endorsement event. The education provider had provided their endorsement confirmation letter as additional documentation. The education provider also stated that as part of their induction sessions, learners are advised about the role of the CODP and the resources and support available. Learners are advised of the information available to them via the CODP website.

The visitors were satisfied that there is an appropriate level of engagement with other professional regulators and professional bodies, particularly regarding College of Operating Department Practitioners. We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.

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

Quality theme: Institution self-reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Resourcing, including financial stability –**
 - The education provider reflected how the recent restructure of the School triggered a restructure of all the education providers' Faculties, with the positive outcome being the appointment of Associate Deans of Partnerships and Business to increase communication with existing partners and to develop new business opportunities.
 - Their reflections on their financial statement indicates they are in a good financial position because they have made an appreciation payment to staff which indicates confidence for their future. However, they undertake Continuous Monitoring throughout the year enabling any risks to be flagged at an early stage for intervention.
 - There has been an increase in HCPC registered programmes, enabling greater opportunities for partnerships and interprofessional working and learning. The education provider have state of the art facilities which are supported through strong relationships with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).
 - The education provider stated that they are continuously seeking ways to ensure that their resources meet the needs of learners and educational outcomes and that they remain at the forefront of professional practice, reflecting industry standards.

- The visitors were satisfied that the education provider has performed well in this area. This is because their reflection sufficiently showed that their financial and resource planning/ modelling has ensured sustainability of their provision.
- **Partnerships with other organisations –**
 - The education provider reflected on their partnerships at a local, regional, national and international level. Their partnerships include, industry, commissioners, health boards, employers, professional bodies, and service users and carers.
 - The education provider stated that embedding collaboration and working in partnership has been central to curriculum design and delivery to meet the 2030 Strategy. This focuses on engagement and partnerships with other organisations, and this has led to the development of a new 'Connected University Engagement Plan 2030'. The plan focuses on how the education provider can support individuals, organisations, and the community by integrating education, research, and innovation with the needs of their partners, and is therefore a good example of integration across different levels.
 - The visitors noted what seems to be excellent provision of the Practice Placement Team, a dedicated team placing 6,000 learner per year, and which focusses on developing a breadth of partnerships and governance processes around practice learning and monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and strategic development.
 - The visitors noted that, while the education provider had described policies regarding partnerships with other organisations, they would like greater reflection on their roles and relationships in the development of teaching, research, and entrepreneurial activities. This was explored under quality theme 1.
 - The visitors explored the education provider's plans in greater detail on how the role of partnerships and collaborative relationships have developed across teaching. The visitors were satisfied with the plans in place to develop partnerships in relation to teaching and learning, and therefore satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
 - **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider has embedded the 2030 Curriculum Principles in their validation documentation which is an ongoing process to ensure the curriculum is developed in line with the 2030 Strategy.
 - Recognising the different needs of learners has led to diverse support strategies being implemented, such as the development of the Assessment Life Cycle Hub, the Reflection and Observation of Practice Scheme (ROPs), the adaptation of assessment methods and the development of a two-tier system for external examining.
 - As per the Quality Assurance Agency Performance Review report in 2022, robust arrangements are in place for maintaining academic standards, managing academic quality, and for enhancing the learner experience. This is reflected within the report as no recommendations were made and instead five commendations were highlighted.
 - The education providers' documentation reflects a circle of feedback from external examiners, and learners which is addressed at module

and programme level which in turn feeds into continuous monitoring and Faculty and institutional wide action plans.

- The visitors were satisfied the education provider is performing well in this area. This is because their reflection showed they have continued to develop programmes, to strengthen staff development and to drive improvements. The visitors noted the education provider should be commended in this area.
- **Placement quality –**
 - Practice placements are managed by a dedicated Faculty Practice Placement Team who are led by a Programme and Placements Manager for Health. We understand this is underpinned by an All Wales Placement Reference Group which serves to enhance collaborative working between education providers and practice partners to ensure high quality placement provision.
 - All placement environments are assessed and monitored for suitability and learning experiences. The education provider reflected on how they have developed and established processes for raising concerns, with support provided from tutors and academic staff. They have implemented a dedicated email mailbox for Practice Educators and Practice Facilitators where they can communicate directly with the Practice Placement Team and there is an Advice Zone Online which has been developed for learners with concerns.
 - They also reflected on how they addressed the challenges faced by postgraduate learners who needed placements close to home. To balance the breadth and geography of commissioned placements by HEIW, they merged the Postgraduate and Undergraduate Placement Teams under one experienced manager, aiming to drive improvements.
 - They noted how a single manager oversees the consistency of approach and quality assurance for placement provision. This feeds into their strategic quality improvement planning. Additionally, they are exploring additional placement providers to ensure a balanced and broad placement approach while prioritizing an 'All Wales' approach over competition for placements.
 - The visitors were satisfied that the education provider continues to assess and monitor placement quality to drive strategic improvement. Therefore, they considered the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Interprofessional education –**
 - The education provider has reflected that part of the 2021 HEIW tender was the requirement for all undergraduate health-related programmes to embed 20% of interprofessional education (IPE) into the curriculum. This led to the development of a shared 20-credit module at each level, the integration of interprofessional education (IPE) in placement and multiple opportunities to learn from, with, and about other professions. The outcome of this is that IPE is now fully integrated across core theory, simulation, and practice learning, meaning interprofessional learning is now normalised within the learner experience from the outset.

- The education provider reflected on the challenges with differences in cohort sizes between professions. For example, these were large cohorts of nurses compared to smaller numbers of learners on HCPC approved programmes, and the complexities of coordinating timetables to accommodate full-time and part-time programmes. They addressed this by setting up an IPE lecturer group to address timetabling issues, the introduction of specific IPE weeks within the academic calendar, and the development of an Interprofessional Journal Club.
- The visitors requested further information to understand how different professional groups are involved in these immersive centres, and how learners are using this to inform their future practice. We explored this via [quality theme 2](#).
- The visitors explored the education provider's response to understand how different professional groups are involved in the simulation immersive centres and how learners are using this in relation to interprofessional learning. It was important for the visitors to understand how learners across different professions learn with and from one another. The visitors were satisfied the education provider is appropriately embedding interprofessional education across provision. We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Service users and carers –**
 - The education provider reflected on their 20-year history of working in partnership with service users and carers through their established Teaching and Research Advisory Committee (TRAC). They explained how service users and carers remain central to all their learning, teaching, and research activities regarding them as expert by experience. They acknowledge service users and carers' participation is key to a successful health and social care programme.
 - There is active engagement of service users within programmes, including recruitment, teaching and learning, research and in curriculum design. Service user feedback is integrated into Continuous Monitoring and Learner Recognition Awards, as part of learner assessment and module design, which will be audited bi-annually by Programme Leaders.
 - The visitors noted the self-reflection document addressed some of the difficulties and barriers of service user and carer involvement. The education provider explained the issue of payment for service users and carers who receive benefits which may inadvertently disadvantage the individual, and funding for the contribution of service users and carers with current budget constraints for art, music and counselling postgraduate programmes. They have plans to develop a survey to explore barriers to service user involvement at postgraduate level and is seeking new service user and carer organisations to develop partnerships to enable greater service user involvement.
 - The education provider reflected on how they demonstrate involvement and engagement of service users and carers across their programmes and how feedback for service users and carers is communicated and the feedback loop closed across programmes.

- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing in this area.
- **Equality and diversity –**
 - The education provider reflected about their approach to promoting equality and diversity policies and strategies. They have a dedicated Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Team which supports the implementation of actions to embed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. They have a robust governance structure, which includes representation from across the institution, and the development of an Executive Advisory Board.
 - The education provider has recognised that, while currently the diversity of staff does not reflect the diversity of the learner population, their HCPC accredited programmes recruit learners from the local area and reflects the diversity of the local population.
 - They identified differential attainment challenges through the work of a Differential Outcomes Group which led to the development of a Differential Outcomes Action Plan. The Action Plan is used to help identify and monitor good practice which is then shared. This identifies, monitors, and shares good practice.
 - They reflected on the outcome of review of their recruitment approach to recruitment which resulted in the requirement for all recruitment panels have a diversity of panel members. All staff have a clear EDI objective within their annual Development Performance Review. This ensures they are cognisant of the policies and objectives relating to EDI.
 - The visitors were satisfied with how the education provider ensured Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policies are complied with and the policies and procedures in place. Therefore, the visitors considered the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Horizon scanning –**
 - The education provider has reflected on their involvement in key strategic national committees and organisations and considered the impact of future recruitment and retention. The education provider reflected on how they have used their USW 2030 Strategy to drive change and to develop key projects and ambitions for the future.
 - They explained how they have considered the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan for England and reflected on the effect and challenges this may have on higher education, including the diversity of routes to training and the financial pressure on education. The visitors noted that the education provider's reflections show an understanding of the factors influencing higher education at present and in the future.
 - There are new ventures being put into place including development of digital health care, embedding of Welsh language to reflect the local workforce and population, the development of a Digital Health Village (simulation environment), and a focus on health improvement.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's planning for long term challenges and opportunities. They plan to utilise their partnerships to enable them to meet forthcoming changes and expectations driven by policy changes or workforce planning. This is supported by the continued development of digital technologies for

learning and practice, and the development of the intensive Learning Academy in Leading Digital Transformation. Therefore, the visitors considered the education provider had performed well in this area.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:

- Partnerships with other organisations – The visitors noted evidence of good practice, particularly continuous monitoring and the risk register that has identified potential issues before they happened. The QAA report is very positive in this area. The connected University Engagement Plan 2030 provides a good example of integration across different levels.
- Academic quality – The visitors noted the QAA report indicates appropriate academic standards, and several impressive commendations. The education provider's documentation reflects on a circle of feedback from external examiners, providers, and learners with other mechanisms across the institution providing oversight. The visitors also noted that the education provider's emphasis on addressing the "awarding gap" concerning minority and minoritised groups is to be commended. They noted the change of assessment types is important, as is enhanced staff training.

Quality theme: Thematic reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Embedding the revised Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) –**
 - The education provider submitted an outline of how they intended to embed the new SOPs.
 - Active implementation of the standards – The education provider has considered the new standards both within the existing 2022 programmes and new programmes for 2023 starters. A gap analysis was undertaken for the pre 2022 programmes and minor modifications to content progressed via established quality assurance methods. The post 2022 programmes were able to use the draft revised Standards of Proficiency to inform the programmes development and ensure that the programmes were sufficiently future proofed to meet the revised SOPs. Each programme team has checked the new SOPs and expressed confidence in being able to deliver them.
 - Promoting public health and preventing ill-health – Working with the Welsh Government policy, 'A Healthier Wales: our plan for Health and Social Care' the education provider has looked to embed health promotion and illness prevention within programmes. Three new HCPC accredited undergraduate programmes have modules across all levels of study to embed these principles which begin with a module focusing on health prevention and promotion.
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion - HCPC accredited programmes have been developed to recognise the impact of EDI from the outset. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) precedes any validation

documentation outlining how each programme of study has considered how it meets EDI policies, regulations and procedures.

- Further centralising the service user- the education provider noted this is already embedded in their programmes. However, they also considered plans to broaden the range of opportunities to partner with service users and carers and to reduce barriers to participation, as this will lead to increased accessibility for service users wishing to partner with them.
- Digital skills and new technologies – the education provider noted the need for digital literacy which is also a requirement of the 2030 Curriculum Design Principles to equip learners for future employability. The education provider describes how learners are helped to develop digital skills and informatics on their first shared module. During practice learning experiences, learners are actively engaged in digital health-care assessment and treatment, digital record keeping, and care delivery using evolving technology to support service users' health and wellbeing. These form part of placement preparation and are integrated into placement focused modules.
- **Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic –**
 - The education providers' response to the Covid-19 pandemic was commended in the 2022 QAA Quality Enhancement Review. The visitors noted that they had taken forward the positive aspects of learning developed during the pandemic, such as the use of flipped classrooms, digital learning, the use of on-line meetings with partners and simulated practice assessments. They developed a set of Digitally Enabled Active Learning (DEAL) principles, guidelines, and shared practice to ensure that staff were able to deliver and assess online. As a result, these methods have been embedded into everyday practice, an approach which has continued due to positive staff, learner, and external examiner feedback.
 - Through this learning, the education provider has considered in more detail the delivery of programmes which has enabled them to think about the importance of learner support and mental health and wellbeing and apply these learnings taken forward into everyday practice. Learner choice in assessment type is now routinely offered and learners have greater flexibility to work online. The use of mixed online and on-campus experiences has also addressed the cost-of-living difficulties through less travel.
 - There was sufficient reflection provided to determine the education provider has performed well in this area. This is because the education provider has been able to use learning from the impact of the pandemic in order to improve their provision.
- **Use of technology: Changing learning, teaching and assessment methods –**
 - The visitors noted that the education provider has made significant investment in technology. This involves aspects such as a dedicated simulation suite, incorporating the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and varied methods of teaching, learning and assessment. They have set up an AI working group to understand how AI can develop critical thinking within learners and staff are able to use this output in an

information repository. Other specific developments, such as having an Associate Dean for Simulation, use of eye tracking devices to increase learner situational awareness in a virtual hospital environment, and a dedicated simulation team are all examples of positive developments in this area.

- The education provider has recognised that greater use of digital technology requires additional support for less digitally proficient learners. In response, they have developed a short pre-enrolment programme to introduce learners to the platforms they will be using for teaching and learning. Furthermore, they have invested in Virtual Reality (VR) development to enable learners to enter immersive virtual environments to develop knowledge and decision-making skills. They have embedded technology as central to their programmes, and plan to share and learn best practice through their involvement in different groups and partnerships and integrate these into learning, teaching, and assessment practices.
- There was sufficient reflection provided to determine the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Apprenticeships in England –**

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Areas of good and best practice identified through this review:

- Learning and developments from the COVID-19 pandemic – The visitors noted this was an area that has been commended by the QAA quality enhancement review. The visitors highlighted that the education provider had learned a great deal about the delivery of programmes and about the importance of supporting learners and mental health and wellbeing. They have applied this learning and have taken forward into everyday practice. This was an area the visitors highlighted as best practice.

Quality theme: Sector body assessment reflection

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Assessments against the UK Quality Code for Higher Education –**
 - The education provider noted they had undergone a QAA Cymru Quality Enhancement Review in July 2022. The review made judgements against the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for internal quality assurance, and the relevant baseline regulatory requirement of the Quality Assessment Framework in Wales. The report found that the education provider meets the ESG and QA Framework for Wales.
 - We noted the education provider had received several commendations and one affirmation from the review. There were no recommendations.
 - The education provider has processes in place to ensure that their provision continues to meet the requirements of the ESG and the QA Framework. They demonstrate this through their focus on strategic aims to create a cohesive approach to the enhancement of learning, teaching

and assessment. Their extensive engagement with external guidance, and networks, has positively informed the management of academic standards and enhancement of the learner experience.

- The affirmation identified steps being taken to ensure external examiner reports clearly distinguish between the education provider's on-campus provision and that delivered at each partner college. As a result, the education provider has taken action to separate external examiner comments to identify specific cohorts of learners, and so that programme teams can follow up appropriately.
- The visitors considered there was sufficient reflection provided to determine the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Performance of newly commissioned Allied Health Professional (AHP) provision in Wales –**
 - The education provider reflected on the implementation and integration of provision commissioned by Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) which commenced September 2022. The draft performance report by HEIW showed achievement against all Key Performance Indicators, and indicated a high degree of learner satisfaction, enjoyment of placement and supportive staff.
 - We noted 100% learner satisfaction in relation to Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, however only 84% in ODP although the feedback in learning and teaching was 100%. Looking into this, the education provider found that low scores were around 'learning resources' and 'campus resources' despite the major investment aimed largely at ODP education, including fully equipped operating spaces and ultrasound imaging.
 - The education provider, although feeling disappointed by low scores in this area, have reflected that greater promotion of these facilities by staff and programme teams will ensure learners are fully aware of the resources and therefore facilitated to engage more fully. Other resources, such as the library resources, are also being expanded because of learner feedback.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the developments and considered this indicated the education provider is performing well in this area.
- **Other professional regulators / professional bodies –**
 - The education provider's reflection showed that all programmes engaged with relevant professional bodies. We noted the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) programmes were approved as continuing to meet all NMC standards during the review period, and without any conditions, which is a significant achievement.
 - Recently accredited HCPC undergraduate programmes had received commendations during the accreditation process, particularly around stakeholder involvement and assessments. Staff are supported by and working with their respective professional bodies and there are close working relationships with the different professional bodies and organisations.
 - The visitors noted there was engagement with Royal College of Occupational Therapists, British Association for Music Therapy, and the British Psychological Society, however there was no reflection on engagement with the College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) or whether there were future plans for ODP programme

accreditation and the impact this may have on provision and learners. We explored this via quality theme 3.

- Following this, the visitors are assured that there is an appropriate level of engagement with other professional regulators and professional bodies, particularly regarding College of Operating Department Practitioners. We were satisfied with how the education provider is performing in this area.

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 –**
 - A detailed reflection was submitted showing different developments around the curriculum for each programme, especially as it related to new and revised HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs). The education provider explained how they considered the planned changes to the SOPs when they developed their new Physiotherapy programme which was validated in 2022. This forward planning to integrate revised SOPs has been extended to other modules and other programmes including Occupational Therapy (OT) and Operating Department Practice (ODP).
 - The visitors noted that the education provider had carefully considered the revised SOPs when reviewing their programmes. The visitors also noted that detailed and wide-ranging curriculum development is ongoing, the breath of which should be commended. They also noted a commendable emphasis on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion which is evident within the programmes.
 - Other longer established programmes, such as Arts Psychotherapy, have made some major changes to reflect the need to update these programmes in line with the new SOPs. The education provider has critically reviewed and updated programme documentation, terminology, and assessment matrix to reflect criteria linked to new and revised SOPs.
 - The visitors were satisfied with the education provider's reflection in this area, particularly in relation to HCPC SOPs. They have concluded the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Development to reflect changes in professional body guidance –**
 - Professional bodies standards are continuously monitored to ensure any changes are responded to in a timely fashion which has been evidenced within the documentation. Staff are supported by and working with their respective professional bodies. Changes and requirements are clearly communicated via the Placement Team and used to inform Placement Handbooks and Placement Modules.
 - The education provider reflected on changes they made to their Independent and Supplementary Prescribing programme in response to changes made to the Royal Pharmaceutical Society – Competency Framework for all Prescribers (2021). The changes were adopted and fully

implemented by September 2022. This required the updating of taught content and the adjustment of summative assessments to align with the new Framework.

- The education provider reflected on how they use other professional body guidance as guidance across various professions. For example, they used single profession guidance to direct learners to their respective professional body, while interprofessional education allows a platform of shared learning across multiple professions. In this way, updated policies and guidance feed into curriculum content for both single profession and shared learning. This is further underpinned by the incorporation of 'Principles of Practice Based Learning' which is being developed across multiple professions.
- There was sufficient reflection provided to determine the education provider has close working relationships with different professional bodies and organisations.
- **Capacity of practice-based learning (programme / profession level) –**
 - The education provider's reflection showed significant work in developing placements, working with educators and developments of new areas for placements. They work with the Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW's) Practice Placement Plan, which determines placement capacity and provides security for meeting the challenge of capacity of practice-based learning for commissioned programmes. However, the education provider has also recognised that the breadth of practice in some professions places an emphasis on the need to build capacity in non-NHS funded provision, including social care, private and third sector organisations and are developing plans to ensure capacity in these areas.
 - For the MA programmes, the education provider identified challenges around meeting placement needs close to home for learners. This requires the Practice Placement Team to audit and quality assure placements to ensure they meet standards. This has led to the education provider developing automated systems to identify potential untapped placement areas and capacity. As a result, placements in new areas such as youth justice have been identified enabling greater knowledge transfer between professions.
 - The visitors recognised that, despite some of the difficulties in the provision of practice-based placements for Operating Department Practice (ODP), due to competing professions requiring placements in certain areas such as theatre, the education provider is actively looking at solutions to mitigate this. For example, the education provider can utilise digital methodology to create simulation to help provide some of the placement capacity. This is underpinned by the continued use and support of practitioners to facilitate key aspects of the curriculum.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area as demonstrated by the partnerships and relationships with practice educators and the development of new placement areas.

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 –**
 - The education provider reflected on the range of methods to gather learner feedback such as, through Staff Learner Programme Liaison Groups (SSLGs), informal meetings, and informal programme and module feedback.
 - The education provider reflected on how learner feedback on HCPC approved programmes has been positive with two programmes scoring 100% learner satisfaction. They also reflected on the actions taken by the programme team in response to feedback from postgraduate learners about being subject to fitness to practice concerns.
 - The education provider has been responsive, and minor changes have been made to some teaching as a result of feedback from learners. Their reflections suggest they implemented changes quickly based on the nature of the feedback. The education provider also recognised that they need to increase the transparency of how learner feedback affects change and show why some feedback cannot be actioned. This is identified by the education provider as development going forward.
 - The education provider has reflected that by presenting changes made as a result of learner feedback, learners have reported increased satisfaction and feel that their 'learner voice' is heard, which in turn boosts learner wellbeing.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area. They have processes in place to collect feedback from learners and take appropriate actions in response to that feedback.
- **Practice placement educators –**
 - The education provider reflected on how practice placement providers within have contributed to programme design. Partnership working between Practice Educators and staff, through the All-Wales Practice Placement Reference Group and the All-Wales Practice Education Forum, informed curriculum design placement provision and continues to support these developments.
 - The education provider reflected on the concerns raised by practice educators about how HEIW commissioned placements do not fully represent the "whole range of settings in which OT's work. As a result, they appointed, staff to lead on managing and developing practice-based learning for Occupational Therapy, which in turn provides the opportunity to develop new partnerships with a diverse range of providers.
 - The education provider reflected that they have used the expansion of partnerships and the engagement of practice educators and partners to increase the creativity of thinking around placement provision and to diversify.
 - We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area due to the education provider's reflection on feedback and actions taken in response to practice educators and placement provision.
- **External examiners –**
 - The education provider reflected on how their relationship with external examiners has been vital in providing advice, guidance and support for

new programmes. They plan to continue to improve their relationships with external examiners to ensure continuing comparability and consistency with other programmes in the sector.

- The education provider reflected on the specific challenge of when to time Exam Boards to ensure external examiners could attend. Programme teams worked with the department responsible for arranging these to provide earlier notice of Exam Board scheduling to enable external examiners to attend. This has helped to maintain and build on the positive, collaborative relationships already developed.
- The education provider reflected on how the external examiners supported them during the pandemic through the sharing of best practice. They reflected that they felt supported and mentored in decisions made, particularly amongst postgraduate programmes. In light of the feedback received and the discussion around best practice, the education provider has developed new practice programme materials.
- External examiners have commended the Physiotherapy programme for developing a transparent assessment profile which enables learners to see how learning from one assessment relates to other assessments and modules.
- We were satisfied how the education provider is performing relating to this area. This is because the reflection showed the education provider has continued to use and action feedback from external examiners and integrate them fully within the programmes.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: Ensuring increased transparency in how learner feedback affects change, and demonstrating why some feedback cannot be actioned, was identified by the education provider as development going forward.

Data and reflections

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **Learner non continuation:**
 - The education provider is performing in line with the benchmark. There was sufficient reflection provided to determine the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Outcomes for those who complete programmes:**
 - As noted in the institution performance data table in Section 2, the education provider had a data point of 89% against a benchmark of 93%. The education provider reflected this data did not cover all undergraduate HCPC accredited provision, as these are still in the early stages of delivery. The established postgraduate HCPC accredited provision reported 100% graduate level employment or further study in the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) data (2019-20). The education provider has a GOS working group, who manage the GOS cycle, as well as the interpretation and dissemination of GOS data. Their Strategic Implementation Groups focusses on graduate employability and a research project is currently underway across the

institution to explore staff interpretation and understanding of programme level data in comparison with sector norms.

- The visitors were therefore satisfied the education provider has performed well in this area.
- **Learner satisfaction:**
 - As noted earlier under National Student Survey (NSS) outcomes, learner satisfaction rate was above sector norms. The visitors were therefore satisfied the education provider had performed well in this area.
- **Programme level data:**
 - The education provider noted that the new HCPC approved programmes have benefitted greatly by the staff: learner ratios facilitating time for new programme material development. These SSR's reflect the stage of roll-out of the programmes and will continue to be monitored to ensure appropriate resourcing of programmes.
 - The visitors were therefore satisfied that the education provider had performed well in this area.

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).

There were no outstanding issues to be referred to another process.

Section 6: Decision on performance review outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

Based on the findings detailed in section 4, the visitors recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the education provider's next engagement with the performance review process should be in the 2028-29 academic year.

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 were Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW), the All-Wales Practice Education Forum, and the Teaching Research Advisory Committee (TRAC).
- External input into quality assurance and enhancement
 - The education provider engaged with a number of professional bodies including, Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT), British Psychological Society (BPS) and College of Operating Department

Practitioners (CODP). They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.

- The education provider engaged with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). They considered professional body findings in improving their provision.
- The education provider considers sector and professional development in a structured way.
- Data supply
 - Data for the education provider is available through key external sources. Regular supply of this data will enable us to actively monitor changes to key performance areas within the review period.
- 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.

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 2028-2029 academic year.

Reason for this decision: The Panel agreed with the visitors' recommended monitoring period for the reasons noted in the report. The panel recommended that the education provider and its programmes next engage with the performance review process within the stated timeframe.

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
University of South Wales	CAS-01409-Y2Z3W0	Jennifer Caldwell and Joanna Finney	Five years	They are performing well across all the key areas. They have reflected well throughout their portfolio, and have strong relationships with external stakeholders. There are strong internal drivers of quality and learner support, and external quality mechanisms are also being used effectively. They have taken steps to make the programme as accessible as possible.	N / A

Appendix 2 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy	PT (Part time)	Occupational therapist			26/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			26/09/2022
BSc (Hons) Physiotherapy	PT (Part time)	Physiotherapist			26/09/2022
Independent/ Supplementary Prescribing for HCPC and GPhC registrants	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/10/2020
MA Art Psychotherapy	PT (Part time)	Arts therapist	Art therapy		01/09/2013
MA Music Therapy	PT (Part time)	Arts therapist	Music therapy		01/09/2013
Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	FT (Full time)	Practitioner psychologist	Counselling psychologist		01/09/2018
Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	PT (Part time)	Practitioner psychologist	Counselling psychologist		01/09/2018
Supplementary Prescribing	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/09/2014