
Approval process report

Birmingham City University, Paramedic, 2023-24

Executive Summary

This is a report of the process to approve a paramedic programme at Birmingham City University. This report captures the process we have undertaken to assess the institution and programme(s) against our standards, to ensure those who complete the proposed programme(s) are fit to practice.

We have

- Reviewed the institution against our institution level standards and found our standards are met in this area
- Reviewed the programme(s) against our programme level standards and found our standards are met in this area following exploration of key themes through quality activities
- Recommended all standards are met, and that the programme(s) should be approved

Through this assessment, we have noted:

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

Previous consideration	Not applicable. This approval was not referred from another process.
Decision	The Education and Training Committee (Panel) is asked to decide: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• whether the programme(s) is / are approved
Next steps	Outline next steps / future case work with the provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provider's next performance review will be in the 2026-27 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 approval process undertaken by the HCPC to ensure that the programme(s) detailed in this report meet our education standards. The report details the process itself, evidence considered, outcomes and recommendations made regarding the programme(s) approval / ongoing approval.

Our standards

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

Our regulatory approach

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

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

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

The approval process

Institutions and programmes must be approved by us before they can run. The approval process is formed of two stages:

- Stage 1 – we take assurance that institution level standards are met by the institution delivering the proposed programme(s)

- Stage 2 – we assess to be assured that programme level standards are met by each proposed programme

Through the approval process, we take assurance in a bespoke and flexible way, meaning that we will assess whether providers and programmes meet standards based on what we see, rather than by a one size fits all approach. Our standards are split along institution and programme level lines, and we take assurance at the provider level wherever possible.

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

How we make our decisions

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

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

The assessment panel for this review

We appointed the following panel members to support this review:

Jason Comber	Lead visitor, paramedic
Kenneth Street	Lead visitor, paramedic
John Archibald	Education Quality Officer

Section 2: Institution-level assessment

The education provider context

The education provider currently delivers 30 HCPC-approved programmes across six professions, including ten post registration programmes for prescribing annotations. It is a higher education institution and has been running HCPC approved programmes since 1993.

The education provider currently runs HCPC-approved degree apprenticeship programmes. This programme will sit alongside the direct entry BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science in the College of Health and Care Professions.

In the current model of quality assurance, the education provider engaged with the approval process in 2021-22. This was for new provision for diagnostic and therapeutic radiographer. The education provider also engaged with the approval process in 2021-22 for the speech and language therapy profession.

The last performance review was in the 2021-22 academic year.

In the legacy model of quality assurance, the education provider engaged with the approval process in 2019 for the speech and language therapy profession. The operating department practice programme has undergone several major changes for the BSc (Hons) programme in 2019, 2020, and 2021. For the paramedic profession, the level of qualification for registration was raised in 2018 to BSc (Hons) and approval was subsequently withdrawn from programmes that were below the revised threshold.

Practice areas delivered by the education provider

The provider is approved to deliver training in the following professional areas. A detailed list of approved programme awards can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

	Practice area	Delivery level		Approved since
Pre-registration	Dietitian	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/01/2018
	Operating Department Practitioner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/09/2001
	Paramedic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/09/2012
	Physiotherapist	<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/01/2018
	Radiographer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/09/1993
	Speech and language therapist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate	01/09/2001
Post-registration	Independent Prescribing / Supplementary prescribing			01/09/2007

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.

This data is for existing provision at the institution, and does not include the proposed programme(s).

Data Point	Benchmark	Value	Date	Commentary
Total intended learner numbers compared to total enrolment numbers	1838	1938	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 is the benchmark figure, plus the number of learners the provider is proposing through the new provision.</p> <p>We reviewed resourcing for the programme. The visitors had questions to explore in this area. As discussed in quality theme 2, the visitors were satisfied with the education provider's response, and did not have any further questions.</p>
Learners – Aggregation of percentage not continuing	3%	6%	2020-21	This data was sourced from a data delivery. This means the data is a bespoke Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data return, filtered bases on HCPC-related subjects.

				<p>The data point is above 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 2%.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing teaching methods for the programme. The visitors were satisfied and did not have any areas to explore further.</p>
National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score	93%	90%	2020-21	<p>This 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 2%.</p> <p>We explored this by reviewing resourcing, including support for learners. The visitors were satisfied and did not have any areas to explore further.</p>
National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score	77.6%	79.1%	2023	<p>This National Student Survey (NSS) positivity score data was sourced at the subject level. This means the data is for HCPC-related subjects.</p>

				<p>The data point is above the benchmark, which suggests the provider is performing above sector norms.</p> <p>When compared to the previous year's data point, the education provider's performance has improved by 5.9%.</p> <p>We did not explore this data point through this assessment because the provider is performing above sector norms.</p>
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The route through stage 1

Institutions which run HCPC-approved provision have previously demonstrated that they meet institution-level standards. When an existing institution proposes a new programme, we undertake an internal review of whether we need to undertake a full partner-led review against our institution level standards, or whether we can take assurance that the proposed programme(s) aligns with existing provision.

As part of the request to approve the proposed programme(s), the education provider supplied information to show alignment in the following areas.

Admissions

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Information for applicants –**
 - Existing policies apply to how applicants find out about programmes, for example, through the website and marketing materials. For degree apprenticeships, this is supplemented by the employer. They advertise the apprenticeship role, provide a job description, and finalise banding salary for the post. The education provider and employers work together to shortlist applicants and carry out a joint interview process. Offers are then made by the education provider to successful applicants. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

- **Assessing English language, character, and health –**
 - The Admissions Policy applies for English language, enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service checks and occupational health clearance. The education provider and employer undertake a joint face to face interview with the applicant. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Prior learning and experience (AP(E)L) –**
 - The education provider operates a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process that enables applicants to gain recognition for previous studies and learning that relate to the programme. This applies to apprentices as well as other learner groups and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - The education providers Access and Participation Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2020 - 2025 outline how individuals who, may not otherwise be able to access the profession, can apply. These ensure each programme receives appropriate data on progression and attainment to consider as part of programme scrutiny. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Management and governance

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Ability to deliver provision to expected threshold level of entry to the Register¹ –**
 - Existing policies and procedures outline the process of approval from strategic approval through to University / Professional Regulatory and Statutory Body events. For example, BCU Course Approval / Re-

¹ This is focused on ensuring providers are able to deliver qualifications at or equivalent to the level(s) in SET 1, as required for the profession(s) proposed

approval Policy and Procedures. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.

- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Sustainability of provision –**
 - The Course Monitoring and Enhancement Policy and Procedure (CME) uses recruitment, retention, and outcome data to consider performance and sustainability of each programme. In addition, for degree apprenticeship programmes, work is carried out at a national, regional, and local level to look at the scope and sustainability of this route to ensure it is a viable option for the profession and the education provider. The education provider has worked with the professional body and NHS England to engage employers and seek their commitment to this route of entry into the profession. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective programme delivery –**
 - Existing policies, such as, Learning and Teaching Strategy and Course Monitoring and Enhancement Policy and Procedure will apply. The periodic review process reviews the provision of an entire school every five years. Each programme holds an annual quality day which brings together staff, learners, service users, external examiners, and practice colleagues. This quality day informs ongoing course improvements. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Effective staff management and development –**
 - In addition to policies already mentioned, policies, such as Individual Performance Review Policy, will apply. Management of the team ensures support for their development and wellbeing, recruitment of appropriate people into appropriate roles, via school policies / procedures. The team will draw on existing expertise from within the education provider and further afield to support the development of its existing staff group. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.

- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Partnerships, which are managed at the institution level –**
 - Existing processes and support are in place. For example, the Apprenticeship Partnership Unit which supports degree apprenticeships across the provider. The school liaises with clinical partners and employers, and hosts programme and department level regular clinical placement group meetings. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Quality, monitoring, and evaluation

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Academic quality –**
 - The education provider stated that existing processes are in place (such as the Course Monitoring and Enhancement Policy and Procedure outlined earlier). As part of this, module leads and team members review modules and sessions on a yearly basis and integrate this feedback into their modules to enhance academic quality. Those delivering the materials are required to keep themselves up to date via a variety of Continuous Professional Development activities. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Practice quality, including the establishment of safe and supporting practice learning environments –**
 - Existing processes are in place such as the Educational Placement Audit Process. This ensures department audits are regularly performed, gaining information on equipment, staffing and service-related activity, to ensure learners receive the range of experiences required and are safe and supported. Regular communications from the education provider to the clinical teams takes place both informally through regular personal tutor visits, MS Teams calls and formal lines including practice educator training. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.

- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learner involvement –**
 - Existing processes are in place. Opportunities for feedback for all learners include:
 1. Mid module evaluations
 2. End of practice-based learning evaluations
 3. Learner survey
 4. Learner representative led forums
 5. Professional student society

The programme lead will regularly meet with learners to establish views in relation to all activity relating to the programme and their experiences both formally and informally. The team operate an ‘open door’ policy and through the personal tutor role ensure regular catchups offering the opportunity for feedback on a regular basis. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Service user and carer involvement –**
 - The Monitoring of Service User and Carer Involvement Process is an existing process. Examples of involvement include open days, interviews, simulation, on-line and face to face teaching. Service users are actively consulted regarding curriculum development of all existing and future provision. Within the school, there is a group of service users who input both through sharing their experiences and involvement in discussions about developments. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Learners

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Support –**
 - A range of existing education provider processes are in place. Within the academic environment, all learners are allocated a named personal tutor to support them through their programme and to signpost them to the wider support the institution offers. Whilst in work environment, learners will have access to a mentor whose role will be to support them at this specific time. Learners can access the health and well-

being teams, as well as other services such as the Student Union and Graduate Success Support Advisors. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.

- This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Ongoing suitability –**
 - Existing processes are in place. Learners are encouraged to speak to their personal tutor and course leads regarding any concerns / suitability. The education provider has policies in relation to the Fitness to Study and Fitness to Practice and Disciplinary Policy, with associated levels of discussion with learners. This means starting with informal, but recorded discussion, before moving to more formal discussions to enable oversight of learner's reflective development in relation to identified issues. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Learning with and from other learners and professionals (IPL/E) –**
 - Existing processes are in place. The programme will sit within the Faculty of Health Education and Life Sciences and there will be a range of opportunities to learn with, and from, learners and apprentices from a range of professions. There will be opportunity to engage in joint simulation and collaborative working activities in the academic environment. Particularly within practice-based learning and the workplace, apprentices will have the opportunity to learn about the roles of other professionals from a range of sectors. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion –**
 - Existing processes are in place, such as the 2021/22 – 2024/25 Access and Participation Plan. A range of support services is provided by the education provider to enable all learners, regardless of disability, health condition or learning difficulty, to access their chosen programme. The programme team will respond to the needs of a learner with an identified disability, in conjunction with Student Support Services. This includes reasonable adjustments within the practice and academic settings. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.

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

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Assessment

Findings on alignment with existing provision:

- **Objectivity –**
 - Existing processes are in place, such as the University Academic Regulations Fourth Edition (September 2021). There is a clear Assessment and Feedback Policy that guides programme teams through a structured and rigorous process. This includes internal and external verification, regular meetings of the marking team, moderation from outside the marking team, and external examiner reviews. These processes will be made clear to learners throughout the programme to ensure they are aware of this process and how this process is objective. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Progression and achievement –**
 - The Academic Regulations Fourth Edition (September) 2021 and Course Monitoring and Enhancement Policy and Procedure and Programme ensure appropriate progress and achievement rules are in place and subsequently monitored. Programme leaders have access to module specific information and implement interventions and enhancements as required. An Extenuating Circumstances (EC) procedure is also available to learners. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.
 - We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.
- **Appeals –**
 - Existing processes are in place, such as the Academic Appeal Procedure and Extenuation Circumstances procedure. They will be used in relation to this programme. These processes are led by the Student Governance team. The policies are institution-wide and will apply to the proposed programme.
 - This aligns with our understanding of how the education provider runs programmes.

- We think this as the education provider has indicated there have not been any changes to how they meet this area.

Non-alignment requiring further assessment: None.

Outcomes from stage 1

We decided to progress to stage 2 of the process without further review through stage 1, due to the clear alignment of the new provision within existing institutional structures, as noted through the previous section.

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

- The staffing team consists of:
 - 1.0 Whole time equivalent (WTE) Associate Professor, a HCPC-registered paramedic
 - 8.0 WTE HCPC-registered paramedics, with three vacancies currently awaiting recruitment.

The wider departmental team includes staff from various health backgrounds who can be accessed for specialised session delivery. For example, bioscience, physiotherapy, ODP, and midwifery. Further teaching support is available from appropriate casual workers and visiting teachers from a range of external organisations such as Trusts, and public and private providers, as well as service users and actors.

- On campus the education provider has:
 - an ambulance for clinical simulation
 - 'Simbulance', an ambulance equipped for immersive simulation and hands-on learning
 - anatomage table teaching space
 - dedicated manual handling training facilities
 - x-ray room and two ultrasound scanners
 - simulation suite, including wards, operating theatres, and flexible areas to replicate other clinical areas.

Due to recent successful bids, the education provider has recently upgraded their operating theatre, and created a new telehealth suite.

- Resources are already in place or in development and due for completion prior to programme approval.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Outstanding issues for follow up: None.

Section 3: Programme-level assessment

Programmes considered through this assessment

Programme name	Mode of study	Profession (including modality) / entitlement	Proposed learner number, and frequency	Proposed start date
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science Degree Apprenticeship	Full time	Paramedic	100 learners, one cohort per year	2 September 2024

Stage 2 assessment – provider submission

The education provider was asked to demonstrate how they meet programme level standards for each programme. They supplied information about how each standard was met, including a rationale and links to supporting information via a mapping document.

Data / intelligence considered

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

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

Quality themes identified for further exploration

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

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

Quality theme 1 – partnership between the education provider and West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS)

Area for further exploration: The education provider outlined they have a relationship with WMAS. WMAS are the employer and practice-based learning

provider on this proposed programme. We recognised WMAS have worked with the education provider during the development of the programme. The education provider informed us there were different meetings between the education provider and WMAS. For example, between the education provider's Head of College of Health and Care Professions, and the WMAS Head of Service and Heads of Education. The visitors however did not receive evidence of the meetings between the education provider and WMAS. They therefore could not be sure of what was discussed, to ensure the meetings provided ongoing quality and effectiveness. The visitors sought more information about this.

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

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined the agendas and notes of several meetings. For example, the visitors were able to identify the issues for discussion in the Paramedic Commissions Review Meeting included updates from both the education provider and WMAS. They were also able to identify who attended the meeting. For example, the Head of Education and Training at WMAS. The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated the partnership between the education provider and WMAS provided ongoing quality and effectiveness. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 2 – staffing for the programme

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the course information document suggested there are seven staff on the proposed programme. The visitors however received five CVs, one of which was not a permanent position. The visitors also recognised they had been informed of the responsibilities of staff, for example, the modules each will be working on. We need to be sure there are an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. The visitors however were unsure whether the programme's resources allowed for an appropriate number of staff. They therefore sought more information about this.

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

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider explained the learner numbers on the proposed programme will not be an addition. They outlined the proposed programme will replace the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science as the programme learners from WMAS will study on. The currently approved programme has an intake of 50 learners per cohort with three cohorts per year. The proposed programme has 100 learners, and one cohort per year.

The visitors were informed many of the modules are taught by staff within the wider college and / or faculty. The education provider outlined they were currently undergoing staff recruitment. They explained:

- two posts have been offered to successful candidates;
- approvals for two more posts are progress; and
- four visiting lecturers have been contracted to work one day a week each.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated there was an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. They had no further questions in this area and considered the standard to be met.

Quality theme 3 – teaching and assessment of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs)

Area for further exploration: The visitors noted the learning outcomes for the programme did not refer to the SCPEs. They also noted the SCPEs were not listed in core reading for the programme. The visitors were unable to identify how or where learners learnt about professional conduct, and how they demonstrated what behaviour is appropriate for a professional and what is not. The visitors were therefore unclear how the programme will ensure learners understand and are able to meet the expectations associated with being a regulated professional and are taught and assessed about the SCPEs. They therefore sought more information about this.

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

Outcomes of exploration: The education provider outlined all their modules, teaching and assessments which teach and assess the SCPEs. They added the standards are referred to and discussed throughout all teaching on all levels of the programme. From this, the visitors were able to identify where the standards are part of the indicative content of modules and core reading lists. They could also identify and understand where and how the SCPEs are assessed. For example, in the module Academic Skills and Understanding Risk, the standards were a part of the indicative content of the module and core reading list. Learners are assessed in this module through a written assignment. This assignment asks learners how they meet the standards in the context of risk management and health promotion. The education provider outlined the assignment ensured learners link practice with legislation, guidelines, and standards.

The visitors were satisfied the evidence demonstrated the SCPEs are taught and assessed through the programme. They had no further questions and considered these standards met.

Section 4: Findings

This section details the visitors' findings from their review through stage 2, including any requirements set, and a summary of their overall findings.

Conditions

Conditions are requirements that must be met before providers or programmes can be approved. We set conditions when there is an issue with the education provider's approach to meeting a standard. This may mean that we have evidence that standards are not met at this time, or the education provider's planned approach is not suitable.

The visitors were satisfied that no conditions were required to satisfy them that all standards are met. The visitors' findings, including why no conditions were required, are presented below.

Overall findings on how standards are met

This section provides information summarising the visitors' findings against the programme-level standards. The section also includes a summary of risks, further areas to be followed up, and areas of good practice.

Findings of the assessment panel:

- **SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register** – this standard is covered through institution-level assessment.

- **SET 2: Programme admissions** –
 - Minimum entry requirements have been agreed between the employer and the education provider.
 - Applicants need 120 UCAS tariff points. Applicants also need to hold either the IHCD Technician qualification or Associate Ambulance Practitioners (AAP) qualification, and ongoing employment as an Ambulance Technician or Student Paramedic, with support from their employer.
 - All applicants are subject to an occupational health check via an online questionnaire. They also undergo an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check via an external DBS service provider.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET are met.

- **SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership –**
 - As discussed in [quality theme 1](#), the education provider works in partnership with West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS). WMAS are both the employer and practice-based learning provider. They have been involved in the design of the programme and fully support it.
 - Additional staff have been recruited. Much of the learner's education will be delivered in the employer organisation. The education provider provided CVs of current staff. There are a range of visiting teachers who support delivery of the programme.
 - As discussed in [quality theme 2](#), the proposed programme will replace a different programme and will result in fewer learners overall. The visitors were informed many of the modules are taught by staff within the wider college and / or faculty. The paramedic team includes a Senior Lecturer, Lecturers and an Apprenticeship Course Lead who will be supported by the programme team. Other academic staff from professional groups, including physiology, the personal development department and library services, will help with design and delivery. They are involved in developing and delivering teaching and assessment.
 - Staff are supported in a variety of ways. For instance, the Peer Observation cycle enables all members of the team to be both an observer and the observed. Discussions are held between observers and observed before and after teaching.
 - Learners have access to skills suites for simulation activities and the simulance. Learners have access to all education provider libraries. These provide a range of remote and face to face support. They offer a range of printed and electronic resources and services to help learners with their studies. The learner's virtual learning environment is Moodle. This will hold resources such as module specifications and programme handbooks. Learners can access support systems, for example, wellbeing and mental health services.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

- **SET 4: Programme design and delivery –**
 - Modules have been mapped against the HCPC Standards of Proficiency. All standards will be met throughout the modules taught.
 - As discussed in [quality theme 3](#), the SCPEs are taught on the programme. All modules ensure learners have the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to ensure that their professional behaviour adheres to HCPC standards of proficiency. Professional behaviours are developed whilst in practice-based learning and within work-based learning. There are learning outcomes within each practice-based learning setting addressing professional behaviours.
 - The programme aims and learning outcomes are aligned to the College of Paramedics (CoP) curriculum guidance. The programme meets the

knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) Paramedic apprenticeship standard.

- All modules are mapped to current guidance. Content is reviewed annually to ensure the programme remains current. The programme team will draw on their own clinical practice and evidence base to inform the development of content.
 - The three elements of the apprenticeship programme are:
 - class-based learning;
 - practice-based learning; and
 - work-based learning.
 - Each practice-based learning module is aligned to academic learning, to enable learners to apply their knowledge and theory to practice-based learning.
 - The learning outcomes require the learners to be an autonomous practitioner who can deliver evidence-based patient care. As learners progress, the programme expects a greater level of autonomy of them.
 - Evidence-based practice (EBP) is threaded throughout the programme. Modules support the learner to understand the role and importance of EBP in the profession, how to evaluate the evidence base, and understand and evaluate research methods.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
- **SET 5: Practice-based learning –**
 - Practice-based learning is integral to the programme. There is an assessed practice-based learning module within all three years of the programme. Learners will be within the practice setting as both employees and learners. Practice-based learning provision will meet the required learning outcomes and standards of proficiency required.
 - Learners are exposed to a range of clinical situations and experiences, to enable the learner to meet the learning outcomes.
 - Practice-based learning outcomes ensure graduates meet the SOPs, IfATE knowledge, skills and behaviours, and CoP guidance.
 - Practice-based learning providers complete an audit every two years. This assures the education provider they can continue to provide high quality practice-based learning. It also ensures learners receive the range of experiences required from appropriately qualified practice educators.
 - The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.
 - **SET 6: Assessment –**
 - Assessments ensure learners have the relevant and necessary academic and practical knowledge and skills required to practice as a

paramedic. All modules must be passed and all elements of assessment within each module must be passed.

- As discussed in [quality theme 3](#), the SCPEs are assessed on the programme. Learners are required to study and pass professional practice modules. Learners are required to adhere to the SCPEs throughout the programme.
- Assessments have been linked to the learning outcomes for each module. There are a variety of assessment methods, such as written exams, oral presentations, and clinical skills assessments. The range of assessment methods develops and demonstrates a range of skills reflective of and transferable to practice.
- The visitors considered the relevant standards within this SET area met.

Risks identified which may impact on performance: None.

Section 5: Referrals

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

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

Recommendations

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

The visitors did not set any recommendations.

Section 6: Decision on approval process outcomes

Assessment panel recommendation

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

- All standards are met, and therefore the programmes should be approved

Education and Training Committee decision

Education and Training Committee considered the assessment panel's recommendations and the findings which support these. The education provider was

also provided with the opportunity to submit any observation they had on the conclusions reached.

Based on all information presented to them, the Committee decided that:

- The programmes are approved

Reason for this decision: The Panel accepted the visitor's recommendation that the programme should receive approval.

Appendix 1 – summary report

If the education provider does not provide observations, only this summary report (rather than the whole report) will be provided to the Education and Training Committee (Panel) to enable their decision on approval. The lead visitors confirm this is an accurate summary of their recommendation, and the nature, quality and facilities of the provision.

Education provider	Case reference	Lead visitors	Quality of provision	Facilities provided
Birmingham City University	CAS-01424-K0L6T9	Jason Comber and Kenneth Street	<p>Through this assessment, we have noted:</p> <p>The programme(s) meet all the relevant HCPC education standards and therefore should be approved.</p>	<p>Education and training delivered by this institution is underpinned by the provision of the following key facilities:</p> <p>The staffing team consists of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.0 WTE Associate Professor, a HCPC-registered paramedic • 8.0 WTE HCPC-registered paramedics, with three vacancies currently awaiting recruitment. <p>The wider departmental team includes staff from various health backgrounds who can be accessed for specialised session delivery. For example, bioscience, physiotherapy, ODP, and midwifery. Further teaching support is available from appropriate casual workers and visiting teachers from a range of external organisations such as</p>

				<p>Trusts, and public and private providers, as well as service users and actors.</p> <p>On campus the education provider has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an ambulance for clinical simulation• 'Simbulance', an ambulance equipped for immersive simulation and hands-on learning• anatomage table teaching space• dedicated manual handling training facilities• x-ray room and two ultrasound scanners• simulation suite, including wards, operating theatres, and flexible areas to replicate other clinical areas. <p>Due to recent successful bids, the education provider has recently upgraded their operating theatre, and created a new telehealth suite.</p> <p>Resources are already in place or in development and due for completion prior to programme approval.</p>
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Programmes		
Programme name	Mode of study	Nature of provision
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science Degree Apprenticeship	Full time	Apprenticeship

Appendix 1 – list of open programmes at this institution

Name	Mode of study	Profession	Modality	Annotation	First intake date
MSc Dietetics (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Dietitian			01/01/2018
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/08/2016
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice (South West) Degree Apprenticeship	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/03/2021
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice Degree Apprenticeship	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/03/2021
BSc Hons Operating Department Practice (South West)	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/01/2020
DipHE Operating Department Practice	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/09/2001
DipHE Operating Department Practice (South West)	FT (Full time)	Operating department practitioner			01/01/2018
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2014
Dip HE Paramedic Science	FT (Full time)	Paramedic			01/09/2012
MSc Physiotherapy (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Physiotherapist			01/01/2018
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/1993
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography	PT (Part time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		01/09/1993
BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography Degree Apprenticeship	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Diagnostic radiographer		30/03/2023
BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Therapeutic radiographer		01/01/2003
BSc (Hons) Radiotherapy	PT (Part time)	Radiographer	Therapeutic radiographer		01/09/2003

MSc Therapeutic Radiography (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Radiographer	Therapeutic radiographer		01/01/2023
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2001
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy	PT (Part time)	Speech and language therapist			01/09/2001
BSc (Hons) Speech and Language Therapy Degree Apprenticeship	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			09/01/2023
MSc Speech and Language Therapy (pre-registration)	FT (Full time)	Speech and language therapist			01/01/2020
Non-medical Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	FT (Full time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/09/2007
Non-medical Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/09/2007
Non-Medical Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Undergraduate)	FT (Full time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Non-Medical Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Undergraduate)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Non-Medical Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Undergraduate) (Conversion)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Principles of Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Post Graduate)	FT (Full time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Principles of Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Post Graduate)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing;	01/02/2014

				Independent prescribing	
Principles of Prescribing for Allied Health Professionals (Post Graduate) (Conversion)	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing; Independent prescribing	01/02/2014
Principles of Prescribing for Health Care Professionals	FT (Full time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/10/2010
Principles of Prescribing for Health Care Professionals	PT (Part time)			Supplementary prescribing	01/10/2010