Foot Health Support Workforce Standards of Education and Training Guidance

Guidance document for education providers 2023

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Glossary

AP	Assistant Practitioner
AQA	Academic Quality Assurance Committee
FCA	Foot Care Assistant
FHP	Foot Health Practitioner
FHSW	Foot Health Support Workforce
FHW	Foot Health Workforce
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HEE	Health Education England
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
NHS	National Health Service
PBL	Practice-Based Learning
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RCPod	Royal College of Podiatry
RQF	Regulated Qualifications framework
SETs	Standards for Education and Training

1. Introduction

The Standards for the Foot Health Workforce (also known as the 'Foot Health Standards') were created to expand the role of the support workforce. The key objective of the Standards is to ensure that the NHS recognises the knowledge and skills of the wider foot health support workforce (FHSW). The Standards provide thresholds at each level of practice. Standardising foot health practice gives assurance to the public and employers about the level of care provided. Currently, not all the foot health support workforce is able to work in the NHS due to variation in training and practice levels. Furthermore, there is variation in training within the NHS foot health workforce. Provision of accredited pathways that align training to the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce will provide a recognised threshold of practice.

The accreditation of both clinical and education standards for all newly qualified Foot Care Assistants (FCAs), Foot Health Practitioners (FHPs) and Assistant Practitioners in Podiatry (APs) have been established for educational providers. Going forward, newly qualified students who have completed a programme at an accredited educational provider will be able to work in the NHS.

The Royal College of Podiatry (RCPod) has developed an accreditation pathway for existing and future programmes of education relevant to Foot Health Support Worker roles.

To implement this work there is a need to support education providers in accrediting their programmes appropriately to the level of study and subsequent qualification. The overall aim is to ensure employer, professional and public confidence in the existing and future foot health support workforce by quality assuring standards of training and proficiency in line with the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.

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2. Purpose

This document provides guidance on the Standards of Education and Training (SETs) for the Foot Health Support Worker (FHSW).

As part of the RCPod's accreditation process, we use the SETs to make sure that all learners can meet the requirements defined in the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce, and when they gain a qualification, that they are able to practice safely and effectively.

This document is written for education providers who are preparing for or will be involved in our accreditation and monitoring processes, but it will also be useful for practice education providers and others who work with and alongside education providers.

The guidance for each standard explains the purpose behind it, provides further explanation and definitions, and in some cases, suggests how a provider could meet the standard.

A programme which meets the SETs allows a learner who completes that programme to meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce. The Standards set out the knowledge, skills, behaviours and understanding that are needed for safe and effective practice at each level of qualification. If a learner successfully completes an accredited programme, they are eligible to work for the NHS.

When we use the abbreviation 'SET' followed by a number, this refers to a section of the standards (for example, SET 2) or an individual standard (for example, SET 2.1).

Throughout the document 'we', 'us' and 'our' refers to the RCPod and 'you' refers to the education provider, including those involved in leading or managing the programme.

We have used the term 'learner' throughout this document. We use this to mean anyone learning, studying or training on a programme which will lead to a qualification in a Foot Health Support Worker role. The term includes students, trainees, apprentices and practitioners in training or work-based learning.

We have also used the term 'educator' throughout the document. We use this to mean an individual who is involved in teaching, assessing or aiding learning. This can include people who are permanently employed and others who help to deliver the programme such as sessional or visiting lecturers and practice educators.

The term 'staff' is used more broadly to refer to anyone involved in delivering the programme. This could include educators as well as those involved in other areas, such as managing or administering the programme.

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3. Guidance document structure

We have divided the main text of this document into five sections, to reflect the five sections of the SETs.

SET 1: Programme admissions

SET 2: Programme governance, management and leadership

SET 3: Programme design and delivery

SET 4: Practice-based learning

SET 5: Assessment

Under the title of each section, we have summarised the broad areas that the section is concerned with. We then provide detailed guidance for each standard in the section, in a table.

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4. Standards

Standard of education and training (SET)	Guidance
1. **Programme admissions**	**This section relates to the admissions processes for your programme, including the selection and entry criteria, procedures for assessing applicants and the information provided to the people involved. When making decisions during the admissions process, we expect you to make sure learners are suitable to take part in the programme, including their suitability to work with service users and carers in practice. We also expect you to make sure that they will be able to meet the foot health workforce standards and practice safely and effectively once they have successfully completed the programme.**
1.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.	This standard is about making sure that information provided throughout the admissions process is clear and thorough and allows informed decision-making. This standard has two purposes: 1. We want to be sure that applicants provide all the information required to come to an appropriate decision about their suitability for a programme and 2. We want to make sure that you provide applicants with all the information on the programme that they need to make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on a programme.
1.2 The selection and entry	This standard is about making sure that the academic and

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criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards suitable for the level of study.	professional entry criteria are appropriate to the level and content of the programme. The level of this criteria is determined by the learning organisation in line with national standards relevant to the level of study. Institutions could also confirm on entry to a programme that students: • demonstrate values in accordance with the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce. • have capability to learn behaviours in accordance with the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce. • have met the programme's entry requirements and have capability to develop numeracy skills required to meet programme outcomes. • can demonstrate proficiency in English language • have met the programme's entry requirements and have capability in literacy to meet programme outcomes.
1.3 The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.	This standard is about making sure that learners can use the English language at the level necessary to communicate effectively with service users and carers, educators and others, and to complete the programme successfully. You must have a thorough process in place for assessing an applicant's command of English and the requirements you set at the point of admission are appropriate to the level and content of the programme. Admissions processes must also

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	provide information to applicants of where they can go to get additional training in the English language if required to support them meeting the criteria. The level of this criteria is determined by the learning organisation in line with national standards (IELTS, TOFEL etc) relevant to the level of study. In practice examples: • Studying a health-related programme at level 3 - IELTS = 4.5 • Studying a health-related programme at level 4 or 5 – IELTS 6.0.
1.4 The admissions process must assess the suitability of applicants, including criminal conviction checks.	This standard is about making sure that learners meet the required standards for working with children or vulnerable adults. The process for requesting and confirming criminal record checks on all applicants must be described in the programme documentation. Within the NHS framework, as in all care environments and services, there is a requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service checks to be undertaken for any person working in close contact, caring for or being responsible for children or vulnerable adults. We expect you to carry out criminal record checks on all applicants. You would normally do this through the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales,

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	Disclosure Scotland, Access Northern Ireland or, where appropriate, an equivalent body in another country. This should normally be at an 'enhanced' level or equivalent, due to the positions of trust and responsibility people on our Register are placed in. It is for you to decide who should pay the cost of carrying out the criminal conviction checks. In making an admissions decision about someone who has a criminal record, you should consider whether it might affect their suitability to work with service users and carers or affect the public's confidence in their profession. You should involve partner organisations in assessing the suitability of applicants. For example, you should consult practice education providers to find out whether the fact that an applicant has a criminal record would cause any problems in practice-based learning.
1.5 The admission process must ensure that applicants are aware of any health assessments that need to be carried out and comply with the necessary health requirements to work within a healthcare environment.	This standard is about making sure that learners will be able to take part in a programme safely and effectively and meet our standards for studying and working in a healthcare environment once they complete the programme. A health assessment should be carried out for all individuals applying for NHS and Health and Social Care Northern Ireland positions, including all directly paid employees, temporary workers (supplied by an agency or any other external contractor), students, trainees, and volunteers.

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	Depending on your level of study, additional screening may be needed for workers involved in exposure prone procedures (EPPs), patient care, patient contact or body fluid sample handling. This screening should be relevant to the job hazard and risk profile and must be undertaken in accordance with the relevant guidance. Individuals carrying out EPPs have a professional duty to ensure that they are tested and assessed for HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C.
1.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.	This standard is about making sure that you consider any previous learning and experience an applicant has as part of the admissions process in an appropriate and effective way. This is often known as 'recognition of prior learning' and can relate to an applicant's previous experiential (informal) learning or previous certificated (formal) learning (such as relevant qualifications or completed modules).
1.7 The education provider must ensure that there are equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and that they are implemented and monitored.	This standard is about making sure that the admissions process is open and impartial and does not discriminate unfairly between applicants. There must be equality and diversity policies in place which relate to the admissions process, as well as processes to monitor how these are being put into practice. Programmes may have their own equality and diversity policies, or education providers may have separate policies that apply. You should be able to demonstrate access to information

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	around widening participation and show how you make your policies available to applicants, along with information about what an applicant should do if they feel that they have been unfairly discriminated against.
2. Programme governance, management and leadership	**This part of the Standards of Education and Training covers a range of topics, including how the programme is led, managed and governed, and the processes for monitoring and reviewing the programme. It also provides guidance on involving stakeholders and making sure that the necessary resources are available to learners and educators.** **You must make sure that you oversee the programme effectively, and that there are effective systems and processes in place to establish, review, monitor and improve the way in which the programme is delivered. This applies to all parts of the programme, including practice-based learning.**
2.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.	This standard is about making sure that there is a future for the programme, that it is currently secure, sustainable and is supported by all stakeholders involved.
2.2 The programme must be effectively managed. The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall operational responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and experienced.	This standard is about making sure there is effective management and clear responsibility for the programme. We expect there to be a programme-management structure in place with clear roles and responsibilities. You should also make sure that the people involved have the commitment, skills and expertise they need to lead and manage the programme.

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	By 'appropriately qualified and experienced', we mean that the person is or has been associated with foot health practice and has the relevant educational experience to oversee the programme from an operational perspective.
2.3 The education provider must ensure that the person holding overall professional responsibility for the programme is appropriately qualified and has the relevant educational and professional experience in foot health.	This standard is about making sure that there is a suitable person to lead the programme. This person is sometimes called the 'programme leader', but there may be other titles used for the role. By 'appropriately qualified and experienced', we mean that the person is a healthcare professional capable of leading the programme and effectively organising how that programme is delivered.
2.4 The programme must have regular and effective monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems in place.	You need to be able to show the systems in place to demonstrate how you monitor, report and evaluate the programme's quality assurance and effectiveness. This includes processes which allow you to continuously gather information on quality and effectiveness, as well as to respond to any identified risks, challenges or changes. There are many sources of information that should be used to help in the assurance and enhancement of programme quality and student experience. Evidence emerges at different points throughout the year and thus both assurance and enhancement planning are continual processes.

	In practice
	Programme Leaders with their programme team should review at regular intervals, and as soon as practically possible, relevant quantitative and qualitative performance indicators.
	As well as statistical data, programme teams should consider qualitative sources as well including student voice, external examiner reports, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) reports, service user and carer feedback etc. You should also consider wider sector and employer intelligence.
2.5 Service users and carers must be actively involved in the programme.	This standard is about how a programme actively involves service users and carers in contributing to the overall quality and effectiveness of a programme. It ensures that learners completing an approved programme are patient centred and fit to practice.
	Increasing evidence demonstrates the benefits and added value that user and carer involvement brings to health education, indicating an increased empathy and cultural awareness, improved communication skills, a better understanding of care impact and a positive attitudinal enhancement in students.
	Recommendations from the Berwick Report (2013), the Francis enquiry (2013), and the Keogh Report (2013) all call for a much stronger patient voice at all levels of health and social care education to gain a richer understanding of

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	peoples' experiences and improve service delivery.
	In practice
	The organisation may wish to adopt a service user and carer strategy to provide evidence for the processes of appropriate engagement and involvement of service users, carers and the public so that their views and participation influence decisions taken about planning, delivery, improvement and evaluation. Examples of engagement of service users and carers include:
	• Service users in the delivery of the experiential learning experiences. • Assessment of the students • Demonstration patients during clinical tutorials • Expert patients in the delivery of some theory modules • Governance (fitness to practice, board of studies) • Direct service user (development and improvement of clinical services).
2.6 Learners must be involved in the development and enhancement of a programme.	Programmes need to demonstrate that they provide meaningful opportunities to capture the student voice. Development and enhancement programmes need to provide a safe, secure and non-threatening environment with experienced and, if appropriate, neutral facilitators to ensure that students feel confident to reflect deeply and speak freely. Involving learners could include involving individuals, or it could include working with groups of learners or representatives. It could be focused on modules, programmes, groups of programmes or themes.

	In practice
	By 'involved in the programme,' we mean that learners must be able to contribute to the programme in some way. We do not specify the exact areas of a programme which learners must be involved in, but they could be involved in some or all of the following: • Design • Delivery • Review We do not specify exactly how learners must be involved. This could be done through several activities, including: • Feedback through surveys; • Partnership working between learners and educators; • Staff and learner liaison committees; and • Learners being represented on committees and working groups.
2.7 An effective programme must be in place to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators, appropriate to their role in the programme.	This standard is about making sure that educators continue to develop and maintain their professional and academic skills, so they can deliver the programme effectively. By 'academic development,' we mean activities aimed at developing educators' skills related to teaching, learning or research which is appropriate to their role in the programme. By 'professional development,' we mean activities aimed at developing educators' skills in leadership, management and/or communication.
2.8 There must be effective and	This standard is about your commitment to supporting and

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aaccessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.	helping learners to achieve and successfully complete the programme. By 'all settings' we mean the setting for theory-based learning, as well as the practice-based learning environment (where it is separate) and any other place where part of the programme is delivered. These arrangements should include academic and pastoral support, so that learners have access to feedback and regular reviews on their progress as well as support in particular areas of the programme where needed. **In practice** Programme documentation should describe the processes for allocating a tutor and how the role effectively supports the needs of the learner, including the development of their role-specific identity. The tutor must be an academic member of the programme team. Programme documentation should describe the services available for learners offering the support they may require to successfully complete the programme. This may include personal, mental health, physical health, supportive learning, financial or pastoral services. Education providers may provide these services directly or by facilitating their access for learners.
2.9 The programme must	This standard is about making sure that the programme

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| implement and monitor diversity and inclusion policies in relation to learners. | provides an impartial, fair and supportive environment to allow people to learn. The diversity and inclusion policies, as well as the processes you have in place to monitor how they are put into practice, must apply throughout the programme.

If part of the programme (for example, practice-based learning) is delivered at or by a separate organisation, you must have a process to make sure that appropriate equality and diversity policies are in place and followed, and the policies must apply to all learners on different parts of the programme.

In practice

Programme documentation related to participation and completion of the programme should explicitly describe how individuals defined by any of the protected characteristics – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation – are supported throughout their engagement with the education provider.

Programme documentation related to staffing should describe how the CPD and lifelong learning available for educators and practice educators are inclusive of equality and diversity principles, with the aim of strengthening the skills needed to develop a more inclusive and participatory profession. |
| 2.10 There must be a through | This standard is about how you look at and settle concerns |

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	and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learners' concerns and complaints.	and complaints raised by learners. Clear processes and lines of communication need to be in place to facilitate learners to raise concerns and complaints in a safe, secure and non-threatening environment and defines an appropriate timeline for response by the education provider. Furthermore, how concerns and complaints contribute to the overall way in which the programme is governed.
2.11	There must be thorough and effective processes in place for raising concerns to ensure the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character, health and wellbeing.	This standard is about how you look at and settle concerns raised by academic or practice educators. Clear processes and lines of communication need to be in place to facilitate academic and practice educators to raise academic or professional concerns over a student.

This standard is about how you take responsibility for protecting service users and carers who interact with learners, and for making sure that learners who complete the programme meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce and expectations of professional conduct and behaviour. We expect you to have effective processes in place to continuously reassess the suitability of learners' conduct, character and health, and deal with any concerns about learners. This process should include fitness to study and fitness to practice pathways. |
| 2.12 | There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of | This standard is about helping learners to recognise situations where service users may be at risk, supporting them in raising any concerns and making sure action is taken in response to those concerns. |

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	service users.	Learners and staff may encounter situations which cause concern during practice-based learning or in other ways during the programme. There must be a process or processes which cover all parts of the programme. **In practice** Programme documentation related to practice-based learning should describe how learners are empowered and supported to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people who access foot health services. Safeguarding measures for learners and people who access services should be evidenced in the programme documentation. For apprenticeship programmes, learners should also be empowered and supported to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of people accessing the services of their employer.
2.13	The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of a programme approved by the Royal College of Podiatry leads to eligibility for working for the NHS.	This standard is about making sure there is no confusion about which programmes we approve and which we do not. Learners, educators and the public must be clear on which programmes meet our standards and which do not.
2.14	There must be regular, effective and evidenced collaboration between the	This may be applicable in some cases e.g., apprenticeships or those programmes where placements are delivered in external practice-based learning environments.

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	education provider and practice education providers.	It is best practice where a programme contains practice-based learning to be able to demonstrate collaboration. This standard is about how you work in partnership with those who provide practice-based learning as a way of making sure that they provide ongoing quality and effectiveness. By 'practice education providers,' we mean departments, services or organisations which provide a setting or opportunity for learners to take part in practice-based learning, as well as organisations which employ those involved in teaching or assessing learners in practice. By 'regular,' we mean that the arrangements for working with others must reflect a partnership and ongoing relationship, not joint work and co-operation that only happens around the time the programme is approved or being monitored, or when specific issues arise with practice-based learning. We do not set specific requirements, but partnership working could take various forms, such as meetings, asking for feedback or other methods of communication with practice education providers. You should make decisions based on what is effective for continuously improving the programme.
2.15	There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability, equity and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners	This standard is about the processes you have in place to make sure that all learners on the programme have access to 'hands on' practice-based learning which meets their learning needs and the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

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| 2.16 | There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme. | This standard is about making sure that the resources provided for the programme allow for an appropriate number of staff who are able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively.

By 'adequate number' we mean that you must be able to justify the number of staff you have in place – as well as the proportion of their time spent working on the programme – in relation to the practical requirements of the programme, the number of learners, their needs and the learning outcomes to be achieved.

Where an increase in the number of learners or a significant decrease in the number of educators occurs, or is anticipated, it is reported to RCPod as a major change and a clear strategy for developing or supporting the pre-registration programme team and associated resources is provided.

In practice

Programme documentation related to staffing should include the education provider's workload-planning model, which identifies the teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other activities that educators are contracted to undertake. The approach to managing staffing, including staffing shortages, substantive and interim positions and visiting educators, is also described. |
| 2.17 | Subject areas must be | This standard is about making sure that educators have the |

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| delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise. | necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver their parts of the programme effectively. This covers teaching as well as assessment and other aspects of delivering the programme. By 'educators,' we mean individuals who are involved in teaching, facilitating, assessing or supporting learning.

In practice

Programme documentation related to staffing should describe:

• How educators are required to hold qualifications at a level higher than, or equivalent to, the one they are teaching and can demonstrate quality and currency in their area of teaching;

• The formal qualifications of all educators and evidence of their expertise in the areas they teach;

• The roles and responsibilities for all educators;

• Where relevant the workload-planning model in place outlining how the programme team distributes their contribution to the programme across teaching, research, CPD, administrative and other functions;

• The professional backgrounds of educators and, where possible, practice educators and how their experience aligns with the philosophy and purpose of the programme;

• How the scholarship and research being undertaken by educators are contributing to the programme and the profession. |

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2.18	The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme and must be accessible to all learners and educators.	This standard is about how you make sure that programme resources are readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme. By 'all settings,' we mean the setting for theory-based learning, as well as for practice-based learning (if this is separate) and any other site where a part of the programme is delivered.
3.	**Programme design and delivery**	**This standard is about making sure that learners who complete an approved programme can meet the Foot Health Support Worker Standards.** **You must be able to show how all the standards are covered by the learning outcomes in the programme. It is not necessary for each of the standards to link to a single learning outcome. It may be that several learning outcomes together make sure that learners are able to meet one or more of the standards.** **You should also take account of any reasonable adjustments you have made to the way you deliver the programme to disabled learners when considering how they can meet the standards at the end of their programme.**
3.1	The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-	This standard is about ensuring learners use best evidence to inform and systematically evaluate their practice as a key part of meeting the standards. Programmes should introduce

based practice.	key research and enquiry skills to inform evidence-based practice. The ability to guarantee the quality of their own practice is a requirement set out in the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce (SFHW).
	A research-informed curriculum is one which engages learners with current research relevant to their subject, discipline or profession; including where possible the opportunity to interact and engage with researchers. It involves students learning through research and enquiry and is informed by evidence drawn from robust practice and educational based research.
	Programmes are informed by cutting-edge research and actively involve students in the creation of knowledge through engagement with research and through research-like learning and teaching activities (e.g., problem-based and inquiry-based learning).
	In practice
	Programme documentation should include an explicit statement describing the aims and objectives of research education and demonstrate how this is embedded throughout the programme to develop an evidence-based practitioner. The curriculum should describe the acquisition of both quantitative and qualitative research skills and must support methods appropriate to research in foot health. The curriculum should be designed to develop graduate

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	confidence in the application of research skills to support engagement in and with research.
	• When designing and reviewing programmes it is important to consider how you will integrate opportunities for students to be exposed to and involved in the latest research.
	• In order to create effective links between research and teaching, staff need to develop creative ways of authentically aligning research priorities with the needs of student learning.
	• It is likely that in the first instance the immediate link between research and teaching will be programme content. However, you may also want to consider whether the programme could contain elements that stimulate students to adopt disciplinary audit and/or research approaches or to undertake research type activities.
3.2 The delivery of the programme must support and develop digital literacy skills.	This standard is about ensuring learners develop their digital literacy skills to prepare them for the digital workplace. A programme should evidence how digital literacy is embedded within the programme and how learners develop these skills through authentic tasks in meaningful situations relevant to the level of study. Delivery incorporates practical and innovative technology to facilitate formal and informal learning between students, staff and industry. Technology should be employed to provide students with the resources necessary to create and

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maintain their own digitally fluent and relevant practices, incorporating digital, networked identities to support their learning and engagement with industry, and tools to aid their personal and professional development.

In practice

- Support greater learner engagement through 'flipped,' hybrid and blended approaches that might combine face-to-face teaching with other approaches.
- Classroom sessions, including lectures, can be customised to meet the needs of learners and to encourage greater learner engagement, e.g. through in-class polling using student response devices, smartphones or other electronic devices.
- Lectures may be recorded and the recordings made available to learners (online and for download) to allow leaners to study at a time and place to suit their needs and other commitments promoting inclusive learning.
- Staff and students may be able to choose from a range of e-learning multimedia materials that feature attributes such as interactivity, usability and accessibility.
- Create environments where learners can submit assignments and receive fast feedback and assessment results in an electronic format.
- Support lectures with multimedia content, e.g. handouts, reading lists, diagrams and illustrations, videos, links to databases, websites or research papers.
- Foster collaborative learning through online group work and student interaction via online

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	communication.
	• Support enquiry-based learning and the development of personal research skills through the use of online research tasks and the use of online databases and libraries.
	• Support assessment for learning by providing a range of forms and modes of assessment (e.g. exams, coursework, presentations and tests).
3.3 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn about the roles of other relevant professionals in the wider healthcare team.	This standard is about how learners are prepared to work with other professionals and across professions for the benefit of service users and carers. Programme documentation should describe how learners have interprofessional learning experiences with other health, wellbeing, social and integrated care professions as well as other relevant professions.
3.4 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.	This standard is about respecting individuals' rights and reducing the risk of harm, while also making sure that learners understand what will be expected of them as health and care professionals. The standard has two parts: 1. Getting appropriate consent from service users who interact with learners. 2. Getting appropriate consent from learners in situations where they take part as service users themselves in practical and clinical teaching.

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	In practice
	• Programme documentation related to practice-based learning should describe the process for obtaining consent from people who access services prior to engagement with learners. The process for obtaining consent from people who access services for their involvement in programme development, implementation and review should also be documented.
	• Programme documentation should describe the process for obtaining consent from learners who take part in learning or assessment activities where they act as people accessing services.
	• Safeguarding measures for learners and people who access services should be evidenced in the programme documentation.
	• Programme documentation related to staffing should describe how the CPD and lifelong learning available for educators and practice educators are inclusive of the skills and knowledge to ensure safeguarding of learners and people accessing services.
3.5 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring	This standard is about making sure that all learners who complete the programme meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce (SFHW), by being fully involved in the parts of the programme which are essential to achieving them. You must have systems in place to monitor attendance and

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processes in place.	to take appropriate action if learners fail to attend the compulsory parts of the programme.
	For apprenticeship programmes, arrangements and responsibilities associated with attendance must be communicated to learners to ensure they are able to meet the apprenticeship standards.
3.6 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.	This standard is about making sure that learners who complete an approved programme can meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce (SFHW). You must be able to show how all the SFHW are covered by the learning outcomes in the programme. It is not necessary for each of the SFHW to link to a single learning outcome. It may be that several learning outcomes together make sure that learners are able to meet one or more of the SFHW domains.
3.7 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, as set out in the common themes in the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.	Throughout a programme, learners must have the opportunity to learn about professional conduct and to demonstrate an understanding of which types of behaviour are appropriate for FHSW roles and which are not. **In practice** • Programme documentation should describe how the learning outcomes are aligned with the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the roles. • Programme documentation should demonstrate how learners will be assessed as meeting the learning outcomes. • Programme documentation should define the

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	responsibilities, roles and expectations of learners across all elements of the programme and clearly indicate the consequences of not fulfilling these.
3.8 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.	This standard is about making sure that a programme remains current regarding the philosophy, core values, knowledge and skills of the FHSW roles. It also aims to allow for changes within the profession.
3.9 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice at the appropriate level for the learner's role.	This standard is about how the programme takes account of and reflects current practice, so that it remains relevant and effective in preparing learners for practice at the appropriate level for their role. Practice changes over time. You must be able to show how you make sure the curriculum stays relevant and how you update it in line with developments or changes in current practice.
3.10 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.	This standard is about making sure that learners can apply knowledge to practice as a basic part of being prepared and competent to practice within their roles. This standard can be mapped in a programme's assessment matrix. Making direct connections between curricula and their importance to the real world helps to motivate and engage students and place their learning in context. Participating in programmes of study that include an emphasis on application, experiential learning and real-world engagement will make a major contribution to students developing skills and attributes for employability. This motivates students to

engage in active learning through the desire to find solutions to questions, scenarios and problems.

Experiential learning develops autonomous learners by promoting the knowledge-development, leadership and transferable skills required, alongside subject and disciplinary knowledge, for tackling complex problems that occur in the real world. Facilitating collaborative learning and authentic learning supports the self-management of learning as it is perceived as being more relevant to their needs and gives the learner the responsibility and a degree of freedom.

In practice

- Design the curriculum around participatory and experiential learning activities using questions or problems, small-scale investigations, projects and research.
- Consider the design of the learning environment to encourage real-world experience, e.g., simulation suites.
- Adopt a student-centred teaching approach that incorporates learning activities to provide students with an experience in which learning takes place and challenges students to not only develop knowledge but to apply that knowledge in a range of contexts.
- Focus the tutor role on scaffolding, asking open-ended questions to provoke further thinking and learning.

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		• Seek out opportunities for employer engagement in the design and delivery of your curriculum. • Consider inter-disciplinary teaching and learning to ensure students experience ideas and views from a range of disciplines, cultures, places and generations. • Use methods such as problem-based learning, group work and workshops. • Encourage and create opportunities for student reflection.
3.11	The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.	This standard is about making sure that the methods you use to deliver the programme supports learners to achieve the learning outcomes. By 'appropriate,' we mean relevant to, and effective at, achieving the learning outcomes needed, both in terms of theoretical knowledge and the practical skills needed in professional practice.
3.12	The delivery of the programme must support and develop a learner's responsibility for their own learning and reflective thinking.	This standard is about helping learners to take responsibility for their own learning to become reflective practitioners as they carry out well defined clinical duties and essential fundamentals of foot health care. Learners should be encouraged to identify: • Their own learning goals (i.e. what they need to learn to be successful during training, in their careers, and in their lives more generally). • Their learning processes (i.e. how they will learn what they need and which methods are most effective for their personal style of learning). • How they will evaluate their own methods of learning

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	with a view to becoming more efficient and effective learners. The delivery of the programme should encourage learners to consider their own practice, including the scope of their safe and effective practice and their responsibility to make sure that they continue to practise safely when they complete the programme.
4. Practice-based learning	**This section is about the practice-based learning which must be a central part of your programme. We define 'practice-based learning' as the clinical or practical experience that forms part of an approved programme. It may take place throughout a programme or in separate periods of time. In some programmes, it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.** **You must oversee and be responsible for all practice-based learning, even if it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.**
4.1 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving, monitoring and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.	This standard is about making sure the programme delivers continued quality of practice-based learning. You must have a system for approving or overseeing practice-based learning and for regularly monitoring it. This may include collecting, analysing and acting on feedback from learners, service users, practice placement educators and others. Also, we expect you to have processes in place to respond when any concerns, difficulties or incidents arise, which

could prevent a learner's success when providing practice-based learning, or if there is evidence which may call into question the suitability of the practice-based learning environment.

This might include, for example, information or reports from regulators as well as internal investigations. Responding appropriately may involve making changes to practice-based learning, dealing with issues or removing approval if this is necessary. You should see the quality assurance of practice-based learning as a method of continuous improvement of the learning environment and service users' experience. If practice-based learning is provided by a separate organisation, you must still have overall responsibility for overseeing it.

4.2 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.	You must make sure that practice-based learning does not cause a risk to service users. This is in part about making sure that learners work within a scope of practice that is appropriate to their level of skills and experience. This is likely to develop for an individual learner as they progress during the course of the programme and the practice-based learning they take part in should reflect this.
4.3 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.	This standard is about making sure there is enough support for learners to take part in safe and effective practice-based learning. The training establishment is responsible for ensuring whomever they employ to provide practice-based learning adheres to the requirements of that organisation to do their relevant CPD.

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4.4 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.	We expect you to make sure that the qualifications and experience of staff are appropriate to the specific aspects of practice-based learning they are involved in, and that they can effectively support learning and assessment.
4.5 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.	This standard is about how practice-based learning is used effectively, as a key part of the programme, to prepare learners for future practice. Practice-based learning may take place throughout a programme or in separate periods of time. In some programmes, it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme. The practice-based learning provided must provide the relevant 'hands on' learning experiences to allow the learner to successfully meet the learning outcomes in line with the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.

Programme documentation should describe how learners apply their knowledge, skills and values across a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities. All practice-based learning opportunities should include interventions that focus on the person, the occupation, and the environment. Programme documentation should describe how the practice-based learning outcomes are informed by national evidence and expectations of service provision. |
| 4.6 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the | This standard is about making sure that the way practice-based learning is designed allows learners to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme and the Standards for |

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| achievement of the learning outcomes and the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce. | the Foot Health Workforce (SFHW). You must be able to explain how learners progress during practice-based learning, in relation to the SFHW and the learning outcomes of the programme.

Programme documentation should include samples of the learning agreements between a learner and practice educator. Learning agreements should specify progressive learning outcomes for practice-based learning and must be agreed to by an educator who is a podiatrist.

For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation should include a contract template describing:

- The organisational responsibilities of the employer, education provider and practice-based learning provider.
- The roles and responsibilities of the learner, work-based mentor, educator and practice educator.
- The status of learner, as opposed to employee, and the contexts in which this differentiation is important.
- The commitment by employers to meet the same expectations as education providers regarding enough resourcing to ensure there is quality in the education and learning opportunities provided.
- When and how the policies of employers and education providers will operate, and which will take precedence in any given circumstance. |

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	The contract should reflect an agreement between the learner, employer and education provider. An additional contract may be required to demonstrate arrangements for the end-point assessment. For apprenticeship pre-registration programmes, programme documentation should describe how employee rights (for example, annual leave and bank holidays) and pressure points in the workplace are considered when scheduling practice-based learning.
4.7 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.	This standard is about making sure there is enough support for learners to take part in safe and effective practice-based learning. You must be able to justify what you consider to be a suitable number of staff for the number of learners and the level of support specific learners need.
4.8 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning.	This standard is about how you make sure that practice educators are suitable and able to support and develop learners in a safe and effective way. A 'practice educator' is defined as a person who is responsible for a learner's education during their practice-based learning. You must be able to justify what the necessary knowledge, skills and experience are to be able to support safe and effective practice-based learning in relation to the learning outcomes of the programme. Programme documentation should describe how the education provider supports practice-based learning providers to identify, prepare, support and retain practice educators. Programme documentation related to staffing should describe how practice educators are facilitated to

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	develop the skills needed to support learners. Programme documentation should outline the relationship between the education provider and the practice-based learning provider and describes how they work in partnership to support the CPD and lifelong learning of practice educators.
4.9 The education provider must ensure that learners undertake a suitable amount practice-based learning to meet the learning outcomes of the programme.	This standard is about how you make sure that a learner has undertaken enough practice-based learning to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme relevant to the level of study. The programme should evidence that it is designed to embed participatory and 'hands on' experiential learning activities. The RCPod does not stipulate the number of hours that a programme should provide to a student, **however a programme must be able to demonstrate and justify that the number of hours allocated to practice based learning will ensure a student has enough time to complete the required learning outcomes for the programme.** The following practice-based learning hours for each level are provide as guidance only to programme providers. These should be quality learning hours with a mixture of experiences where the majority should be 'hands on' experiences. The RCPod takes into consideration those programmes where the number of 'hands on' hours appear to be low but could be of a high quality due to the intensity of experience or better learner to practitioner ratios. Programmes must therefore ensure that they can justify the

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quality of practice provision to meet the learning outcomes.

Level 3 – 350 hours

Level 4 – 350 hours

Level 5 – 350 hours.

Learners should experience a wide range of practice-based learning opportunities, such as:

- Public, independent/private and third sector settings

- Urban, rural, local or international settings.

- Non-frontline settings, for exposure to strategic and leadership roles and/or within research departments or organisations.

- Organisations for people who are under-employed, disempowered, dispossessed or socially excluded.

- Organisations caring for people of different ages, from different socioeconomic and cultural contexts, with recently acquired and long-standing occupational needs and with different levels of physical and psychosocial functioning.

- Settings using individual, group, community and population approaches.

- Settings where there are no Foot Health Support Workers currently employed.

5. Assessment	**This standard is about making sure that learners who complete the programme have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practice**

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	their role safely and effectively.
	Your assessment strategy and design must make sure that learners can meet all of the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce before completing the relevant programme. Equally, you need to make sure that learners who do not meet the standards are not allowed to complete the programme.
	Your assessment strategy and design should strike a suitable balance between the need to support learners to succeed and the need to make sure that learners who complete the programme achieve the standards.
	It is not necessary for each of the standards to link to a particular assessment. It may be that several assessments together make sure that learners are able to meet one or more of the standards.
5.1 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.	This standard is about making sure that assessments are effective at deciding whether a learner is fit to practice by the end of the programme. You must have appropriate processes in place to make sure that assessments in the programme are objective, inclusive, fair, reliable and are of a variety to support individual styles and develop transferable skills. This should include processes for dealing with issues or putting improvements in place where necessary.
5.2 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and	This standard is about how you make sure that learners understand what is expected of them at each stage of the programme and educators can apply assessment criteria

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achievement within the programme.	consistently. As well as what might prevent a learner from progressing, you should also be clear about the options available to a learner who is failing or at risk of not progressing or completing the programme. You should be able to show how these policies are clearly communicated to both learners and educators. Programme documentation should demonstrate how learners will be assessed as meeting the learning outcomes. Programme documentation should also include the process for identifying and managing learners who are less likely to successfully complete the programme as early as possible. For apprenticeship programmes, arrangements for the end-point assessment must be documented. An additional contract may be required for the external examiner to demonstrate arrangements and responsibilities for the end-point assessment.
5.3 There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.	This standard is about making sure that assessment processes are applied fairly. An 'academic appeal' means a request by a learner for a review of a decision made by you or another academic body about their progression, assessment or award. You must have a process in place which allows learners to make an appeal if they feel that the process which led to the decision has been followed incorrectly or unfairly, or when new information has come to light which affects the assessment outcome.

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	In practice
	Programme documentation should outline the academic appeals process and describe how this information is communicated to learners.
	Programme documentation should define an appropriate timeline for responses to academic appeals by the education provider.
5.4 The education provider must ensure that at least one external examiner for the programme has the professional and academic experience and qualifications relevant to the programme.	This standard is about making sure that there is relevant professional input in the external review of the assessment process. You must make sure that at least one of your external examiners has professional and academic experience and qualifications relevant to the programme.
	By 'professional and academic experience,' we mean that one of the external examiners must be a podiatry academic capable of reviewing the professional and academic assessment processes, additionally, they will have a thorough understanding of the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce and experience of assessment principles and methods in education that are required to award the qualification.
	Programme documentation related to staffing should outline the expectations of the expertise, qualifications (and current HCPC registration status for one of the external examiners) of external examiners. The appointment of suitable external examiners is the responsibility of the education provider.

	For apprenticeship programmes, arrangements and responsibilities associated with the end-point assessment must be included within the external examiner contract.
5.5 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.	This standard is about making sure that learners who complete the programme have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practice their role safely and effectively. Your assessment strategy and design must make sure that learners can meet all the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce before completing the programme. Programme documentation should describe the assessment methods used and how they address the andragogic needs of learners. Assessment should include direct observation during practice-based learning. Programme documentation should describe how the assessment methods are congruent with the educational aims and learning outcomes.
5.6 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate that they can meet the professional values and behaviours as set out in the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.	This standard is about how learners can demonstrate that they understand the expectations associated with being a Foot Health Support Worker. Programme documentation should describe how the programme learning outcomes are aligned to the ethical and professional conduct expectations of the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce.

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	Programme documentation should include the process for investigation of alleged fitness to practice concerns and for the potential termination of a learner's enrolment on these grounds. In cases where there are concerns about a learner's ability to progress in the programme, the process used to inform relevant stakeholders, where applicable, and decide about the learner's progression, should be outlined in the programme documentation. For apprenticeship programmes, programme documentation should describe the approach taken by the education provider and employer to jointly decide about the learner's progression and the efforts to preserve the ongoing relationship between the learner and their employer in such circumstances.
5.7 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to, and effective at, measuring the learning outcomes appropriate to the level of study.	This standard is about making sure that the methods used to assess learners help you to decide whether the learning outcomes of the programme have been met. This, in turn, makes sure that the Standards for the Foot Health Workforce are met. **In practice** • The assessment schedule of a programme, module or session must consider the dual needs of assessment for learning and assessment of learning, as outlined above. Programme-based assessment strategies should employ a range of methods that aim explicitly to develop the learning of your students.

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	• Opportunities for feedback that promotes learning are explicitly to be built into the design and delivery of learning and teaching activities. Assessment (for learning) should be placed at the centre of subject and program design, recognised as an integral part of curriculum planning from the earliest levels, and organised holistically across programmes.
	• Every student should have regular opportunities to reflect on feedback and engage in dialogue with staff.
	• Students and their teachers should be partners in learning and assessment: students take responsibility for assessment and the feedback process, students should develop the ability to judge their own work and others against agreed standards using self and peer assessment, and there should be dialogue and interaction between staff and students. Students should have the opportunity to devise and apply assessment criteria for formative assessment.
	• Students must be involved in assessment practices and cultures: Assessment practices must be carefully structured to enable students to make the transition to university study, and assessment practices should respond to diverse student experiences and expectations.
	• Students should develop skills in assessment literacy.
	• Assessments should provide inclusive and trustworthy representation of student achievements: Interim results should be used for learning, not for

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	summative assessment, achievement should be based on integrated assessments and certification should report student accomplishments and abilities in terms of specific and meaningful outcomes.