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## **HCPC Code of Corporate Governance**

The Health and Care Professions Council's Code of Corporate Governance incorporates a series of regulatory documents and policies which govern how we operate, take decisions and the procedures followed to ensure that our actions are fair, efficient, transparent and accountable to our stakeholders.

The Code is divided into five sections as detailed below.

### **Part A: Council**

Standing Orders of the Council.....Enclosure 1

### **Part B: Scheme of Delegation**

Scheme of Delegation .....Enclosure 2

Scheme of Delegation, Education and Training Committee .....Enclosure 3

### **Part C: Committees**

Committee Memberships.....Enclosure 4

Education and Training Committee Standing Orders .....Enclosure 5

Education and Training Committee Rules .....Enclosure 6

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Standing Orders .....Enclosure 7

People and Resources Committee Standing Orders .....Enclosure 8

Remuneration Committee Standing Orders .....Enclosure 9

Professional Liaison Groups .....Enclosure 10

### **Part D: Roles and responsibilities of Members**

Council and Committee Roles .....Enclosure 11

Code of Conduct .....Enclosure 12

Council and Committee Conflict of Interest Policy .....Enclosure 13

### **Part E: Financial Regulations**

Financial Regulations .....Enclosure 14

Anti-bribery & Fraud Policy.....Enclosure 15

## **Standing Orders of the Health and Care Professions Council**

### **1 Application and Interpretation**

- 1.1 These Standing Orders establish the basic rules about how the Council conducts its proceedings.
- 1.2 They supplement and must be read with the Health Professions Order 2001 and the Health and Care Professions Council (Constitution) Order 2009 (together, **the Orders**).
- 1.3 If a procedural point arises during a Council meeting which is not covered by these Standing Orders (or the Orders), the common law rules concerning the conduct of meetings apply.
- 1.4 The Chair is the final authority on the interpretation of these Standing Orders.
- 1.5 Unless the context otherwise requires, terms used in the Standing Orders have the same meaning as in the Orders.

### **2 Suspension of Standing Orders**

The Council, by resolution, may suspend any Standing Order (other than one prescribed by or under the Orders).

### **3 Frequency of Meetings**

- 3.1 The Council must meet in ordinary session (**Ordinary Meeting**) at least six times each year, at times decided by the Council.
- 3.2 In addition to Ordinary Meetings, a special session of the Council (**Special Meeting**) may be convened by the Secretary at the written request of the Chair or any four Council Members.
- 3.3 A request for a Special Meeting to be held must include details of the business to be transacted at that meeting.
- 3.4 A Special Meeting must take place within 14 days of the Secretary receiving the request for the meeting to be held.

### **4 Adjournment of Meeting**

- 4.1 The Chair may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn a meeting, but no business is to be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business which had not been disposed of when the adjournment took place.
- 4.2 If a meeting is adjourned for more than seven days (but not otherwise), notice of the meeting must be given as if it was an Ordinary Meeting.

## **5 Access to meetings**

- 5.1 Subject to Standing Order 19.5, all Council meetings must be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
- 5.1.1 information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
  - 5.1.2 information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or office holder or an applicant for any post or office;
  - 5.1.3 the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
  - 5.1.4 negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
  - 5.1.5 any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
  - 5.1.6 action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
  - 5.1.7 the source of information given to the Council in confidence; or
  - 5.1.8 any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council's functions.

## **6 Notice of Meetings**

- 6.1 The Secretary must give Members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting.
- 6.2 If for any reason a meeting is convened at shorter notice, then the Secretary must give Members notice of the time and place of the meeting at the time that the meeting is convened.
- 6.3 Failure to send notice of a meeting to a Member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

## **7 Agenda**

- 7.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting.
- 7.2 Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to Members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **8 Chair**

- 8.1 The Chair is to preside at any Council meeting.
- 8.2 If the Chair is absent from or unable to preside at a meeting, the Members present must nominate another Member to serve as chair at that meeting.
- 8.3 In these Standing Orders, references to the **Chair** include a Member presiding at a meeting in place of the Chair.

## **9 Quorum**

- 9.1 The quorum at any Council meeting is seven Members.
- 9.2 If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the time appointed for a meeting to commence, all business which should have been transacted at that meeting is to be held over until the next Ordinary Meeting, unless a Special Meeting is called in the meantime for the transaction of that business.
- 9.3 If, during a Council meeting, it appears to the Chair that a quorum has ceased to exist, business must be suspended and the number of Members present counted and, if:
  - 9.3.1 a quorum exists, the business may proceed;
  - 9.3.2 a quorum does not exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next Ordinary Meeting.

## **10 Conduct of Meetings**

- 10.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.
- 10.2 A Member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the meeting.
- 10.3 All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Council.
- 10.4 Members must not use offensive or improper language or make derogatory personal references to any other Member or Council employee.
- 10.5 A Member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a Member and, where the Member persists in that conduct, may direct that Member to cease speaking.
- 10.6 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **11 Voting**

- 11.1 Except where the Orders specify a different requirement, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the Members present voting by a show of hands.
- 11.2 In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **12 Minutes of Council meetings**

- 12.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting which shall include a record of the Members present at that meeting.

- 12.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the preceding meeting must be confirmed (or confirmed as amended) and signed by the Chair as a true record of that meeting.
- 12.3 The signed minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.

### **13 Duration**

Subject to Standing Order 9.2, a meeting must start at the time set out in the notice of meeting and may continue until all of the business on the agenda has been disposed of.

### **14 Disorder**

- 14.1 If, in the Chair's opinion, a Member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that Member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 14.2 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chair considers appropriate.
- 14.3 If a person other than a Member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.

### **15 Members' interests**

- 15.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 15.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests. A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Council's consideration of that matter.

### **16 Code of conduct**

Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

### **17 Members' education, training and performance**

- 17.1 The Council must establish standards of education and training for Members and, as part of those standards, must arrange for Members to undergo training to assist them in their performance of their duties.

- 17.2 The Council must establish standards of attendance and performance for members, including a system of annual performance appraisal.
- 17.3 Members must comply with the standards established by the Council under this Standing Order and must not, without reasonable excuse, refuse to participate in the training or appraisal processes.

## **18 Provisional suspension of Members**

- 18.1 If circumstances arise which may result in a Member being suspended or removed from office by the Privy Council under the Orders, the Council may resolve that the Member is to be provisionally suspended from office until the Privy Council has reached a decision on whether to suspend or remove the Member.
- 18.2 A Member who is provisionally suspended is not entitled to participate in Council meetings or to exercise any other functions of a Member.

## **19. Virtual meetings**

- 19.1 Meetings of the Council may be held by electronic means, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being together at the same place.
- 19.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 6 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 19.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
  - 19.3.1 to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - 19.3.2 to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 19.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing order 11.1 does not apply.
- 19.5 Where practicable, the Council must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

## **20 Approval of resolutions without meeting**

A resolution which, with the Chair's consent, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by at least three quarters of the Members entitled to receive notice of and attend a Council meeting is as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

## **21 Emergency Action**

- 21.1 In an emergency, where a decision must be made by the Council before its next meeting, the powers and duties of the Council may be exercised by the Chair (**Emergency Action**).

- 21.2 For this purpose an **emergency** means circumstances in which:
- 21.2.1 the HCPC will be unable to discharge its statutory functions or be exposed to a significant level of risk if urgent action is not taken; or
  - 21.2.2 urgent action must be taken to prevent loss, damage or significant disadvantage to the HCPC.
- 21.3 Before taking any Emergency Action, the Chair must consult the Registrar.
- 21.4 The Registrar must make reasonable efforts to inform Members of the proposed Emergency Action or, where it is impracticable to do so, must inform them as soon as possible after Emergency Action has been taken, but failure to do either does not invalidate any Emergency Action.
- 21.5 The Emergency Action functions of the Chair and Registrar may be exercised by any other persons that the Chair and Registrar may respectively nominate in writing.

## **22 The Secretary**

- 22.1 The Registrar is to be the secretary to the Council.
- 22.2 The Registrar, with the Council's consent, may appoint another person to act as secretary to the Council.
- 22.3 In these Standing Orders, references to the **Secretary** mean the Registrar or any person appointed under Standing Order 21.2.

## **23 The Registrar, Secretary and advisers**

- 23.1 The Registrar is entitled to attend and speak at Council meetings.
- 23.2 The Secretary or any other person advising on the business before a Council meeting (including advising the Chair on issues of order) may attend and, with the Chair's consent, speak at that meeting.

## **24 Common Seal**

- 24.1 The Common Seal of the Council must be kept in safe custody by the Registrar or a person appointed by the Registrar.
- 24.2 The Common Seal may only be affixed to a document with the consent of the Council or of a Committee to which that power has been delegated and where the seal is affixed to a document, it must also be signed by a Council Member and the Registrar.

## **25 Adoption**

These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, and supersede all previous versions. They apply to any Council meeting held on or after 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

## **Scheme of Delegation**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Health and Care Professions Council (the **Council**) is responsible for setting the organisation's policy and strategy and the Executive is responsible for the operational implementation of that policy and strategy.
- 1.2 This scheme of delegation (the **Scheme**) is intended to facilitate the efficient and effective discharge of the Council's functions in a manner which reflects that division of responsibilities.
- 1.3 The Scheme sets out the decisions which the Council has:
  - 1.3.1 reserved to itself;
  - 1.3.2 delegated to its Education and Training Committee;
  - 1.3.3 delegated to the Chief Executive, some of which may also be exercised by nominated Executive officers or by persons nominated by the Chief Executive;
  - 1.3.4 delegated to the Registrar, some of which may also be exercised by persons nominated by the Registrar;
  - 1.3.5 delegated to other nominated officers of the Executive.
- 1.4 Where a decision is delegated to a Head of Service or Director, that power may also be exercised by the relevant Executive Director.
- 1.5 The Scheme does not affect:
  - 1.5.1 decisions of an administrative nature, which form part of the Executive's responsibilities for the day to day administration of the HCPC's affairs under the direction of the Chief Executive; or
  - 1.5.2 any statutory function conferred upon the Registrar by or under the Order, the discharge or delegation of which is a matter for the Registrar.

### **2 Withdrawal of delegated power**

- 2.1 The Scheme remains in force until it is amended or revoked by the Council.
- 2.2 The Scheme does not apply to any matter in respect of which the Council has resolved that delegated authority is not to be exercised.

### **3 Exercise of delegated power**

- 3.1 Any power delegated under the Scheme must be exercised in a manner which is consistent with the Council's obligations under the Health Professions Order 2001 (the **Order**) and the general law.



- 3.2 In particular, the decision maker must have regard to Article 3(4) of the Order, which provides that the over-arching objective of the Council in exercising its functions is the protection of the public.
- 3.3 The decision maker must also recognise that lawful exercise of a statutory power requires not only formal compliance with the conditions laid down for its performance, but also compliance with the principle that all statutory powers must be exercised in good faith and for their proper purpose.
- 3.4 Delegation does not impliedly authorise sub-delegation. Consequently, a Committee or person to whom the Council has delegated any power may not permit another Committee or person to exercise that power unless the Council has expressly authorised them to do so.

#### **4 Matters reserved to the Council**

- 4.1 The Council retains ultimate responsibility for all policy matters including agreeing the overall strategy for the performance of its functions.
- 4.2 The power to make Rules is specifically reserved to the Council by Article 3(12) of the Order and cannot be delegated.
- 4.3 The Council retains responsibility for the following decisions which, to the extent that it is lawful to do so, may only be delegated by means of a specific resolution of the Council:
  - 4.3.1 establishing the Standards of Proficiency, Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, Standards of Education and Training and Standards of Continuing Professional Development;
  - 4.3.2 prescribing good conduct and good character requirements for safe and effective practice;
  - 4.3.3 establishing criteria for the purposes of Article 13 (grandparenting criteria), Article 15 (approvals criteria) and Article 15B (criteria for approved mental health professionals courses) of the Order;
  - 4.3.4 making recommendations to the Secretary of State and the Scottish Ministers concerning the regulation of any profession and giving guidance on the criteria that it will take into account in so doing;
  - 4.3.5 making any proposal to the Privy Council concerning the structure of the register;
  - 4.3.6 approving any report, plans or accounts to be submitted to the Privy Council, the Secretary of State or the Scottish Ministers;
  - 4.3.7 setting the fees to be charged for or associated with registration (including renewal, readmission, restoration and scrutiny fees);
  - 4.3.8 establishing any committee or sub-committee and making the Standing Orders for any committee or sub-committee;
  - 4.3.9 appointing members to any committee or sub-committee (this power may be exercised by the Chair in accordance with any policy or principles established by the Council);
  - 4.3.10 appointing or removing the Chief Executive;

- 4.3.11 appointing or removing the Registrar;
  - 4.3.12 appointing members to represent the Council on outside bodies (this power may be exercised by the Chair in accordance with any policy or principles established by the Council);
  - 4.3.13 entering into any arrangements with a body created or designated by the National Assembly for Wales under Article 20 of the Order;
  - 4.3.14 acquiring or disposing of any freehold or leasehold interest in land and property or other interest in land;
  - 4.3.15 re-structuring the Council's staff where the changes involve 20 or more employees.
- 4.4 The Council is also responsible for making decisions in relation to any matter for which it has granted delegated authority but where:
- 4.4.1 the person who would otherwise have delegated authority to act has an actual or potential interest; or
  - 4.4.2 in the opinion of the Chief Executive, it would be more appropriate for the Council to make the decision.

## **5 Matters delegated to the Education and Training Committee**

Approving, for the purpose of Article 12 of the Order, qualifications awarded in the United Kingdom which attest to the Standards of Proficiency required for admission.

## **6 Matters delegated to the Chief Executive and any officer nominated by the Chief Executive**

- 6.1 Advising the Privy Council that a person has ceased to be a member of the Council. This power may also be exercised by the Secretary to the Council.
- 6.2 Maintaining and publishing the Register of Members' Interests. This power may also be exercised by the Secretary to the Council.
- 6.3 Determining and administering the Council's employment procedures and processes.
- 6.4 Arranging any insurance on behalf of the Council where either the value of the premium payable does not exceed £50,000 or the renewal premium payable does not exceed the previous premium by more than 10%.
- 6.5 Tendering, awarding and varying contracts where the estimated total value does not exceed £100,000. The Chief Executive, with the approval of the Chair of the Council, may enter into contracts which exceed that limit (except in any case where the Council has resolved otherwise).
- 6.6 Approving the terms of any other agreement or transaction of a minor or urgent nature which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, is in the best interests of the Council.
- 6.7 Managing any property owned by the Council or in which the Council has an interest including the submission of planning and building consent applications.

## 7 Matters delegated to the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar

- 7.1 Maintaining the register and establishing arrangements for its publication and inspection.
- 7.2 Issuing certificates of good standing to registrants who wish to practise in another relevant European State.
- 7.3 Referring any allegation received by the Council under Part V of the Order to a Practice Committee or to Screeners. This power may also be exercised by the Head of Fitness to Practise.
- 7.4 Exercising the power under Article 22(6) of the Order to refer a matter for investigation as if it was the subject of an allegation.
- 7.5 Subject to any appointments procedure established by the Council, appointing:
  - 7.5.1 Visitors under Article 16 of the Order;
  - 7.5.2 Members and Panel Chairs of the Practice Committees (collectively, the Health and Care Profession Tribunal (the **Tribunal**)) under rules 3 and 4 of the Health and Care Professions Council (Practice Committees and Miscellaneous Amendments) Rules 2009; and
  - 7.5.3 Legal Assessors, Registrant Assessors, and Medical Assessors under Articles 34 to 36 of the Order.

This power may also be exercised by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- 7.6 Prosecuting offences under Articles 39 and 39A of the Order (but subject to any prosecution policy established by the Council).
- 7.7 Conducting and defending all proceedings brought by or against the Council in any court, tribunal or arbitration, other than proceedings relating to fitness to practise cases or proceedings under section 29 of the NHS Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002.
- 7.8 Entering into arrangements for the provision of administrative, technical or advisory services under Article 44A of the Order.
- 7.9 Determining applications for registration (but subject to any policies or procedures established by the Council or the Education and Training Committee).
- 7.10 Inviting (but not selecting):
  - 7.10.1 the members of any Panel which is to determine a registration appeal; and
  - 7.10.2 the Legal Assessor who is to be present at a registration appeal hearing.
- 7.11 Publishing the particulars of decisions (and the reasons for them) made by the Council's Registration Appeals Panel.
- 7.12 Conducting and defending all proceedings brought by or against the Council in relation to registration appeals.

- 7.13 Appointing authorised persons for the purpose of Articles 37(7) of the Order.

## **8 Matters delegated to the Head of Fitness to Practise**

- 8.1 Conducting and defending all proceedings brought by or against the Council in relation to fitness to practise cases and proceedings under section 29 of the NHS Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002.
- 8.2 Appointing authorised persons for the purpose of Article 25(1) of the Order.
- 8.3 Requiring a person to comply with Article 25(2) of Order (certain information to be provided by a registrant who is the subject of an allegation). This power may be exercised by any person nominated by the Head of Fitness to Practise.
- 8.4 Seeking an extension by a court, under Article 31(8) of the Order, of an interim order made by a Practice Committee.
- 8.5 Inviting (but not selecting) the Legal Assessor who is to be present at a Tribunal hearing.
- 8.6 Publishing the particulars of orders and decisions made by the Tribunal (and the reasons for them).

*(The Head of Fitness to Practise is also authorised by the Registrar under rules 3(2) and 4(3) of the Health and Care Professions Council (Practice Committees and Miscellaneous Amendments) Rules 2009, to invite Panel Chairs and Panel Members to participate in Tribunal proceedings.)*

## **10 Matters delegated to the Head of Education**

- 10.1 Inviting (but not selecting) the Visitors who are to conduct a visit or perform other functions under Part IV of the Order.
- 10.2 Publishing Visitors' reports and any responses to such reports (where the respondent has asked for it to be published).
- 10.3 Maintaining and publishing the Council's list of approved courses of education and training, qualifications and institutions.

## **11 Matters delegated to the Director of Finance**

- 11.1 In conjunction with the Chief Executive, who is the Council's Accounting Officer:
- 11.1.1 keeping the accounts and preparing the annual accounts of the Council in accordance with Article 46 of the Order;
- 11.1.2 administering the Council's finances including, but not limited to, the day to day control and regulation of those finances.

**3rd December 2020**

## **Education and Training Committee Scheme of Delegation**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Education and Training Committee (the **Committee**) is responsible for discharging the statutory functions conferred upon it by the Health Professions Order 2001 (the **Order**) and executive management is responsible for the operational implementation of the Committee's decisions.
- 1.2 This scheme of delegation (the **Scheme**) is intended to facilitate the efficient and effective discharge of the Committee's functions in a manner which reflects that division of responsibilities.
- 1.3 The Scheme sets out the decisions which the Committee:
  - 1.3.1 has reserved or must reserve to itself;
  - 1.3.2 has delegated to the Education and Training Panel
  - 1.3.2 has delegated to the Chief Executive and Registrar (the **Chief Executive**) or persons nominated by the Chief Executive;
  - 1.3.3 has delegated to nominated directors and persons nominated by them.
- 1.4 The Scheme does not affect:
  - 1.4.1 decisions of an administrative nature, which form part of the executive management's responsibilities for the day to day administration of the HCPC's affairs under the direction of the Chief Executive; or
  - 1.4.2 any statutory function conferred upon the Registrar by or under the Order, the discharge or delegation of which is a matter for the Chief Executive (as Registrar).

### **2 Withdrawal of delegated power**

- 2.1 The Scheme remains in force until it is amended or revoked by the Committee.
- 2.2 The Scheme does not apply to any matter in respect of which the Committee has resolved that delegated authority is not to be exercised.

### **3 Exercise of delegated power**

- 3.1 Any power delegated under the Scheme must be exercised in a manner which is consistent with the requirements of the Order, any rules made under it, any policies or procedures established by the Committee and the Committee's obligations under the general law.

- 3.2 In particular, the decision-maker must have regard to article 3(4) of the Order, which provides that the overarching objective of the HCPC in exercising its functions is the protection of the public.
- 3.3 The decision-maker must also recognise that lawful exercise of a statutory power requires not only formal compliance with the conditions laid down for its performance but also compliance with the principle that all statutory powers must be exercised in good faith and for their proper purpose.
- 3.4 Delegation does not impliedly authorise sub-delegation. Consequently, a person to whom the Committee has delegated any power may not permit another person to exercise that power unless the Committee has expressly authorised them to do so.

#### **4 Matters reserved to the Committee**

- 4.1 The Committee retains ultimate responsibility for all policy matters, including agreeing the overall strategy and procedure for the performance of its functions.
- 4.2 The Committee retains responsibility for the following decisions which, to the extent that it is lawful to do so, may only be delegated by means of a specific resolution of the Committee:
  - 4.2.1 responding to any consultation by the Council under article 7 of the Order on the making of rules or the determining or varying of fees;
  - 4.2.2 approving, for the purpose of article 12(1) of the Order, qualifications awarded in the United Kingdom which attest to the standard of proficiency required for admission. (This is a function which has been delegated to the Committee by the Council without authority to sub-delegate);
  - 4.2.3 establishing procedures under article 12(2) of the Order for the assessment of qualifications obtained, and training and experience acquired, outside of the United Kingdom and requirements as to knowledge or English;
  - 4.2.4 giving advice to the Council under article 14 of the Order in relation to the establishment of standards of proficiency, standards and requirements in respect of education and training and standards and requirements in respect of continuing professional development (**CPD**) and guidance in respect of the standards of education and training, supervision and performance of persons who provide services in connection with those provided by registrants;
  - 4.2.5 responding to any consultation by the Council under article 15 of the Order on the establishment of standards of education and training and requirements for admission to and participation in education and training;
  - 4.2.6 approving courses of education and training, qualifications, institutions and tests of competence under article 15(5) of the

Order;

- 4.2.7 ensuring that universities and other bodies in the United Kingdom are notified of the standards of education and training and the Council's requirements for admission to and participation in such education and training and taking appropriate steps to satisfy the Committee that these standards and requirements are being met;
  - 4.2.8 approving education and training provided outside of the United Kingdom under article 15(6) of the Order;
  - 4.2.9 requesting the Council (or the Registrar or Deputy Registrar to which the Council has delegated this matter for the time being) to appoint visitors (as defined in the Order) under article 16 of the Order;
  - 4.2.10 receiving any report submitted to the Committee by a visitor under article 16(7) of the Order;
  - 4.2.11 imposing reporting requirements on visitors under article 16(7)(b) of the Order;
  - 4.2.12 withdrawing or refusing approval of an institution for failure to provide information and assistance under article 17(3) of the Order, with the approval of the Council;
  - 4.2.13 withdrawing or refusing approval of a course of education or training, qualification or institution under article 18 of the Order; and
  - 4.2.14 responding to any consultation by the Council under article 21(3) of the Order on the giving of guidance in relation to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics or the standards of education and training, supervision and performance of persons who provide services in connection with those provided by registrants.
- 4.3 The Committee is also responsible for making decisions in relation to any matter for which it has granted delegated authority but where:
- 4.3.1 the person who would otherwise have delegated authority to act has an actual or potential interest; or
  - 4.3.2 in the opinion of the Chief Executive, it would be more appropriate for the Committee to make the decision.

## **5 Matters delegated to the Education and Training Panel**

- 5.1 The Committee has established a panel of the Committee, the Education and Training Panel to conduct one or more of the items of business of the Committee specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023.
- 5.2 These items of business are:
  - 5.2.1 considering visitors' reports and, if thought fit, approving the course of education or training, qualification or institution to which a report and observations (if any) relate;

- 5.2.2 considering and, if thought fit, approving a recommendation for a focussed review arising from the monitoring of an approved programme; and
- 5.2.3 considering focused review reports, and if thought fit, providing a continue to approve recommendation.

## **6 Matters delegated to the Chief Executive and any officer nominated by the Chief Executive**

- 6.1 determining applications for admission to the register, including determining whether the applicant holds an approved qualification or has passed an aptitude test or successfully completed an adaptation period and meets the health and character requirements for safe and effective practice;
- 6.2. dealing with and determining applications for registration from a specified state professional (as defined in the Order), based on the UK-Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein Free Trade Agreement;
- 6.3 receiving and determining applications for renewal of registration and readmission to the register, including determining whether the applicant needs to meet or has met any additional requirements required by article 10 of the Order and sending renewal notices and other communications to persons about their renewal and any right to appeal a decision to remove a person's name from the register under article 37 of the Order;
- 6.4 determining applications for admission to the Register made under article 13 of the Order;
- 6.5 requiring a person to submit further evidence, documents or information in respect of any application for admission or readmission to the Register or renewal of registration;
- 6.6 requiring a person to submit their CPD record and evidence of the CPD activity they have undertaken in compliance with standards made under article 19(1) of the Order and specifying the period in which they should do so and sending notices and other communications about compliance with the request;
- 6.7 removing a person from the Register under article 11A(8) of the Order for failing to have appropriate indemnity arrangements in place or article 19(3) of the Order for failing to comply with CPD standards;
- 6.8 directing the removal of a person from the Register where both the person's application for the renewal of their registration and the renewal fee are not received within the period specified under rule 11(5) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003;
- 6.9 making written representations to the panel appointed to consider an appeal under article 37 of the Order in the case of an appeal to be determined without an oral hearing or nominating a person to appear on behalf of the Committee at any hearing of such a panel if not the Chair of the Committee; and



6.10 disposing of any case remitted to the Committee by the Council in accordance with the Council's directions under article 37 of the Order following an appeal of any decision made by the Committee.

**7 Matters delegated to the Head of Education and any officer nominated by the Head of Education**

- 7.1 inviting the visitors who are to visit any place or institution for any purpose under Part IV of the Order;
- 7.2 sending a copy of any report received by the Committee from a visitor under article 16(7) of the Order to the institution concerned and notifying that institution of its right to make observations on the report and the period in which to do so in accordance with article 16(9)(b) of the Order;
- 7.3 requiring a relevant institution to provide information and assistance under article 17(3) of the Order (information and assistance reasonably required in connection with the exercise of the Committee's functions);
- 7.4 giving notice to the institution concerned and notifying that institution of its right to make observations, and the period in which to do so, in relation to any proposal by the Committee to refuse or withdraw approval in accordance with article 18 of the Order setting out its reasons; and
- 7.5 endeavouring to secure the opportunity to follow approved education or training or to study for an approved qualification or at an approved institution for persons when approval of a course of education or study, qualification or institution is withdrawn.

**12 June 2024**

## **Committee Memberships**

### **Process**

The Chair appoints Council members (and independent members) to Committees, as either a member or a Chair. Unless otherwise specified, all appointments are for a period of two years (see frequency of review below)

Views of members as to their preferences will be sought. However it will not always be possible to allocate a member to their preferred committee.

Changes to the Committee membership allocations will be notified to Council as a paper to note at the next meeting. Whilst allocating members to Committees is a matter for the Chair, the Council retains authority to determine how a Committee should be constituted (subject to any mandatory requirements of the Health Professions Order 2001). The Standing Orders for each Committee set out these requirements.

### **Principles**

When allocating Council members to Committees the Chair will apply the following principles:

- Committees have the skills they need, the Council Skill Matrix is a key reference document.
- All members get the opportunity to take part in a Committee.
- Members get the opportunity to contribute to the breadth of the work of the HCPC during their term(s)
- Committee Chair positions should not continue longer than 4 years (two terms of two years) unless no suitable alternative candidate is available on the Council (for example if there is a requirement for a financially qualified Chair and only one member of the Council fulfils this requirement).
- Succession planning is in place for each Committee, to enable new perspectives, and continuity, in balance.

### **Frequency of review**

Committee appointments (memberships and chairs) will be reviewed every two years, or earlier depending on business need.

## **Education and Training Committee**

### **Standing Orders**

#### **1. Terms of Reference**

- 1.1 The Education and Training Committee (the Committee) is to perform:
  - a) the functions conferred on it by or under the Health Professions Order 2001 (the Order); and
  - b) and other functions that the Council may require it to undertake.
- 1.2 The Education and Training Committee has established a panel of the Committee (an Education and Training Panel or a Panel) to conduct one or more of the items of business of the Committee specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023. The standing orders for the Education and Training Panel are set out in an annex to these Standing Orders.

#### **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The composition of the Education and Training Committee is determined by the Council in The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023.
- 2.2 The quorum at a meeting of the Committee is any three members. If, during a meeting, a quorum ceases to exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next meeting of the Committee.

#### **3. Chair**

- 3.1 The Chair, who is appointed by the Chair of the Council, is to preside at any Committee meeting.
- 3.2 If the Chair is absent from or unable to preside at a meeting, the members present must nominate another member to serve as chair at that meeting.
- 3.3 The Chair must provide a report on the work of the Committee to the Council following each meeting of the Committee.

#### **4. Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

- 4.1 The Committee will meet as required, which will usually be four times in each year.
- 4.2 Where a Committee meeting is held the Secretary must give members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

#### **5. Decision Making**

- 5.1 The Committee and Panel shall make decisions based on a tier system set out as follows:
  - a) Tier 1 - Papers-based
  - b) Tier 2 - Panel meeting
  - c) Tier 3 - Committee meeting
- 5.2 The operation of each Tier is as follows:
  - a) Tier 1 – where only the visitors' view is presented to the Panel, and the executive considers there is no information which suggests that the Panel will make a decision other than the one recommended by the visitors, papers shall be shared with all Panel members, who will be Committee members, who have a set period of time to confirm their approval or rejection of the visitors' recommendations. The decision cannot relate to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme and can only relate to the items of business specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023 as set out in Standing Order 1.2 and the standing orders of the Panel;
  - b) Tier 2 – Panel meetings shall be arranged in advance where the executive considers that discussion is likely to be required to make a decision, but the decision does not relate to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme and can only relate to the items of business specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023 as set out in Standing Order 1.2 and the standing orders of the Panel;
  - c) Tier 3 – Items shall be added to existing Committee meetings or one item meetings or a resolution of the Committee without a meeting as permitted in Standing Order 13 shall be arranged where an urgent decision is required. Decisions in relation to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme or that are not items of business for a Panel as specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023 and the standing orders of the Panel may be made by the Committee.

## **6. Agenda**

- 6.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting. Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **7. Transparency**

- 7.1 All Committee meetings must be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
- a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
  - b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee office holder or an applicant for any post or office;
  - c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
  - d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
  - e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
  - f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
  - g) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or
  - h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or the Council's functions.

## **8. Minutes of meetings**

- 8.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting, which must include a record of the members present at that meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Committee and attendees following the meeting, who will be invited to review these for factual accuracy.
- 8.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the preceding meeting must be approved (or approved subject to amendments) as an accurate record of that meeting. The approved minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.
- 8.3 The minutes of each meeting of the Committee will be provided to the Council following each meeting. This may occur prior to the minutes being approved by the Committee.

## **9. Conduct of Meetings**

- 9.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.

- 9.2 A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Chair. All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Committee.
- 9.3 A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
- 9.4 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **10. Voting**

- 10.1 Except where the Order or these Standing Orders specify otherwise, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the members present voting by a show of hands.
- 10.2 In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **11. Disorder**

- 11.1 Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 11.2 If, in the Chair's opinion, a member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 11.3 If a person other than a member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.
- 11.4 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a period that the Chair considers appropriate.

## **12. Members' interests**

- 12.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 12.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests.
- 12.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest

is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Committee's consideration of that matter.

### **13. Virtual meetings**

- 13.1 Meetings of the Committee should be held by electronic means where possible, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being required to be together at the same place.
- 13.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 4.2 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 13.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
  - a) to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - b) to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 13.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing Order 10.1 does not apply.
- 13.5 Where practicable, the Committee must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

### **14. Approval of resolutions without meeting**

- 14.1 A resolution which, with the Chair's consent, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by at least three quarters of the members entitled to receive notice of and attend a Committee meeting is as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

### **15. The Secretary**

- 15.1 The Secretary to the Council, or any other person that the Secretary to the Council may appoint, is to be the Secretary to the Committee (the Secretary).

### **16. Effectiveness**

- 16.1 The Committee should periodically review its own effectiveness and report to the Council on this assessment.

## **17. Adoption**

- 17.1 These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council on 20 March 2024 and supersede all previous versions. They apply to any Committee meeting held after that date.



## **Annex**

# **Education and Training Panel**

## **Standing Orders**

### **1. Terms of Reference**

- 1.1 The Education and Training Panel is to conduct one or more of the items of business of the Committee specified in rule 6(3) of The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023. These items of business are:
- a) considering visitors' reports and, if thought fit, approving the course of education or training, qualification or institution to which a report and observations (if any) relate;
  - b) considering and, if thought fit, approving a recommendation for a focussed review arising from the monitoring of an approved programme; and
  - c) considering focused review reports, and if thought fit, providing a continue to approve recommendation.
- 1.2 No other business can be conducted by the Education and Training Panel (the Panel), including the non-approval or withdrawal of approval from an approved programme. Any other business will be undertaken by the Education and Training Committee.

### **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The composition of the Panel is any two Committee members.
- 2.2 The quorum for a Panel is two members. Where a Panel decision is papers-based, this requires the approval of any two members.
- 2.3 If, during a meeting, a quorum ceases to exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next meeting of a Panel.

### **3. Chair**

- 3.1 The members of a Panel must nominate one of their number to act as Chair of a meeting or where a decision is papers-based.
- 3.2 The Chair will sign any decision notices of the Panel following a meeting or a papers-based decision.

### **4. Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

- 4.1 The Panel will be convened as required, which will usually be monthly.

- 4.2 Panel meetings are only required for decisions that require discussion as set out in Standing Order 5.2.
- 4.3 A papers-based approval route for a Panel will be used for all other pre-defined decisions as set out in Standing Order 5.2, with Panel members confirming or rejecting such decisions through correspondence.
- 4.4 Where a Panel meeting is held the Secretary must give members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

## **5. Decision Making**

- 5.1 The Committee and Panel shall make decisions based on a tier system set out as follows:
  - a) Tier 1 - Papers-based
  - b) Tier 2 - Panel meeting
  - c) Tier 3 - Committee meeting
- 5.2 The operation of each Tier is as follows:
  - a) Tier 1 – where only the visitors' view is presented to the Panel, and the executive considers there is no information which suggests that the Panel will make a decision other than the one recommended by the visitors, papers shall be shared with all Panel members, who have a set period of time to confirm their approval or rejection of the visitors' recommendations. The decision cannot relate to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme and can only relate to the items of business specified in these standing orders;
  - b) Tier 2 – Panel meetings shall be arranged in advance where the executive considers that discussion is likely to be required to make a decision. The decision cannot relate to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme and can only relate to the items of business specified in these standing orders;
  - c) Tier 3 – Items shall be added to existing Committee meetings or one item meetings or a resolution of the Committee without a meeting as permitted in Standing Order 12 shall be arranged where an urgent decision is required. Decisions in relation to the non-approval or withdrawal of approval of a programme or that are not items of business for a Panel as specified in these standing orders may be made by the Committee.

## **6. Agenda**

- 6.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting. Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **7. Minutes of meetings**

- 7.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting, which must include a record of the members present at that meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Panel and attendees following the meeting, who will be invited to review these for factual accuracy.
- 7.2 The minutes of the meeting of any Panel will be approved (or approved subject to amendments) as an accurate record of that meeting by the Education and Training Committee at its next meeting. The approved minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.

## **8. Conduct of Meetings**

- 8.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.
- 8.2 A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Chair. All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Panel.
- 8.3 A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
- 8.4 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **9. Voting**

- 9.1 Except where these Standing Orders specify otherwise, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the members present voting by a show of hands.
- 9.2 In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **10. Disorder**

- 10.1 Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 10.2 If, in the Chair's opinion, a member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 10.3 If a person other than a member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.

- 10.4 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a period that the Chair considers appropriate.

## **11. Members' interests**

- 11.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 11.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests.
- 11.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Panel's consideration of that matter.

## **12. Virtual meetings**

- 12.1 Meetings of a Panel should be held by electronic means where possible, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being required to be together at the same place.
- 12.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 4.4 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 12.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
- a) to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - b) to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 12.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing Order 9.1 does not apply.
- 12.5 Where practicable, the Panel must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

## **13. The Secretary**

- 13.1 The Secretary to the Council, or any other person that the Secretary to the Council may appoint, is to be the Secretary to the Panel (the Secretary).

# The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023

Made 23 February 2023 .

Coming into force 24 February 2023

These Rules are made by the Health and Care Professions Council in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by paragraph 17(1) of Schedule 1 to the Health Professions Order 2001.

## Citation and commencement

1. (1) These Rules may be cited as the Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2023.

(2) These Rules come into force on 24 February 2023 .

## Interpretation

2. In these Rules—

“the Committee” means the Education and Training Committee;

“the Chair” has the meaning given in rule 5(1) and includes a person nominated under rule 5(4) or 6(2) to serve as Chair at a meeting;

“the Constitution Order” means the Health and Care Professions Council (Constitution) Order 2009;

“member”, except in the phrase “Council member”, means a member of the Committee and includes the Chair; and

“the Order” means the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001.

## Revocation

3. The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2020 are revoked.

## The Committee

4. (1) The Education and Training Committee comprises five members, of whom—

(a) four must be Council members;

(b) one must be a person who has experience in relation to the provision or assessment of professional education and training which the Council considers will assist the Committee in performing its functions; and

(2) The Council must determine the term of office of each member on appointment.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a member may be appointed for a term of not more than four years and is eligible for re-appointment, but no person may be a member for more than an aggregate of 8 years during any period of 20 years.

(4) A Council member may not be appointed as a member of the Committee for a term which exceeds that person’s term of office as a Council member.

(5) A person ceases to be a member of the Committee—

(a) if the member resigns, which the member may do at any time by notice in writing to the Council;

(b) in the case of a member who is a Council member—

- (i) on ceasing for any reason to be a Council member, or
- (ii) if the member's Council membership is suspended by the Privy Council under Article 7 of the Constitution Order;
- (c) in the case of any other member, if the member becomes a person who, in the opinion of the Council, would be liable to removal or suspension from the Council under Article 6 or 7 of the Constitution Order if that person was a Council member; or
- (d) if the Council, by majority vote, terminates the person's appointment as a member of the Committee.

### **Committee Chair**

5. (1) The Council must appoint a member as the chair of the Committee ("the Chair").
- (2) The Council must determine the term of office of the Chair on appointment, which may not exceed that person's term of office as a member of the Committee.
- (3) A person serving as Chair ceases to do so—
- (a) if the member resigns as Chair, which the member may do at any time by notice in writing to the Council;
  - (b) on ceasing for any reason to be a member of the Committee or (where applicable) a Council member;
  - (c) if the Council, by majority vote, terminates the person's appointment as Chair.
- (4) If, for any reason, the Chair is absent from or unable to act as Chair at a meeting or the office of Chair is vacant, the members who are present at a meeting of the Committee must nominate one of their number to serve as Chair at that meeting.

### **Quorum**

6. (1) Subject to paragraph (2), the quorum of the Committee is three members.
- (2) At a panel meeting of the Committee the quorum is any two members (who must nominate one of their number to act as Chair at that meeting).
- (3) A "panel meeting" means a meeting of the Committee which has been convened only to conduct one or more of the following items of business (and at which no other business is conducted)—
- (a) considering Visitors' reports which are submitted to the Committee in accordance with Article 16(7) of the Order and any observations upon those reports received by the Committee under Article 16(9) of that Order and, if thought fit, approving the course of education or training, qualification or institution to which a report and observations (if any) relate;
  - (b) considering and, if thought fit, approving a recommendation for a focussed review arising from the monitoring of an approved programme;
  - (c) considering focused review reports, and if thought fit, providing a continue to approve recommendation.
- (4) The steps that may be taken at a panel meeting under paragraph (3) do not include non-approval or withdrawal of approval from an approved programme, which may only be undertaken at a Committee meeting.
- (5) Where a decision is papers-based, two Committee members will be required to confirm or reject the decision.
- (6) In paragraph (4) an "approved programme" means a course, qualification or institution which is approved by the Committee under Part IV of the Order.

Sealed with the common seal of the Health and Care Professions Council on 23 February 2023.



*Christine Elliott*  
Chair

*Andrew Smith*  
Registrar

### **Explanatory Note**

These Rules prescribe the composition of the Health and Care Professions Council's Education and Training Committee, provide for the chairing of that Committee and specify its quorum for transacting business.

The Rules revoke and replace the Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2022.

## **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

### **Standing Orders**

#### **1. Terms of Reference**

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (the Committee) is to:

- 1.1 Advise the Council and the Registrar (as Accounting Officer) on the appointment of internal and external auditors.
- 1.2 Approve internal and external audit programmes and fees and any other terms of engagement.
- 1.3 Review the external auditors' management letters and any other relevant reports and the adequacy of management's response, reporting on these to the Council as appropriate.
- 1.4 Receive reports on the internal audit work plan and the adequacy of management's response and consider appropriate action arising from them.
- 1.5 Review the effectiveness of internal and external audit periodically, including resourcing and access and quality assurance processes.
- 1.6 Review the annual report and accounts, including; the governance statement, the process for review of the accounts prior to submission to auditors, the level of error identified and management's letters of representation to the external auditors, making recommendations to the Council and the Registrar (as Accounting Officer) as appropriate.
- 1.7 Review any changes to the risk appetite, Strategic Risk Register and advise the Council and Accounting Officer on the adequacy of processes and controls to monitor and manage strategic and operational risk.
- 1.8 Review assurance activity relating to the control framework for the management of risk, governance and compliance requirements for the HCPC.
- 1.9 At the Council's request, advise it on matters of corporate governance (but without limiting the Committee's power to make recommendations to the Council on corporate governance issues arising from the work of the internal and external auditors).
- 1.10 Review and approve the HCPC's internal whistleblowing, anti-fraud and anti-bribery policies and monitor their operation, escalating to Council as required.



- 1.11 Consider and make recommendations to the Council and the Registrar (as Accounting Officer) as appropriate on the Council's accounting policies.
- 1.12 The Committee may procure specialist advice at the expense of the HCPC taking into account the HCPC's financial regulations.

## **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee comprises four members, appointed by the Chair, of which:
  - 2.1.1 at least one member must have recent, significant and relevant financial experience;
  - 2.1.2 at least two members must be members of the Council; and
  - 2.1.3 at least one member must not be a member of the Council.
- 2.2 No member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can be a member of the People and Resources Committee or Remuneration Committee.
- 2.3 The quorum at a meeting of the Committee is any three members. If, during a meeting of the Committee, a quorum ceases to exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **3. Chair**

- 3.1 The Chair, who is appointed by the Chair of the Council, is to preside at any Committee meeting.
- 3.2 If the Chair is absent from or unable to preside at a meeting, the members present must nominate another member to serve as chair at that meeting.
- 3.3 The Chair must provide a report on the work of the Committee to the Council following each meeting of the Committee.

## **4. Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

- 4.1 As a minimum the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee must meet three times in each year, on dates which coincide with key dates within the financial reporting and audit cycles.
- 4.2 The Secretary must give members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.
- 4.3 At least once each financial year the Committee will meet with representatives of the external and internal auditors without management being present to discuss their remit and any issues arising from their audits.

## **5. Agenda**

- 5.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting. Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **6. Transparency**

- 6.1 All Committee meetings must be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
- a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
  - b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee office holder or an applicant for any post or office;
  - c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
  - d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
  - e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
  - f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
  - g) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or
  - h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or the Council's functions.

## **7. Minutes of meetings**

- 7.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting, which must include a record of the members present at that meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Committee and attendees following the meeting, who will be invited to review these for factual accuracy.
- 7.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the preceding meeting must be approved (or approved subject to amendments) as an accurate record of that meeting. The approved minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.
- 7.3 The minutes of each meeting of the Committee will be provided to the Council following each meeting. This may occur prior to the minutes being approved by the Committee.

## **8. Conduct of Meetings**

- 8.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.

- 8.2 A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Chair. All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Committee.
- 8.3 A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
- 8.4 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **9. Voting**

- 9.1 Except where the Order specifies otherwise, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the members present voting by a show of hands. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **10. Disorder**

- 10.1 Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 10.2 If, in the Chair's opinion, a member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 10.3 If a person other than a member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.
- 10.4 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a period that the Chair considers appropriate.

## **11. Members' interests**

- 11.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 11.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests.
- 11.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Committee's consideration of that matter.

## **12. Virtual meetings**

- 12.1 Meetings of the Committee may be held by electronic means, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being together at the same place.
- 12.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 4.2 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 12.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
  - a) to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - b) to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 12.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing Order 9.1 does not apply.
- 12.5 Where practicable, the Committee must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

## **13. Approval of resolutions without meeting**

- 13.1 A resolution which, with the Chair's consent, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by at least three quarters of the members entitled to receive notice of and attend a Committee meeting is as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

## **14. The Secretary**

- 14.1 The Secretary to the Council, or any other person that the Secretary to the Council may appoint, is to be the Secretary to the Committee (the Secretary).

## **15. Effectiveness**

- 15.1 The Committee should periodically review its own effectiveness and report to the Council on this assessment.

## **16. Adoption**

- 16.1 These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council on 20 March 2024 and supersede all previous versions. They apply to any Committee meeting held after that date.

## **People and Resources Committee**

### **Standing Orders**

#### **1. Terms of Reference**

The People and Resources Committee (the Committee) is to:

##### ***People***

- 1.1 Provide assurance to the Council on the HCPC's performance as an employer, including the suitability and effectiveness of its HR policies, internal EDI practice and the health of the organisational culture.
- 1.2 Provide assurance to the Council on the recruitment, retention, training and performance of the HCPC's Partners.

##### ***Finance***

- 1.3 Review the HCPC's ongoing financial and organisational sustainability to ensure the overall strategy set by the Council remains deliverable.
- 1.4 Review and recommend the annual budget and quarterly budget reforecast to the Council.
- 1.5 Review the major variances to budget and forecast to assure the Council of the rationale for the variances.

##### ***Investment***

- 1.6 Consider and recommend to the Council policies on financial management, investment and reserves.
- 1.7 Consider and award, or, where the Committee considers significant policy issues are involved, recommend that the Council award, major contracts.
- 1.8 Provide the Executive with advice and support on the development and delivery of the Digital Transformation and Estates strategies and sustainability plans.

##### ***Organisational Performance***

- 1.9 Review the HCPC's ongoing work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the HCPC including monitoring performance indicators and providing assurance on improvement programmes where requested by the Council.

## **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The Committee comprises five members, appointed by the Chair of the Council, of which:
  - 2.1.1 at least one member must have recent, significant and relevant financial experience; and
  - 2.1.2 at least one member must not be a member of the Council.
- 2.2 No member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can be a member of the People and Resources Committee.
- 2.3 The quorum at a meeting of the Committee is any three members. If, during a meeting of the Committee, a quorum ceases to exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **3. Chair**

- 3.1 The Chair, who is appointed by the Chair of the Council, is to preside at any Committee meeting.
- 3.2 If the Chair is absent from or unable to preside at a meeting, the members present must nominate another member to serve as chair at that meeting.
- 3.3 The Chair must provide a report on the work of the Committee to the Council following each meeting of the Committee.

## **4. Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

- 4.1 As a minimum the Committee must meet four times in each year, on dates which coincide with key dates within the financial planning cycle.
- 4.2 The Secretary must give members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

## **5. Agenda**

- 5.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting. Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **6. Transparency**

- 6.1 All Committee meetings must be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
  - a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;

- b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee office holder or an applicant for any post or office;
- c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
- e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
- f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
- g) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or
- h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or the Council's functions.

## **7. Minutes of meetings**

- 7.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting, which must include a record of the members present at that meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Committee and attendees following the meeting, who will be invited to review these for factual accuracy.
- 7.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the preceding meeting must be approved (or approved subject to amendments) as an accurate record of that meeting. The approved minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.
- 7.3 The minutes of each meeting will be provided to the Council following each meeting. This may occur prior to the minutes being approved by the Committee.

## **8. Conduct of Meetings**

- 8.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.
- 8.2 A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Chair. All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Committee.
- 8.3 A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
- 8.4 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **9. Voting**

- 9.1 Except where these Standing Orders specify otherwise, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the members present voting by a show of hands. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **10. Disorder**

- 10.1 Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 10.2 If, in the Chair's opinion, a member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 10.3 If a person other than a member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.
- 10.4 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a period that the Chair considers appropriate.

## **11. Members' interests**

- 11.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 11.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests.
- 11.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Committee's consideration of that matter.

## **12. Approval of resolutions without meeting**

- 12.1 A resolution which, with the Chair's consent, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by at least four of the members entitled to receive notice of and attend a Committee meeting is as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

## **13. Virtual meetings**

- 13.1 Meetings of the Committee may be held by electronic means, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being together at the same place.



- 13.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 4.2 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 13.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
- a) to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - b) to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 13.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing Order 9.1 does not apply.
- 13.5 Where practicable, the Committee must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

#### **14. The Secretary**

- 14.1 The Secretary to the Council, or any other person that the Secretary to the Council may appoint, is to be the Secretary to the Committee (the Secretary).

#### **15. Effectiveness**

- 15.1 The Committee should periodically review its own effectiveness and report to the Council on this assessment.

#### **16. Adoption**

- 16.1 These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council on 20 March 2024 and supersede all previous versions. They apply to any Committee meeting held after that date.

## **Remuneration Committee**

### **Standing Orders**

#### **1. Terms of Reference**

The Remuneration Committee is to:

##### ***Remuneration policies***

- 1.1 Review the remuneration policies and principles for Council and independent committee members, the Chief Executive, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), employees annually and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.
- 1.2 Review, as necessary, any significant changes to policies impacting on remuneration, the employee pay band and salary structure or the HCPC pension scheme and other benefits.
- 1.3 Approve the expenses policies for Council members, employees and partners.

##### ***Remuneration reviews***

- 1.4 Approve the remuneration of the Chief Executive, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the annual pay review for employees, including any changes to the HCPC' pay bands, in line with the remuneration policy set by the Council. The financial implications of any review of remuneration will need to be considered by the People and Resources Committee and approved by the Council as part of the annual budget for each financial year.
- 1.5 Support the annual remuneration review of the Chief Executive, by reviewing a report from the Chair of Council regarding the performance appraisal of the Chief Executive.
- 1.6 Support the annual remuneration review of the ELT, by reviewing reports from the Chief Executive regarding the performance appraisals of ELT members.
- 1.7 Review and approve the proposed or advertised remuneration for the Chief Executive or member of the ELT as part of any recruitment process.

- 1.8 Recommend to the Council any changes to the remuneration of the Chair, Council members and partners.
- 1.9 Use market rates and conditions, internal and external benchmarking, HCPC financial and budgetary information and other relevant guidance and information when reviewing remuneration to inform the Committee's decision-making.

### ***Special severance payments***

- 1.10 Approve the terms of any special severance arrangements applying in the event of any required and unplanned early termination of employment of the Chief Executive or any member of the ELT, having regard to relevant guidance and codes of practice and contracts of employment.
- 1.11 Review any severance payments to employees, contractors or others outside of normal statutory or contractual requirements, including special severance payments or payments made in settlement of an employment tribunal claim.

## **2. Membership and Quorum**

- 2.1 The Remuneration Committee is formed wholly from the membership of the People and Resources Committee, that being five members, appointed by the Chair of Council, of which:
  - 2.1.1 at least four members must be members of the Council; and
  - 2.1.2 at least one member must not be a member of the Council.
- 2.2 No member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can be a member of the Remuneration Committee.
- 2.3 The quorum at a meeting of the Committee is any three members. If, during a meeting of the Committee, a quorum ceases to exist, the meeting must be dissolved and all remaining business adjourned to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **3. Chair**

- 3.1 The Chair, who is appointed by the Chair of the Council, is to preside at any Committee meeting.
- 3.2 If the Chair is absent from or unable to preside at a meeting, the members present must nominate another member to serve as chair at that meeting.
- 3.3 The Chair must provide a report on the work of the Committee to the Council following each meeting of the Remuneration Committee.

## **4. Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

- 4.1 As a minimum the Remuneration Committee must meet once each year to determine the annual pay review.

- 4.2 The Secretary must give members at least seven days' notice of the time and place of a meeting. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member does not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

## **5. Agenda**

- 5.1 The Secretary must issue an agenda for each meeting. Except in cases of urgency or where circumstances make it impracticable to do so, the agenda for a meeting and any accompanying papers must be sent to members at least seven days before the meeting.

## **6. Transparency**

- 6.1 All Committee meetings must be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
- a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
  - b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or office holder or an applicant for any post or office;
  - c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
  - d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
  - e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
  - f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
  - g) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or
  - h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or the Council's functions.

## **7. Minutes of meetings**

- 7.1 The Secretary must keep minutes of each meeting, which must include a record of the members present at that meeting. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Committee and attendees following the meeting, who will be invited to review these for factual accuracy.
- 7.2 At each meeting, the minutes of the preceding meeting must be approved (or approved subject to amendments) and be signed by the Chair as a true record of that meeting. The approved minutes of a meeting, unless the contrary is proved, are conclusive proof of the proceedings of that meeting.
- 7.3 The minutes of each meeting will be provided to the Council following each meeting. This may occur prior to the minutes being approved by the Committee.

## **8. Conduct of Meetings**

- 8.1 The order of business at a meeting must follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chair with the consent of the meeting.
- 8.2 A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Chair. All motions must relate to matters that are within or related to the functions of the Committee.
- 8.3 A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chair may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition or other improper conduct on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
- 8.4 A ruling by the Chair on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, is final and not open to debate.

## **9. Voting**

- 9.1 Except where these Standing Orders specify otherwise, any question at a meeting is to be decided by a majority of the members present voting by a show of hands. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair is entitled to an additional casting vote.

## **10. Disorder**

- 10.1 Members must comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 10.2 If, in the Chair's opinion, a member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chair or behaved in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair may order that member to withdraw from the whole or part of the remainder of the meeting.
- 10.3 If a person other than a member interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order the part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.
- 10.4 In the event of a disturbance which, in the Chair's opinion, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a period that the Chair considers appropriate.

## **11. Members' interests**

- 11.1 Members must make a declaration of their personal interests in the form required by the Council (which must be published in the Council's Register of Members' Interests) and must ensure that their interests as set out in that Register are accurate and up to date.
- 11.2 The agenda for every meeting must include as an item of business the declaration of interests.

- 11.3 A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at that meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, must promptly disclose that interest to the meeting. If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting during the Committee's consideration of that matter

## **12. Approval of resolutions without meeting**

- 12.1 A resolution which, with the Chair's consent, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by at least four of the members entitled to receive notice of and attend a Committee meeting is as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

## **13. Virtual meetings**

- 13.1 Meetings of the Committee may be held by electronic means, without any number of the members participating in the meeting being together at the same place.
- 13.2 Where a meeting is to be conducted by electronic means, the notice under Standing Order 4.2 must include the arrangements for members to access the meeting.
- 13.3 At a meeting held by electronic means, members must be able:
- a) to hear and be heard by (and, where practicable, to see and be seen by) the other participating members and any person invited to participate in the meeting; and
  - b) to be heard by (and, where practicable, seen by) any members of the public or the press attending the meeting.
- 13.4 At a meeting held by electronic means, the Chair is to determine the method by which votes are to be cast and Standing Order 9.1 does not apply.
- 13.5 Where practicable, the Committee must make arrangements (such as by telephone or video conference or live webcast or streaming) for the public and press to be able to attend remotely a meeting held by electronic means.

## **14. The Secretary**

- 14.1 The Secretary to the Council, or any other person that the Secretary to the Council may appoint, is to be the Secretary to the Committee (the Secretary).

## **15. Effectiveness**

- 15.1 The Committee should periodically review its own effectiveness and report to the Council on this assessment.

## **16. Adoption**

- 16.1 These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council on 5 December 2024 and supersede all previous versions. They apply to any Committee meeting held after that date.

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## Professional Liaison Groups

### Introduction

1. The Council, where it considers that doing so would assist it to perform its functions in respect of a particular project, may establish a Professional Liaison Group (**PLG**).
2. The purpose of a PLG is to draw on the expertise of Council members and others to consider one or more specified topics in detail, and to perform a specified task or set of tasks within a timeframe set by the Council.

### Establishing a PLG

3. In respect of any project where establishing a PLG may be appropriate and beneficial, the Executive must submit a report to the Council setting out:
  - 3.1 a clear and concise rationale as to why it would be appropriate and beneficial to establish a PLG;
  - 3.2 the proposed terms of reference of the PLG (which must be sufficiently precise to enable the Council to agree the PLG's remit);
  - 3.3 the activities which it is proposed the PLG will undertake, including a detailed timetable that sets a date for the conclusion of those activities and a date by which the PLG will report its findings to the Council;
  - 3.4 the knowledge and skills required for membership of the PLG and its proposed composition, including whether external members should be appointed (and, if so, identifying potential members or organisations who should be invited to nominate such members); and
  - 3.5 a proposed budget for the PLG.

### PLG Membership

4. If the Council agrees to establish a PLG, Council members who wish to be appointed to the PLG must be given an opportunity to submit a statement (of not more than 200 words) which sets out how their knowledge and skills meet those agreed for the PLG by the Council.
5. A PLG will be chaired by a member of the Council and Council members who wish to be considered for appointment as the PLG Chair must provide an additional statement (also of not more than 200 words) setting out their suitability for that role.
6. Unless the Council determines otherwise, statements submitted by Council members in accordance with paragraphs 4 or 5 will be considered by the Chair of Council, who will then determine which members should be appointed to the PLG.



7. If the Council agrees that external members are to be appointed to a PLG, potential members identified in accordance with paragraph 3.4 may be invited to be PLG members or, in the case of organisations, to nominate such members.
8. If the number of potential external PLG members exceeds the number of places available, candidates may be asked to provide a statement similar to that submitted by Council members in accordance with paragraph 4.
9. Unless the Council determines otherwise, any statements submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 will be considered by a Panel comprised of the Chair of the Council, the PLG Chair and the appropriate Executive lead, who will determine which potential members should be appointed to the PLG.
10. As appointments to a PLG are made based upon an individual's knowledge and skills, members cannot delegate their role to others. However, an external PLG member who is appointed to represent an organisation and who is unable to attend a particular meeting may, with the consent of the PLG Chair, send a delegate to that meeting. Consent must be sought at least seven days in advance of the meeting and the PLG Chair's decision as to whether a delegate may attend shall be final and binding.

### **Conduct of PLG business**

11. The Council's expectation is that, normally, PLG meetings will be held in public and that the papers for such meetings will be made available on the HCPC website.
12. PLGs are not committees of the Council and may regulate their own proceedings. However, in doing so, PLG Chairs are expected to have regard to the HCPC Standing Orders for Committees and, in particular, to take account of the criteria set out in Standing Order 5 (access to meetings) in considering any proposal to hold all or part of a meeting in private.
13. Only PLG members are entitled to speak at PLG meetings. Members of the public may only address the meeting at the prior invitation of the Chair. If any person disrupts the proceedings, the Chair may order that the person be removed from the meeting or that the part of the room which is open to the public be cleared.
14. Members of the public who wish to attend PLG meetings must sit in the public gallery. They should aim to arrive before the meeting begins and remain until the meetings ends to avoid disturbing the proceedings.
15. Unless the Council determines otherwise, the quorum for any meeting of a PLG is half of the total membership of the PLG plus one. If, during a meeting a quorum ceases to exist, the Chair must dissolve the meeting and any remaining business will be adjourned to the next meeting of the PLG.
16. Minutes will be taken at all PLG meetings and will be confirmed and signed by the Chair at the next meeting of the PLG. The minutes of a PLG's final meeting will be sent to members electronically for confirmation before being signed by the Chair. All PLG minutes will be submitted to the Council.

## **PLG Costs**

17. PLGs must operate within the budget agreed by the Council when the PLG was established.
18. Council members participating in the work of a PLG will be entitled to claim attendance allowances and expenses in accordance with the HCPC expenses policy for Council members.
19. Other PLG members will be entitled to have their reasonable expenses reimbursed in accordance with that expenses policy but will not be eligible to receive an attendance allowance.
20. In order to support the involvement of service users and carers, PLG members who are participating in an individual capacity or on behalf of an organisation representing service users or carers may, at the discretion of the Chair, be eligible to receive an attendance allowance equal to that paid to Council members.

## **Reporting to the Council**

21. In addition to receiving the minutes of all PLG meetings, the Council must be informed of any deviation from the PLG's agreed activities, timetable or budget and provided with such progress reports on the work of a PLG as the Council considers appropriate.

**3rd December 2020**

## **The Role of Council Members and Chairs**

### **Council Member**

The role of a Council Member is to:

- contribute their knowledge and expertise to Council meetings, to aid effective decision-making;
- support the Council's objectives;
- ensure that they have a good working knowledge of HCPC's functions, processes and other information that may help their role;
- act in accordance with the Code; and
- act as an ambassador for the HCPC, representing the Council to stakeholders.

### **Council Chair**

In addition to the role of Council member, the Chair will also:

- provide strong non-executive leadership, and encourage open and pro-active accountability to the public and the professions;
- act as an ambassador for the Council, inspiring confidence in the organisation and representing the interests of statutory regulation to outside bodies;
- develop and maintain constructive collaboration, networking and consultation with key stakeholders, and others when required;
- uphold public interest in all that the HCPC undertakes;
- chair meetings of Council;
- approve draft agendas and approve draft minutes for presentation to Council;
- monitor and develop Council members' performance, providing support as necessary;
- manage the Council's Chief Executive so as to secure effective oversight of the development and achievement of the Council's strategic, policy and operational objectives and compliance with its statutory responsibilities.
- set the Chief Executive's objectives and monitor the Chief Executive's performance against those objectives;

## **Committee Chairs**

The role of the Chair is to:

- approve draft agendas and approve draft minutes for the committee;
- consult the Committee Secretary for advice as needed;
- manage the efficient and effective running of meetings by grasping the detail of a wide range of business, and contribute to objective decision making by exercising sound judgement;
- facilitate open discussion, and good decision-making;
- give an overview of the business of the Committee and present any relevant papers to Council;
- report annually to Council on the Committee's activities over the last year;
- ensure that the meeting is conducted in accordance with the standing orders, and that all members keep to the Code of Conduct; and
- act as spokesperson for the committee if required.

## **Senior Council Member**

The Senior Council Member has the following functions in respect of Council governance:

- acting as a sounding board for the Chair and Chief Executive on governance matters;
- being the contact point for Members who have concerns which:
  - they have been unable to resolve via the Chair or Chief Executive; or
  - would be inappropriate to raise with the Chair or Chief Executive;
- being the contact point for Members or Executive Directors to raise issues which they feel have not been or cannot be resolved through normal channels;
- being a conduit for Members' views on the performance of the Chair, overseeing the annual performance appraisal of the Chair;
- overseeing the appointment and reappointment process for Chair;
- being the contact point for Members who have concerns about the Chair, the Chief Executive or the relationship between the Chair and the Chief Executive;
- being the contact point for Members who have concerns about the relationship between the Chair and a Council Member;
- initiating dialogue with the Chair or other Members if it appears that the Council is not functioning effectively; and

For the purpose of discharging these functions, the Senior Council Member may require the Council Secretary to include a relevant item of business on the agenda for any Council meeting.

### **Term of Office**

The term of office for the Senior Council member will be two years with the possibility of renewal for a further two years subject to Council approval. The maximum term of office will be four years. Appointment or removal from office is a decision reserved for Council.

**3rd December 2020**

## Code of Conduct

### 1 Introduction

Council members must comply with this Code of Conduct (the **Code**) whenever they act in their capacity as a member of the Council.

The Code will also apply to Council members whose conduct, when acting for another organisation or in a private capacity, may undermine their role as a Council member or public confidence in the Council,

### 2 General obligations

Council members must take personal responsibility for ensuring that they keep to the Code.

Council members must:

- act in good faith;
- act in accordance with the HCPC's over-arching objective in exercising its functions, of protecting the public;
- treat others equally, fairly, with dignity and respect; and
- act in accordance with the principles of public life (set out more fully in Appendix A):
  - selflessness;
  - integrity
  - objectivity
  - accountability
  - openness
  - honesty; and
  - leadership.

Council members must not:

- use their position for personal gain or to promote their private interests;
- discriminate or treat anyone less favourably on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation; or
- act in a way that may undermine public confidence in the HCPC or bring it into disrepute.

### **3 Confidentiality**

As the Council conducts much of its business in public, most information to which Council members have access will be in the public domain. However, some information must be kept confidential.

Council members must not disclose confidential information which they have received in that capacity, other than for a proper purpose or where required to do so by law.

Council members must take appropriate steps to ensure that confidential information is stored securely and should contact the Chief Executive if the status of any information is unclear. A Council member who becomes aware of a breach of confidentiality must immediately notify the Chief Executive or the Chair.

### **4 Attending meetings**

Council members must endeavour to attend all Council meetings and all meetings of any committee of which they are a member unless they are unable, with good reason, to do so and contribute in accordance with their role.

Council members who are unable, with good reason, to attend a meeting must inform the Secretary of the Council or Secretary of the relevant committee as soon as possible ahead of the meeting.

Where a Council member's absence from meetings over a prolonged period may affect the Council's ability to perform its statutory functions, that member will be asked to work with the Chair of Council to consider any action needed to address the position.

Council members' attendance records will form part of their annual performance review and particular consideration will be given to absences without notice.

Article 6(1)(g) of the Health and Care Profession Council (Constitution) Order 2009 provides that the Privy Council may remove a Council member whose level of attendance at meetings falls below a minimum level of attendance acceptable to the Privy Council.

### **5 Use of HCPC resources**

The HCPC may only provide resources to Council members in order to assist them in the discharge of their duties. Council members must not use HCPC resources for any other purpose or place HCPC employees in the embarrassing situation of having to refuse to provide them with resources.

### **6 HCPC employees**

In dealing with HCPC employees, Council members must recognise that their actions may be treated in law as those of the HCPC as employer.

Council members must not give direct instructions to employees, who are subject to the HCPC's established employment procedures and act on the instructions of their line managers, Directors and the Chief Executive.

Members are entitled to question the manner in which the HCPC operates or the advice or opinions provided by employees, but must not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of employees at meetings held in public, nor seek to undermine employees by means of rudeness or ridicule. In particular, Members must recognise that employees are constrained in the response they may make to such public comment.

If a Member has any concerns about the conduct or capability of an employee, they should be discussed with the appropriate Executive Director. Concerns about an Executive Director should be discussed with the Chief Executive and concerns about the Chief Executive should be referred to the Chair of the Council.

## **7 Council members' annual performance review**

Council members must participate in the annual performance review process.

## **8 Breach of the Code**

Any minor breach of this Code should, where possible, be dealt with informally in the first instance; for example, by the Chair or another member drawing the breach to the Council member's attention during the meeting at which it occurs.

A Council member who considers that another Council member may be in breach of this Code may also raise the matter with the Chair.

Where there is evidence of a deliberate, serious or continued breach of this Code or a formal complaint is received about the conduct of a Council member, the matter will be referred to the Chair, who will act in accordance with the complaints procedure set out in Appendix B.

## **9 Suspension or removal from office of a Council Member**

A Council member may be suspended or removed from office in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Care Professions Council (Constitution) Order 2009.

**3rd December 2020**



## Appendix A

### The Seven Principles of Public Life\*

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias..

#### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

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\* as set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life ([www.public-standards.gov.uk](http://www.public-standards.gov.uk))

## **Appendix B**

### **Complaints against Council Members**

#### **Introduction**

1. This procedure deals with the investigation of complaints made against Council members which arise in that capacity, including complaints made against Council members by HCPC staff.
2. Complaints against members by HCPC staff should be made to the Chief Executive. All other complaints against members should be made to the Secretary of the Council.
3. All complaints must be made in writing and referred to the Chair. If, in the opinion of the Chair, more detail is needed in order for the complaint to be considered, the Chair may ask the complainant to provide further details.
4. The Chair must determine conclusively whether a complaint is within the scope of this procedure. If the Chair determines that a complaint is not within its scope or is trivial or vexatious, the Chair must inform the complainant of that decision in writing, and the reasons for it, and no further action will be taken in respect of that complaint. If it appears to the Chair that the complaint is one which should be dealt with by the Privy Council then the Chair will refer the matter to the Privy Council.
5. Where the Chair is unable to act or is the subject of a complaint, any reference in this procedure to the Chair is to be read as a reference to the Chair of the Education and Training Committee.

#### **Conciliation**

6. If the Chair determines that a complaint is within the scope of this procedure, the Chair may suggest that the complainant and the member seek to resolve the matter by conciliation and, if they agree, the Chair, with the consent of the parties, may appoint a conciliator.
7. If the complaint is resolved by conciliation, no further action is to be taken by the Chair in respect of the complaint.
8. If conciliation fails to reach a satisfactory outcome, any admissions or statements made during the course of the process are not admissible in any subsequent investigation or consideration of the complaint.

9. The Chair must nominate an Independent Reviewer to investigate any complaint where:
  - 9.1 the Chair considers that the complaint is unsuitable for resolution by conciliation;
  - 9.2 a party does not agree to take part in conciliation; or
  - 9.3 conciliation fails to resolve the complaint;

### **Investigation**

10. The Chair must nominate a person (the **Independent Reviewer**) to investigate the complaint and report on the matter to the Council as to whether:
  - 10.1 on the balance of probabilities, the allegations contained in the complaint are factually correct; and
  - 10.2 on the basis of those facts, the member has breached the Code of Conduct for Council Members (the **Code**).
11. Where the Independent Reviewer concludes that a breach of the Code has occurred, he or she may also recommend to the Council the action which it should take against the member concerned in respect of that breach.
12. Subject to paragraph 13, the Independent Reviewer may determine the procedure to be followed in conducting the investigation, including the lines of inquiry to be pursued, the persons from whom evidence is to be sought and the form in which that evidence is to be given.
13. The Independent Reviewer must:
  - 13.1 send a copy of the complaint to the member concerned and invite him or her to submit a written response within a reasonable time (which must in any event be not less than 14 days);
  - 13.2 send a copy of any response from the member concerned to the complainant, and provide him or her with a reasonable time (which must in any event be not less than 14 days) in which to comment on it.
14. The Independent Reviewer may be provided with administrative support by the HCPC and may obtain legal advice from the Solicitor to the Council but, if the Independent Reviewer wishes to obtain independent administrative support or legal advice, the Council must meet the reasonable costs incurred by the Independent Reviewer in doing so.

## **Report**

15. Once the investigation has concluded, the Independent Reviewer must prepare a report (the **Report**) setting out the findings of the investigation, the conclusions reached, any recommendation made in accordance with paragraph 18 and the reasons for them.
16. The Report must also include all of the documents considered by the Independent Reviewer (other than any legal advice given to the Independent Reviewer or any other privileged communication).
17. The Report must be submitted to the Chair and, at the same time, a copy must be sent to the complainant and the member concerned.
18. If the Independent Reviewer concludes that there has been a breach of the Code, the Report may include one or more of the following recommendations:
  - 18.1 that no action be taken;
  - 18.2 that the member be admonished by the Council;
  - 18.3 that a report be submitted to the police, another regulatory or law enforcement agency or to a prosecuting authority;
  - 18.4 that the Council recommend to the Privy Council that the member be removed from the Council.

## **Council Procedure**

19. The Chair must convene a meeting of the Council, to consider the report.
20. The Report must be considered as public business unless, at the discretion of the Chair, it is taken as private business where:
  - 20.1 the Independent Reviewer has dismissed the complaint;
  - 20.2 the complaint concerns the health of any person;
  - 20.3 the complaint concerns confidential information; or
  - 20.4 the Independent Reviewer has recommended that the police or a regulatory, law enforcement or prosecuting body be informed of the matter;

and, in the latter case, the Chair may determine that the Council must not make public any information relating to the matter until the conclusion of any action by the police or other body concerned.

## **Council & Committee - Conflict of Interest Policy**

### **1. Policy Purpose**

Council and Committee Members have a duty to ensure that they are not placed in a position where their personal interests conflict with their duty to act in the interests of the HCPC.

The Council and Committee Member Code of conduct policy states that members must not –

- use their position for personal gain or to promote their private interests
- act in a way that may undermine public confidence in the HCPC or bring it into disrepute.

The aim of this policy is to set out the expectations regarding real or potential conflicts of interest and the process for dealing with a conflict raised in relation to a Council or Committee Member.

### **2. Scope**

The policy applies to all Council and Committee members. Compliance with this policy is compulsory for all Council and Committee members, breaches may result in a formal concern under the Council Code of Conduct.

Any request for further advice or guidance about Member's responsibilities under this policy should be directed to the Head of Governance.

### **3. What is a conflict of interest?**

A conflict of interest arises where a Council or Committee member has an interest which might influence, or be perceived to influence, that person's judgement in carrying out their role at the HCPC.

When a fair-minded and informed observer would conclude that there is a real possibility that an HCPC decision maker is or could be biased because of a particular interest then there is a conflict of interest.

When considering what might constitute a potential conflict, the seven principles of public office should be born in mind: selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership

## **4. The Importance of conflict of interest management**

The Council and Committee Member Conflict of Interest Policy supports the HCPC to ensure, and demonstrate, that its decision making is independent, transparent and enables public confidence.

The HCPC is responsible for promoting and setting standards of conduct for registrants, as well as making decisions about registrants whose fitness to practise may be impaired. It is critical that the HCPC's leadership must reflect the highest standards.

## **5. Responsibility for conflict of interest management**

It is the responsibility of all Council and Committee Members to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that they, and the HCPC, are not placed in a position where there is a conflict between the Member's responsibility to promote the best interests of the HCPC and the Member's own private interests.

Council Standing Order 15 requires members to make, and keep up to date, a declaration of their personal interests. All Members must complete a declaration on appointment and reconfirm this declaration on an annual basis.

Any changes to a Member's interests must be notified to the Head of Governance as soon as it becomes known to the Member.

The Head of Governance is responsible for maintaining the register of interests for the Council. The Governance Team will annually circulate the entries to members to review their declarations for currency.

## **6. Declaring interests at a meeting**

To promote transparency, at the beginning of the formal agenda of any meeting Members are asked to declare any interests (including any already contained within the register) that could be perceived as being relevant to any item on the agenda.

If an interest is declared, the Council will take a view on whether the interest should preclude the Member in taking part in that item of the agenda as required by Council Standing Order 15.2. Declarations and the Council's view on their materiality will be recorded in the formal minutes of the meeting.

## **7. Conflict of interest register**

On appointment all Council and Committee members will be asked to complete a declaration of interest form. This will be retained in a central register of interests.

The form required the following information on personal interests:

**1 - Relationships** - Members must declare any relationships, either personal or professional (outside of HCPC business), with any HCPC Registrant, Council or Committee Member, Employee, Partner or Supplier. Members

should also declare here if they have a partner or close family member who is a registrant and their profession.

**2 - Details of any employment** - this includes remunerated and unremunerated (voluntary) work, permanent and temporary roles, self-employment, consultancy work, Non-Executive Directorships of public or private companies.

**3A Membership of bodies exercising functions of a public nature** - this includes any role on the governing Board, Council, Committee or Group of a public body, this could be a government body, non-departmental public body, arm's length body, NHS body or regulator.

**3B - Membership of bodies which are directed to charitable purposes** - any charity trustee roles must be declared

**3C - Membership of any body whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy** - this includes membership of political parties, trade unions policy development and research groups or lobbying organisations.

**3D - Membership of bodies to which the HCPC has appointed the Member** - The HCPC takes part in cross organisational groups and contributes to the working groups of other organisations. Council Members may be asked to represent the HCPC on these Groups.

**4 - Details of any shareholdings which give a majority or controlling interest in any undertaking** - you should also include any shareholdings of a partner or close family member where those shareholdings could result in an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the HCPC's operation.

**5 - Description of any contracts for goods, services or works made between the HCPC and the Member, or an organisation from which you or your partner / close family member receive remuneration** - This does not include the remuneration Members receive to undertake their duties as a Council or Committee member. This section related to any additional work undertaken outside of this agreement, either by the Member, their partner or close family member or one of the Member's employers. For example, consultancy services.

**6 - Details of any significant political activity undertaken in the last five years** - this should include activities that are a matter of public record i.e. office holding in, public speaking in support of, or candidate on behalf of, any political party (or affiliated body) which fields candidates at local or general elections in any part of the UK or in elections to the European Parliament.

*Note - close family members for the purpose of conflicts of interest is defined as – That person's (or their partner's) dependents, and, or children, siblings and parents. Declarations made relating to a Partner or Close family member will not be published on the website register of interests.*

## **8. Publication of the register**

The HCPC is committed to transparency in its decision making. To enhance transparency, the register of interests is published on the HCPC website.

**3rd December 2020**



## Council and Committee Members Conflicts of interest and other material information

Council and Committee Members have a duty to ensure that they are not placed in a position where their personal interests conflict with their duty to act in the interests of the HCPC. Transparent declaration of interests is an essential duty for Council and Committee members.

The following sections ask for information which may be relevant in this context. More information can be found in the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

### Section 1 – Conflicts of Interest

1.	Do you have a relationship, either personal or professional (outside of HCPC business), with any HCPC Registrant, Council or Committee Member, Employee, Partner or Supplier. If yes please outline:	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
2.	Please summarise all employment (current or in the last two years)  This includes remunerated and unremunerated (voluntary) work, permanent and temporary roles, self-employment, consultancy work, Non-Executive Directorships of public or private companies)		
3.	Please provide details of membership or management of bodies that: (current or in the last two years)		
(a)	exercise functions of a public nature (including any public appointments):		
(b)	are directed to charitable purposes:		
(c)	aim to influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union):		
(d)	you have been appointed to by the HCPC		
4.	Please provide details of any shareholdings which gives you a majority or controlling interest in any undertaking:		

5.	Please provide a description of any contracts for goods, services or works made between the HCPC and you, or an organisation from which you or your partner / close family member receive remuneration.
6.	Please provide details of any significant political activity undertaken in the last five years. This should include activities that are a matter of public record i.e. office holding in, public speaking in support of, or candidate on behalf of, any political party (or affiliated body) which fields candidates at local or general elections in any part of the UK or in elections to the European Parliament.

## Section 2 – Material Information

Have you:			
1.	(a) any convictions or cautions, from the UK or overseas, which would be considered unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(b) ever been the subject of disqualification from the practice of a profession in the UK or elsewhere which remains in force; or are you the subject of any proceedings which could lead to such a disqualification?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(c) any pending charges to which you intend to plead guilty?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(d) become bankrupt over the past 10 years?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(e) been dismissed from any office or employment over the past 10 years?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(f) ever been disqualified from acting as a Company Director or in the conduct of a company?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(g) ever been a director, partner or manager of a company which has gone into liquidation, receivership or administration?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
	(h) any other facts to declare which you feel could be raised publicly in the future relating to your suitability to hold the office of Council or Committee member?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
2.	If you have answered yes to a question in section 1, please provide details below, continuing on a separate sheet if necessary.		

## Declaration

I undertake to advise the Council of any other information relevant to an assessment of suitability as a public appointee and to report and significant future change to the information I have provided on this form.

I will inform the Council of any change of circumstance which would result in a YES answer having to be given to any of the questions in Section 1.

I confirm that the information given on this form is complete and true, to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the information I have provided is subsequently found to be untrue, then my tenure of office may be terminated.

**Signature** .....

**Print** ..... **Date**.....

Completed forms must be returned to the Head of Governance at [secretariat@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:secretariat@hcpc-uk.org)

# FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR THE HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

<b>Status of document:</b>	Final
<b>Version:</b>	1.0
<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
<b>Date of approval:</b>	05 December 2024
<b>Effective from:</b>	05 December 2024
<b>Owners:</b>	Alastair Bridges, Executive Director of Resources Alan Keshtmand, Head of Finance and Commercial
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<b>Next policy review date:</b>	November 2027

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Financial management overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Financial responsibilities .....	3
Purpose and scope of financial regulations .....	3
Approval and review of financial regulations .....	3
<b>2. Codes of behaviour in financial management .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Financial management framework .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Financial delegations .....	5
Governance and committees .....	6
Executive financial responsibilities .....	6
Delegated authority and budget responsibilities .....	7
<b>4. Financial controls and procedures .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Operational and budget controls .....	7
Procurement and contractual commitments .....	8
Purchase orders and supplier payments .....	8
Corporate credit card usage .....	9
Travel and subsistence .....	9
Capital expenditure .....	10
Treasury and cash management .....	10
<b>5. Financial planning, budgeting and reporting .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Budget process .....	11
Investments for major projects .....	12
Management accounts and forecasts .....	12
<b>6. Other requirements .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Risk management .....	13
Audit requirements .....	13
Disclosure of interests and gifts .....	14
Fraud, bribery, corruption and whistleblowing .....	14
Insurance .....	14
Training and supervision .....	14
<b>Annex 1 - Authority for financial commitments .....</b>	<b>15</b>

## 1. Financial management overview

### Financial responsibilities

- 1.1. The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) was established under section 60 of the Health Act 1999. As a regulator of health and care professions in the UK, the HCPC's role is to protect the public. The Council has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the HCPC is financially sound and that there is effective financial management in place.
- 1.2. The Chief Executive was appointed as the HCPC's Accounting Officer by the Privy Council and is accountable for the stewardship of the HCPC's resources.

### Purpose and scope of financial regulations

- 1.3. The purpose of the financial regulations is to:
  - ensure that high standards of financial integrity are maintained at all times
  - outline the financial responsibilities of HCPC employees<sup>1</sup>, and the policies adopted by the HCPC to fulfil its financial control and legal obligations
  - provide high level principles that guide planning and managing the HCPC's finances and the proper use of resources and stewardship of assets.
- 1.4. The financial regulations are part of our governance arrangements and are supported by a range of policies, procedures and guides. If any instance of conflict or ambiguity arises between the financial regulations and supporting documents, the financial regulations take precedence.

### Approval and review of financial regulations

- 1.5. The financial regulations are set and approved by the Council and are consistent with the financial strategy<sup>2</sup>. They are reviewed by the Council every three years and more frequently should circumstances require. In line with good practice, the appropriate operational managers should regularly update the supporting documents.
- 1.6. The financial regulations apply to all HCPC employees. They are available on the intranet. Failure to comply with the financial regulations or

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<sup>1</sup> The regulations apply to the Council and Committee members, permanent and fixed-term employees and temporary, interim, agency and contracted workers.

<sup>2</sup> Financial Strategy: [hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/meetings-attachments3/finance-and-resources-committee/2013/march/enc-09---financial-strategy/](http://hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/meetings-attachments3/finance-and-resources-committee/2013/march/enc-09---financial-strategy/)

instructions issued under them, may result in disciplinary action. All employees are responsible for understanding their responsibilities under these regulations and complying with them. Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees they manage receive appropriate training on the regulations, understand them and comply with them.

- 1.7. On joining the HCPC, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), who report directly to the Chief Executive, must sign a budget delegation letter confirming that they have read the financial regulations and understand and accept their responsibilities.
- 1.8. It is not possible to cover every eventuality within these financial regulations. Where a particular circumstance is not specifically referred to and there is any doubt as to the correct course of action, guidance should be sought in the first instance from the Head of Finance and Commercial.

## **2. Codes of behaviour in financial management**

2.1. In addition to the financial regulations, the Nolan principles of public life<sup>3</sup> apply to our financial management.

2.2. 'The Seven Principles of Public Life' are ethical standards that are expected of those working in public services, such as the HCPC and are as follows:

- Selflessness - to act solely in terms of the public interest.
- Integrity - to avoid placing ourselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence us in our work. Not to act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for ourselves, our family or our friends. To declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- Objectivity - to act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- Accountability - to be accountable to the public for our decisions and actions and to submit ourselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- Openness - to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.
- Honesty - to be truthful.
- Leadership - to exhibit these principles in our own behaviour. To actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

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<sup>3</sup> The Seven Principles of Public Life: [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-seven-principles-of-public-life)

- 2.3. Alignment with the HCPC's values - based on the HCPC's people strategy<sup>4</sup>, the values outlined for the organisation are 'Fair', 'Compassionate', 'Inclusive' and 'Enterprising'. These values guide the HCPC's approach to regulatory responsibilities and workforce practices and reflect commitments such as transparency, respect, collaboration and a proactive, innovative mindset in service delivery and team culture.

### **3. Financial management framework**

#### **Financial delegations**

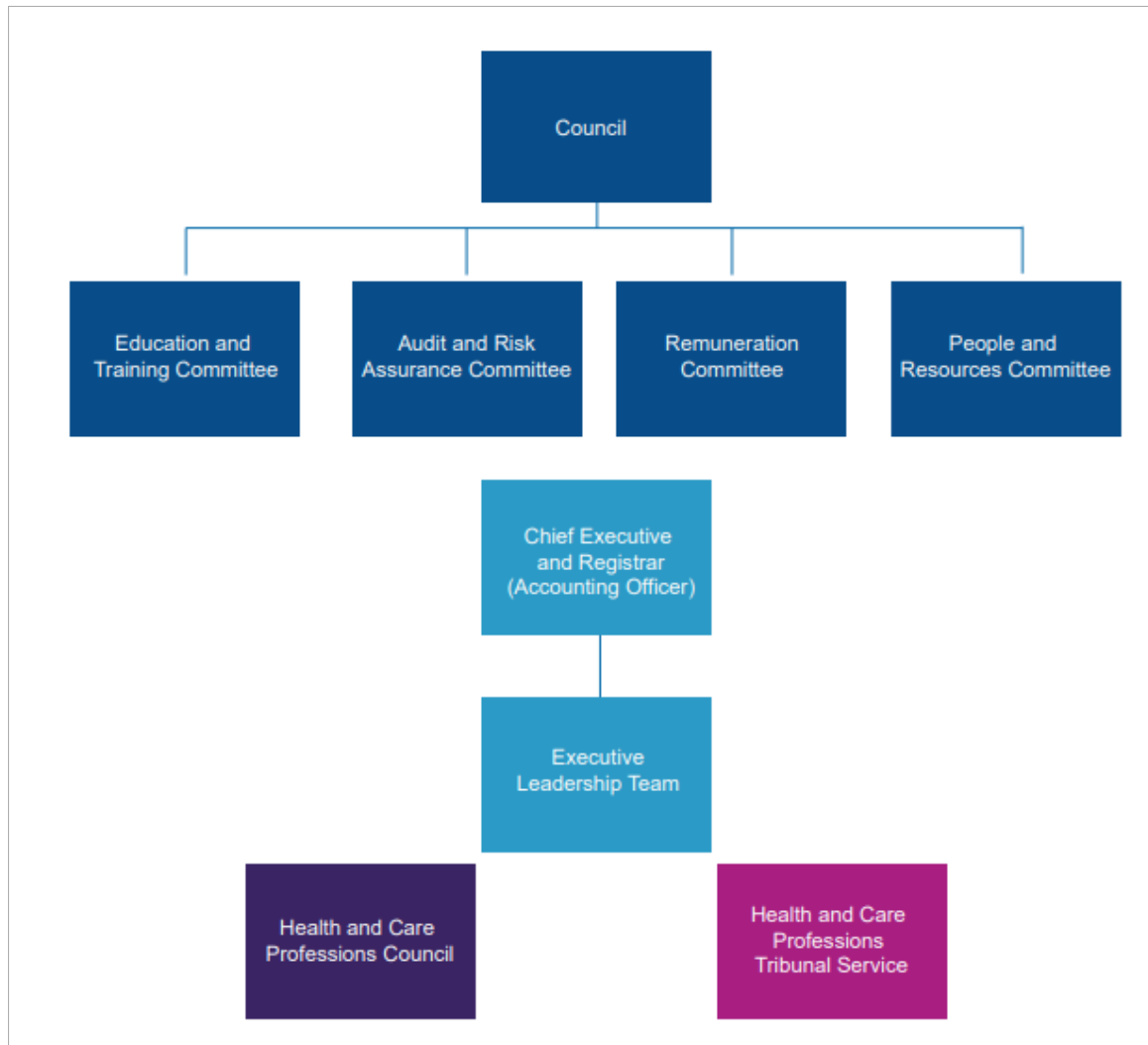
- 3.1. Council responsibilities: the Council is ultimately responsible for the financial stability and integrity of the HCPC. It exercises financial control through strategic approvals, such as defining the financial control framework, overseeing reserves, investments and procurement policies and regularly reviewing financial reports.
- 3.2. Statutory duties: under the Health Professions Order 2001 (the Order), the Council is responsible for specific financial activities including setting fees, maintaining accounts, publishing annual accounts and appointing external auditors.
- 3.3. The scheme of financial delegation is represented in the diagram below<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> People Strategy: [prod.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/reports/hcpc-people-strategy-2021-2026.pdf](https://prod.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/reports/hcpc-people-strategy-2021-2026.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Annual Report and Accounts (page 51): [HCPC annual report and accounts 2023-24](#)





## Governance and committees

- 3.4. The Order, Standing Orders of the Council and Scheme of Delegation that set out the powers and functions of the Council and the standing orders of committees are available on the HCPC's website<sup>6</sup>.
- 3.5. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC): oversees the HCPC's audit processes and risk management practices.
- 3.6. People and Resources Committee (PRC): monitors financial planning and long-term financial sustainability.

## Executive financial responsibilities

- 3.7. Chief Executive and Accounting Officer: the Chief Executive, appointed by the Privy Council as the Accounting Officer, is accountable for managing the HCPC's resources, adhering to the financial framework and fulfilling the HCPC's statutory obligations.

<sup>6</sup> Scheme of Delegation: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/about-us/who-we-are/council-and-committees/code-of-corporate-governance/scheme-of-delegation.pdf>

- 3.8. Executive Director of Resources: accountable for implementing Council-approved financial policies, maintaining internal financial controls, providing financial guidance and preparing necessary financial reports. Ensures adherence to best practices and professional standards in financial management.
- 3.9. Head of Finance and Commercial: responsible for implementing Council-approved financial policies, maintaining internal financial controls, providing financial guidance and preparing necessary financial reports. Accountable for preparing management accounts, conducting quarterly reviews, budget preparation, medium-term financial projections and preparing annual accounts.

### **Delegated authority and budget responsibilities**

- 3.10. Delegation of Authority: only those with delegated authority may commit the HCPC to financial or contractual expenditures, adhering to the financial limits detailed in Annex 1. No purchase orders or financial commitments should be initiated without prior approval from an authorised individual.
- 3.11. Budget management: budget holders are responsible for ensuring funds are used appropriately, aligning with departmental and organisational goals and adhering to financial regulations as well as the Procurement Policy<sup>7</sup>. Decisions on spending should be justifiable to registrants as responsible use of funds<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.12. Signatories: the Finance and Commercial department maintains a database of authorised signatories and individuals with delegated authority must be active users of the electronic finance and purchasing system to approve expenditures.

## **4. Financial controls and procedures**

### **Operational and budget controls**

- 4.1. The Head of Finance and Commercial is accountable for implementing and managing systems to:
- Order goods and services
  - Process payments to creditors, allowances and expenses
  - Collect and deposit all income owed to the HCPC
  - Manage and protect the HCPC's assets until disposal
  - Administer taxes and make necessary payments to authorities

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<sup>7</sup> [Procurement manual](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Regularity, Propriety and Value for Money](#)

- 4.2. The HCPC's accounting systems must allocate income and expenses accurately to facilitate statutory account preparation. Whenever possible, items of income and expenditure should be assigned to relevant cost centers.
- 4.3. Registration fees: all registration fees charged to HCPC registrants are defined in the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003<sup>9</sup> and must be accurately recorded within the Registration system.
- 4.4. Fees for additional services: while the HCPC generally does not charge for additional services, any fees must align with the HCPC's objectives and ensure that registrant funds are not used to subsidise unrelated activities. If a service is requested by another organisation, individuals should consult with the Finance and Commercial department to determine if a fee should be charged.
- 4.5. Payroll oversight: payroll costs are managed through the HCPC's budget-setting process, as well as strict procedures for hiring and setting compensation for employees and temporary workers. In collaboration with the Head of HR, the Head of Finance and Commercial oversees systems for the timely and accurate payment of salaries, wages and pensions.
- 4.6. Expenditure authorisation: employees are required to obtain approval from an authorised budget holder before committing the HCPC's funds for any goods or services.

#### **Procurement and contractual commitments**

- 4.7. Procurement compliance: all goods and services must be procured in line with the Procurement Policy. Only the ELT, following authority thresholds set in Annex 1, can enter into contracts on behalf of the HCPC.
- 4.8. Budget holder responsibilities: before approving contracts or requisitions, budget holders must ensure that the expenditure is necessary, represents good value and adheres to Procurement Policy guidelines. Each contract or requisition should be clear and detailed, specifying deliverables, prices and deadlines. Documentation of compliance must accompany the requisition in the purchasing system.

#### **Purchase orders and supplier payments**

- 4.9. Purchase order creation and compliance: an approved purchase requisition generates a purchase order, forming a binding agreement with the supplier, who will invoice against it.

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<sup>9</sup> [consolidated-registration-and-fees-rules.pdf](#)

- 4.10. Goods and service receipt: budget holders are responsible for confirming that goods or services meet expectations before 'receipting' the purchase order. This action authorises payment to the supplier.

### **Corporate credit card usage**

- 4.11. Corporate credit cards may be issued to employees for specific business needs, subject to ELT approval and Finance guidance. Cardholders must adhere to the Corporate Credit Card policy<sup>10</sup> and use cards only for approved purposes, avoiding circumvention of standard expenditure controls.

### **Travel and subsistence**

- 4.12. Employees must follow the expenses policy for any travel and accommodation expenses. Travel, subsistence and allowance claims are processed in line with the HCPC's expenses policy<sup>11</sup>. The following approval protocols apply based on the claimant and nature of the claim:

- Employee claims: authorised by the claimant's line manager or designated departmental reviewer.
- Executive Directors or Chief Executive (domestic limits): self-authorised for claims up to £500 within the UK, with annual audits for policy compliance.
- Executive Director claims (exceeding domestic limits or international travel): authorised by the Chief Executive or another Executive Director and the Head of Finance and Commercial.
- Chief Executive claims (exceeding domestic limits or international travel): authorised by the Chair of the Council and the Head of Finance and Commercial.
- Council Members' claims: authorised by the Head of Governance or relevant budget holder.
- HCPC Partners' claims: authorised by the relevant budget holder.

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<sup>10</sup> Credit Card Policy: <G:\Finance\ Polices & Procedures\Finance Policies\Current policies\Credit Card Policy\Company Credit Card Policy.docx>

<sup>11</sup> [Expenses Policy for Employees \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

## **Capital expenditure**

- 4.13. Capital expenditure follows the same processes as operational expenses, including budget, procurement and ordering approvals.
- 4.14. Fixed assets, which are defined annually in accounting policies by the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee, include equipment, furniture and property and are recorded in a fixed asset register managed by the Head of Finance and Commercial.
- 4.15. Disposals of assets require approval based on the net book value: if below £5,000, approval from the Head of Finance and Commercial is sufficient; if over £5,000, authorisation from the Executive Director of Resources or ELT is required.

## **Treasury and cash management**

- 4.16. Banking arrangements: the Executive Director of Resources and the Head of Finance and Commercial oversee the HCPC's banking arrangements.
- 4.17. Approval for financial transactions:
  - Bank loans/overdrafts: Council approval is required for any bank loan or overdraft facility.
  - Leases: leases of land and buildings must be approved by the Council. Leases for office equipment require approval from the Executive Director of Resources.
  - Borrowing arrangements: Council approval is required for any borrowing arrangements by the HCPC.
- 4.18. Bank mandate: the Executive Director of Resources and Head of Finance and Commercial are responsible for approving the bank mandate, detailing individuals authorised to approve bank payments. To maintain appropriate segregation of duties, those approving payments must not have administrative access to the finance system.
- 4.19. Payment procedures: payment runs follow defined procedures and payment authorisers must review required evidence before approval.
- 4.20. Payment methods: the HCPC only accepts electronic payments - registrants' fees are made through HCPC Online, direct debit or debit/credit card. The HCPC does not accept payments via cheque or cash. All payments must be made electronically.
- 4.21. Debt recovery and write-offs: the Chief Executive holds full authority to pursue debt recovery, including the initiation of legal action when

necessary. The Executive Director of Resources is permitted to write off irrecoverable debts up to and not exceeding £10,000. The Chief Executive is permitted to write off irrecoverable debts exceeding £10,000. All debts exceeding £10,000 are reported to ARAC.

- 4.22. Losses and special payments: the HCPC report on all losses and special payments such as fruitless claims including cancellation payments to partners attending hearings and travel expenses incurred but not used, constructive losses, claims waived and abandoned and ex gratia payments to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) as part of the annual return to the DHSC per HM Treasury's guidance on Managing Public Money. Losses and special payments exceeding £300,000 are also reported in HCPC's annual report.
- 4.23. Special severance payments: special severance payments to employees are reported to remuneration committee.

## **5. Financial planning, budgeting and reporting**

- 5.1. The financial strategy and annual budgets are aligned with the HCPC's corporate strategy<sup>12</sup>, ensuring sufficient resources for delivering objectives while maintaining financial sustainability and value for money.
- 5.2. The Council is responsible for approving the financial strategy (including fee policy), investment policy, reserves policy, the corporate strategy and the annual budget, with reviews occurring annually and updates every five years.

### **Budget process**

- 5.3. Multi-year budgeting: budgets are created with a strong focus on the first year and are part of the annual business planning and budget setting process.
- 5.4. Budget approval: annual budgets detail overall income, expenditure (both operational and capital), allocations to departments, the annual registration fee and impact on reserves.
- 5.5. Budget holder responsibilities: budget holders are tasked with spending their budgets effectively, aiming for a tolerance of plus or minus 5%. However, demand led regulatory functions, for example Fitness to Practise hearing costs, should normally not be limited solely in order to remain within budget.
- 5.6. Budget revisions: budgets are fixed, revisions however, are captured outside of the original budgets via forecasts. The ELT has authority to move funds between budget line items, but the Council's approval is

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<sup>12</sup> Corporate Strategy 2021-2026: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/about-us/what-we-do/corporate-strategy/hcpc-corporate-strategy-2021-2026.pdf>

required for proposals exceeding aggregate budgeted spend or for any change involving core business or capital expenditure. If budget holders wish to make a commitment that would lead to their budgeted spend being exceeded, the budget holder must follow the approval process from the ELT. Following approval from ELT, the changes will be captured in the revised forecast.

### **Investments for major projects**

- 5.7. Project management: significant changes are managed using a project methodology supported by the Business Change team. This is monitored through a Change & Benefits Forum as part of the overall governance framework, which will provide an opportunity to define its role and responsibilities.
- 5.8. Summary investment case approval: required for projects costing between £100,000 and £250,000 that were not previously budgeted or projects that significantly affect registrants or the public.
- 5.9. Full investment case approval: required for projects over £250,000 or with substantial impact on registrants or the public or if requested by the Council after reviewing the summary investment case.
- 5.10. Council approval process: The Council must approve the investment case before project initiation and re-approval is necessary if there are changes to the project's scope, budget or timeline.

### **Management accounts and forecasts**

- 5.11. Monthly management accounts are prepared for all areas of activity, with forecasts updated monthly for significant movements and detailed reforecasts carried out quarterly. Management accounts will compare actual costs against budget and forecast on a department-by-department and spend category basis.
- 5.12. Summarised management accounts will be presented to the People and Resources Committee and the Council, including comparison of actual income and expenditure to budget and forecast and explanation for significant variances. The Council may request additional reports as required.
- 5.13. Budget holders are responsible for reviewing management accounts and understanding the causes of variances to budget/forecast and being able to explain those variances to their manager or the Council as appropriate.

## 6. Other requirements

### Risk management

- 6.1. The Council has a risk management policy and framework<sup>13</sup>. Budget holders must manage financial risks in accordance with the framework.

### Audit requirements

- 6.2. Access to the HCPC's premises and to all assets, records, documents and correspondence relating to financial and other transactions must be provided and explanations given when required, to external auditors for the purpose of examining the HCPC's accounts and to the internal auditor concerning any matter under examination.
- 6.3. Authority of internal and external auditors - in order to perform their functions, the internal and external auditors have authority to:
- enter, at a reasonable time, any HCPC premises or land;
  - have access to records, documents and correspondence relating to any transaction of the HCPC;
  - review any relevant activity of the HCPC;
  - require and receive such explanations as are necessary concerning any matter under examination; and
  - require any HCPC Council member, employee or contractor to produce any asset under his or her control for which the HCPC is responsible.
- 6.4. Comptroller and Auditor General
- Article 46 of the Health Professions Order 2001<sup>14</sup> provides that the HCPC's accounts shall be subject to examination by the Comptroller and Auditor General.
  - For the purposes of such examination, the Comptroller and Auditor General may inspect the HCPC's accounts and any records relating to them. Notwithstanding that power and the powers available under the National Audit Act 1983<sup>15</sup>, the Comptroller and Auditor General shall have the same authority as the internal and external auditors specified in paragraph 6.3 above.

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<sup>13</sup> [HCPC Operational Risk Management Guide](#)

<sup>14</sup> Health Professions Order 2001: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/resources/legislation/hcpc---consolidated-health-professions-order-2001.pdf?v=638400741870000000>

<sup>15</sup> National Audit Act 1983: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/44/contents>



## **Disclosure of interests and gifts**

- 6.5. We are committed to transparency and openness in the conduct of our affairs.
- 6.6. Disclosure requirements for the Council and non-Council committee members are specified in the HCPC's code of conduct for members. The Head of Governance maintains the register of interests of Council and Committee members and the ELT.
- 6.7. Employees must declare any interests they may have in matters they are dealing with in the course of their work at the HCPC to their ELT member, where appropriate, must not be involved in matters in which they have an interest.
- 6.8. Employees taking part in tendering are required to make a conflict of interest declaration to the Head of Governance.
- 6.9. Employees must report all gifts and significant hospitality offered to them in the course of their duties, including those that they decline. Gifts and hospitality are recorded on the gift and hospitality register held by Governance and may be published.

## **Fraud, bribery, corruption and whistleblowing**

- 6.10. Employees must report any suspicions they might have of fraudulent or corrupt behaviour to the Head of Governance, Executive Director of Resources, ELT or senior manager as appropriate.
- 6.11. The anti-bribery and fraud policy<sup>16</sup> and the whistleblowing policy<sup>17</sup> (public interest disclosure policy) are available on the intranet.

## **Insurance**

- 6.12. Budget holders should promptly notify the Head of Finance and Commercial of new or changing insurance requirements and of loss, liability, damage or an event that is likely to lead to an insurance claim.

## **Training and supervision**

- 6.13. The Head of Finance and Commercial is responsible for providing financial training to all relevant employees and ensuring that guides to financial procedures are available.
- 6.14. Managers are responsible, within their areas, for the effective operation of financial procedures and delivery of financial responsibilities.

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<sup>16</sup> Anti-bribery and fraud policy: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/globalassets/about-us/who-we-are/council-and-committees/code-of-corporate-governance/15.-anti-bribery-and-fraud-policy-13-march-2024.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Whistleblowing policy: <https://hcpcuk.sharepoint.com/howwework/Pages/Whistleblowing-policy.aspx>

## Annex 1 - Authority for financial commitments

Aggregate Contract Value (Incl. VAT)	Method of Selection	Authorisation Level	Contract Budgeted?	Method of Acceptance
£0 – £9,999	Competition with evidence of comparison of at least two suppliers, or a use of mini tender process.	Budget holder, Head of Finance and Commercial, Executive Director	Not contingent on budget	Approved PO
£10,000 – £25,000			Yes	Contract signed by Budget Holder
			No	Contract signed by Executive Director
£25,001 – £100,000	A competitive process with at least three written quotes, or a public tender, or use of a public framework agreement	Tender Panel makes final selection and to be approved by the relevant Executive Director	Yes	Contract signed by Executive Director
			No	Contract signed by the Chief Executive
£100,001 – £250,000	A competitive public tender, or use of a public framework agreement	Tender Panel makes final selection and to be approved by the relevant Executive Director.	Yes	Contract signed by the Chief Executive
			No	Contract signed by the Chief Executive after obtaining the approval from the Chair of the Council
£250,001 and above	Use of a framework agreement, or formal written public tender in compliance with the UK Public Sector Procurement Regulations	Legal advice required if a framework agreement is not used.	Not contingent on budget	Authorised by the Chief Executive with approval of the Chair

## **ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is committed to acting with objectivity and integrity and conducting all of its activities in an honest and ethical manner.

This includes preventing bribery and fostering a culture in which bribery will not be tolerated in any form.

Council members, committee members, employees, partners and all others who act on the HCPC's behalf must uphold the highest standards of integrity when doing so.

### **Bribery**

In essence, bribery is the giving or receiving of a financial or other inducement or advantage in connection with some improper performance of functions.

The Bribery Act 2010 creates two bribery offences:

- offering, promising or giving a financial or other advantage (the offence of bribing another person); and
- requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a financial or other advantage (the offence of being bribed).

In either case the bribe must be intended to induce improper conduct by the recipient, that is the improper exercise of a function of a public nature or an activity connected with a business, trade or profession.

The Act also creates a separate offence of bribing a foreign public official. That offence is committed if a bribe is offered, promised or given to such an official with the intention of influencing the recipient in the performance of his or her public functions and with the intention of obtaining or retaining business or a business advantage.

### **Policy**

All forms of bribery are strictly prohibited. A person who is subject to this policy (**you**) must not:

- offer or give a bribe to, or seek or accept a bribe from, any individual or organisation; or
- seek or accept, any payment (in cash or kind) or other inducement in respect of any service provided by or on behalf of the HCPC.

If you are unsure about whether a particular act contravenes this policy, you should seek advice by contacting [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org).

### **Hospitality, gifts etc.**

This policy does not prohibit the acceptance, for legitimate purposes, of gifts or hospitality which are reasonable and appropriate.

A gift or hospitality will not be reasonable and appropriate if it is lavish or extravagant, or may be seen as an inducement or reward for any preferential treatment.

A gift will be reasonable and appropriate if it is of modest value or a token nature, such as flowers or pens, t-shirts, diaries and similar promotional items. Such gifts do not include expensive items, cash or its equivalent (such as vouchers) or any gift given in secret. No gift or other offering should be accepted if the value is reasonably believed to be over £10.

Hospitality will be reasonable and appropriate if it is of modest value and related to HCPC's activities, such as meals or refreshments provided at meetings or conferences. Such hospitality does not include offers of entertainment, such as attendance at sporting or other events unconnected to the HCPC's activities.

You must not:

- accept a gift or hospitality which is not reasonable and appropriate;
- accept a gift under any circumstances from a supplier or potential supplier when a contract is being awarded or business is being transacted; or
- accept a discount which is not generally available or any similar inducement in respect of products or services purchased for private purposes from an HCPC supplier.

If you are unsure about whether any gift or hospitality contravenes this policy, you should seek advice from [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org).

### **Record keeping**

You must declare any gifts or hospitality which you receive or give.

You must prepare all records relating to dealings with suppliers and other relevant third parties completely and accurately.

### **Raising a concern**

If you are offered a bribe or are asked to make one, or if you suspect that any bribery or other breach of this policy has occurred or may occur, you must report it as soon as possible to [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org)

Also see the HCPC Whistle Blowing policy for further information.

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# **Fraud Policy**

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the policy and procedures of the HCPC or the HCPTS against fraud, and other forms of dishonesty and supplements the Anti Bribery Policy.

It applies to Directors, employees, contractors, interims, agency staff, Council and Committee members and Partners. Anybody associated with the HCPC or the HCPTS who commits fraud, theft, or any other dishonesty, or who becomes aware of it and does not report it, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **1. Statement of intent**

The HCPC or the HCPTS will continually strive to ensure that all its financial and administrative processes are carried out and reported honestly, accurately, transparently and accountably and that all decisions are taken objectively and free of personal interest. We will not condone any behaviour that falls short of these principles.

All members of the HCPC or the HCPTS have a responsibility for putting these principles into practice and for reporting any breaches they discover. Fraud or attempted fraud by those employed or contracted to the HCPC may result in disciplinary action up to and possibly including dismissal and/or referral to the police.

### **3. Definitions**

a) **Fraud**: A deliberate intent to acquire money or goods dishonestly through the falsification of records or documents. The deliberate changing of financial statements or other records by either; a member of the public, someone who works (in any capacity) or is a Partner for the HCPC or the HCPTS. The criminal act is the attempt to deceive and attempted fraud is therefore treated as seriously as accomplished fraud

b) **Theft**: Dishonestly acquiring, using or disposing of physical or intellectual property belonging to the HCPC or the HCPTS or to individual members of the organisation.

c) **Misuse of equipment**: Deliberately misusing materials or equipment belonging to the HCPC or the HCPTS for financial or material benefit.

d) **Abuse of position**: Exploiting a position of trust within the organisation for financial or material benefit.

### **4. Culture**

The HCPC or the HCPTS fosters honesty and integrity in its entire employees and members. Directors, employees, Council & Committee members and Partners are expected to lead by example in adhering to policies, procedures and practices. Equally,

members of the public, service users and external organisations (such as suppliers and contractors) are expected to act with integrity and without intent to commit fraud against the HCPC.

As part of this, the HCPC or the HCPTS will provide clear routes by which concerns may be raised by Directors, employees, and members and Partners. Details of this can be found in the HCPC's Fraud Response Policy. Alternatively employees may email [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org)

Also see the HCPC Whistle Blowing policy for further information.

Senior management are expected to deal promptly, firmly and fairly with suspicions and allegations of fraud or corrupt practice. The HCPC may use the 'Serious Event Report' process which can be found on the Quality Management System [https://hcpcuk.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/QualityManagementSystemISO9001/EdZXHaYD9j1Cmaoojm1JhfABVPzMt5SP9DgU\\_07glaUv2g?e=mTQZ4a](https://hcpcuk.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/QualityManagementSystemISO9001/EdZXHaYD9j1Cmaoojm1JhfABVPzMt5SP9DgU_07glaUv2g?e=mTQZ4a)

## **5. Responsibilities**

In relation to the prevention of fraud, theft, misuse of equipment and abuse of position, specific responsibilities are as follows:

### **a) Council members and ELT:**

The Directors are responsible for establishing and maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the HCPC's policies, aims and objectives.

The system of internal control is designed to respond to and manage the whole range of risks which the HCPC faces.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify the principal risks, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them effectively. Managing fraud risk is seen in the context of the management of this wider range of risks.

Audit Committee will approve such measures on an annual basis.

### **b) The Chief Executive Officer:**

Overall responsibility for managing the risk of fraud has been delegated to the CEO. The day-to-day responsibility has been delegated to the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer (CISRO) to act on behalf of the CEO.

Their responsibilities include:

- Undertaking a regular review of the fraud risks associated with each of the key organisational objectives.
- Establishing an effective anti-fraud response plan, in proportion to the level of fraud risk identified.
- The design of an effective control environment to prevent fraud.
- Establishing appropriate mechanisms for:

- reporting fraud risk issues
- reporting significant incidents of fraud, or attempted fraud to the Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- Liaising with the HCPC's appointed Auditors.
- Making sure that all employees and members are aware of the HCPC's Fraud Policy and know what their responsibilities are in relation to combating fraud;
- Ensuring that appropriate anti-fraud training is made available to Directors, employees and members and Partners as required; and
- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to minimize the risk of previous frauds occurring in future.

c) Executive Leadership Team (ELT) & Senior Leadership Group (SLG)

The Executive Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Group are responsible for:

- ensuring that an adequate system of internal control exists within their areas of responsibility and that controls operate effectively;
- preventing and detecting fraud as far as possible;
- assessing the types of risk involved in the operations for which they are responsible;
- reviewing the control systems for which they are responsible regularly;
- ensuring that controls are being complied with and their systems continue to operate effectively; and
- implementing new controls to reduce the risk of similar fraud occurring where frauds have taken place.

d) Employees and members

All employees and Council or Committee members are responsible for:

- acting with propriety in the use of the HCPC's resources and the handling and use of funds whether they are involved with cash, receipts, payments or dealing with suppliers;
- conducting themselves with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- being alert to the possibility that unusual events or transactions could be indicators of fraud;
- alerting their manager when they believe the opportunity for fraud exists e.g. because of poor procedures or lack of effective oversight;
- reporting details immediately if they suspect that a fraud has been committed or see any suspicious acts or events; and
- cooperating fully with whoever is conducting internal checks or reviews or fraud investigations.

e) Partners

Every Partner is responsible for:

- Acting with propriety in the use of the HCPC's resources and the handling and use information and of funds whether they are involved with cash, receipts, payments or dealing with suppliers;

- Conducting themselves with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- Being alert to the possibility that unusual events or transactions could be indicators of fraud;
- Alerting their manager when they believe the opportunity for fraud exists e.g. because of poor procedures or lack of effective oversight;
- Reporting details immediately if they suspect that a fraud has been committed or see any suspicious acts or events; and
- cooperating fully with whoever is conducting internal checks or reviews or fraud investigations.

## **6. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by ELT and agreed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on a bi-annual basis or if there is a significant change in the appropriate areas of law.



## **Fraud Response Plan**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This fraud response plan provides a checklist of actions and a guide to follow in the event that a fraud is suspected. It covers:
- Notifying Suspected Fraud
  - The investigation process
  - Liaison with police and NAO
  - Initiation of recovery action
  - Reporting Processes
- 1.2 Its purpose is to define authority levels, responsibilities for action and reporting lines in the event of suspected fraud. Theft or other irregularity.

### **2. Notifying Suspected Fraud**

- 2.1 It is important that all employees are able to report their concerns without fear of reprisal or victimisation and are aware of the means to do so. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the “Whistle Blowers Act”) provides appropriate protection for those who voice genuine and legitimate concerns through the proper channels. See the separate Whistle Blowing Policy for further details.
- 2.2 In the first instance, any suspicion of fraud, theft or other irregularity should be reported, as a matter of urgency, to your line manager. If such action would be inappropriate, your concerns should be reported upwards to one of the following persons:
- Head of Governance
  - A member of OMT
  - A member of SMT
  - Director of Finance
  - Chief Executive Officer
- 2.3 Concerns may also be raised with the Chair of the Audit Committee
- 2.4 Every effort will be made to protect an informant’s anonymity if requested. However, HCPC will always encourage individuals to be identified to add more validity to the concerns and allow further investigations to be more effective. In certain circumstances, anonymity cannot be maintained. This will be advised to the informant prior to release of information.

### **3. The Investigation process**

- 3.1 Suspected fraud must be investigated in an independent, open-minded and professional manner with the aim of protecting the interests of both HCPC and the suspected individual(s). Suspicion must not be seen as guilt to be proven.
- 3.2 The investigation process will vary according to the circumstances of each case and will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Director of Finance, the appropriate Director and Head of Governance. An Investigating Officer will be appointed to take charge of the investigation on a day-to day basis. This will normally be the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer or, exceptionally, another independent manager.
- 3.3 The Investigating Officer may appoint any investigation team as needed.
- 3.4 Where initial investigations reveal that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, and to facilitate the ongoing investigation, it may be appropriate to suspend an employee against whom concerns have been raised. This decision will be taken by the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and the Investigating Officer. Suspension should not be regarded as disciplinary action, nor should it imply guilt. The process will follow guidelines set out in HCPC's Employee Handbook. Council & Committee members are subject to the Code of Conduct, in the code of Corporate Governance.
- 3.5 It is important from the outset, to ensure that evidence is not contaminated, lost or destroyed. The Independent Investigator will therefore take immediate steps to secure physical assets, including computers and any records thereon, and all other potentially evidential documents or electronic or document saving devices. They will also ensure, in consultation with management, that appropriate controls are introduced to prevent further loss.
- 3.6 The Investigating Officer will ensure that a detailed record of the investigation is maintained. This should include a chronological file recording details of all telephone conversations, discussions, meetings and interviews (with whom, who else was present and who said what), details of documents reviewed, tests and analyses undertaken, the results and their significance. Everything should be recorded, irrespective of the apparent significance at the time.
- 3.7 All interviews will be conducted in a fair and proper manner. Where there is a possibility of subsequent criminal action, the police will be consulted and interviews may be conducted under caution in compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), which governs the admissibility of evidence in criminal proceedings.
- 3.8 The findings of the investigation will be reported to the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and head of Human Resources and Organisational Development who will determine, in consultation with the Investigating officer, what further action (if any) should be taken.

#### **4. Liaison with Police and National Audit office (NAO)**

- 4.1 The police generally welcome early notification of suspected fraud, particularly that of a serious or complex nature. Some frauds will lend themselves to automatic reporting to the police (such as theft by a third party). For more complex frauds, the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Head of Governance and the Investigating Officer will decide if and when to contact the police. The Director of Finance will report suspected frauds to the NAO at an appropriate time.
- 4.2 All employees will co-operate fully with any police or NAO enquiries, which may have to take precedence over any internal investigation or disciplinary process. However, wherever possible, teams will co-ordinate their enquiries to maximise the effective and efficient use of resources and information.

#### **5. Initiation of Recovery Action**

- 5.1 HCPC will take appropriate steps, including legal action if necessary, to recover any losses arising from fraud, theft or misconduct. This may include civil action against third parties involved in the fraud, or whose negligent actions contributed to the fraud, to recover any losses.

#### **6. Reporting Process**

- 6.1 Throughout any investigation, the Investigating Officer will keep the Chief executive Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Head of Governance informed of progress and any developments. These reports may be verbal or in writing.
- 6.2 On completion of the investigation, the Investigating officer will prepare a full written report setting out:
- Background as to how the investigation arose
  - What action was taken in response to the allegations
  - The conduct of the investigation
  - The facts that came to light and the supporting evidence
  - Action taken against any party where the allegations were proved
  - Action taken to recover any losses
  - Recommendations and/or action taken by management to reduce further exposure and to minimise any recurrence.
- 6.3 In order to provide a deterrent to other staff a brief and anonymised summary of the circumstances may be published on HCPC's intranet.

## DOs and DON'Ts

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make a note of your concerns</b></li> </ul> <p>Record all relevant details, such as the nature of your concern, the names of parties you believe to be involved, details of any telephone or other conversations with names, dates, times and any witnesses.</p> <p>Notes do not need to be overly formal, but should be timed, signed and dated.</p> <p>Timeliness is most important. The longer you delay writing up, the greater the chances or recollections becoming distorted and the case being weakened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Retain any evidence you may have</b></li> </ul> <p>The quality of evidence is crucial and the more direct and tangible the evidence, the better the chances of an effective investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Report your suspicions promptly</b></li> </ul> <p>In the first instance, report your suspicions to your line manager. If this action would be inappropriate, further guidance on disclosure can be found in the Anti bribery Policy, the Fraud Policy and the Whistle Blowing Policy.</p> <p>Additionally, all concerns must be reported to the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Be afraid of raising your concerns</b></li> </ul> <p>The Public Interest Disclosure Act provides protection for employees who raise reasonably held concerns through the appropriate channels – whistle blowing.</p> <p>You will not suffer discrimination or victimisation as a result of following these procedures and the matter will be treated sensitively and confidentially.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Convey your concerns to anyone other than authorised persons</b></li> </ul> <p>There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation for the events that give rise to your suspicion. Spreading unsubstantiated concerns may harm innocent persons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approach the person you suspect or try to investigate the matter yourself</b></li> </ul> <p>There are special rules relating to the gathering of evidence for use in criminal cases. Any attempt to gather evidence by persons who are unfamiliar with these rules may compromise the case.</p>

4 December 2019

## **ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) is committed to acting with objectivity and integrity and conducting all of its activities in an honest and ethical manner.

This includes preventing bribery and fostering a culture in which bribery will not be tolerated in any form.

Council members, committee members, employees, partners and all others who act on the HCPC's behalf must uphold the highest standards of integrity when doing so.

### **Bribery**

In essence, bribery is the giving or receiving of a financial or other inducement or advantage in connection with some improper performance of functions.

The Bribery Act 2010 creates two bribery offences:

- offering, promising or giving a financial or other advantage (the offence of bribing another person); and
- requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a financial or other advantage (the offence of being bribed).

In either case the bribe must be intended to induce improper conduct by the recipient, that is the improper exercise of a function of a public nature or an activity connected with a business, trade or profession.

The Act also creates a separate offence of bribing a foreign public official. That offence is committed if a bribe is offered, promised or given to such an official with the intention of influencing the recipient in the performance of his or her public functions and with the intention of obtaining or retaining business or a business advantage.

### **Policy**

All forms of bribery are strictly prohibited. A person who is subject to this policy (**you**) must not:

- offer or give a bribe to, or seek or accept a bribe from, any individual or organisation; or
- seek or accept, any payment (in cash or kind) or other inducement in respect of any service provided by or on behalf of the HCPC.

If you are unsure about whether a particular act contravenes this policy, you should seek advice by contacting [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org).

### **Hospitality, gifts etc.**

This policy does not prohibit the acceptance, for legitimate purposes, of gifts or hospitality which are reasonable and appropriate.

A gift or hospitality will not be reasonable and appropriate if it is lavish or extravagant, or may be seen as an inducement or reward for any preferential treatment.

A gift will be reasonable and appropriate if it is of modest value or a token nature, such as flowers or pens, t-shirts, diaries and similar promotional items. Such gifts do not include expensive items, cash or its equivalent (such as vouchers) or any gift given in secret. No gift or other offering should be accepted if the value is reasonably believed to be over £10.

Hospitality will be reasonable and appropriate if it is of modest value and related to HCPC's activities, such as meals or refreshments provided at meetings or conferences. Such hospitality does not include offers of entertainment, such as attendance at sporting or other events unconnected to the HCPC's activities.

You must not:

- accept a gift or hospitality which is not reasonable and appropriate;
- accept a gift under any circumstances from a supplier or potential supplier when a contract is being awarded or business is being transacted; or
- accept a discount which is not generally available or any similar inducement in respect of products or services purchased for private purposes from an HCPC supplier.

If you are unsure about whether any gift or hospitality contravenes this policy, you should seek advice from [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org).

### **Record keeping**

You must declare any gifts or hospitality which you receive or give.

You must prepare all records relating to dealings with suppliers and other relevant third parties completely and accurately.

### **Raising a concern**

If you are offered a bribe or are asked to make one, or if you suspect that any bribery or other breach of this policy has occurred or may occur, you must report it as soon as possible to [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org)

Also see the HCPC Whistle Blowing policy for further information.

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# **Fraud Policy**

## **Introduction**

This document sets out the policy and procedures of the HCPC or the HCPTS against fraud, and other forms of dishonesty and supplements the Anti Bribery Policy.

It applies to Directors, employees, contractors, interims, agency staff, Council and Committee members and Partners. Anybody associated with the HCPC or the HCPTS who commits fraud, theft, or any other dishonesty, or who becomes aware of it and does not report it, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **1. Statement of intent**

The HCPC or the HCPTS will continually strive to ensure that all its financial and administrative processes are carried out and reported honestly, accurately, transparently and accountably and that all decisions are taken objectively and free of personal interest. We will not condone any behaviour that falls short of these principles.

All members of the HCPC or the HCPTS have a responsibility for putting these principles into practice and for reporting any breaches they discover. Fraud or attempted fraud by those employed or contracted to the HCPC may result in disciplinary action up to and possibly including dismissal and/or referral to the police.

### **3. Definitions**

a) **Fraud**: A deliberate intent to acquire money or goods dishonestly through the falsification of records or documents. The deliberate changing of financial statements or other records by either; a member of the public, someone who works (in any capacity) or is a Partner for the HCPC or the HCPTS. The criminal act is the attempt to deceive and attempted fraud is therefore treated as seriously as accomplished fraud

b) **Theft**: Dishonestly acquiring, using or disposing of physical or intellectual property belonging to the HCPC or the HCPTS or to individual members of the organisation.

c) **Misuse of equipment**: Deliberately misusing materials or equipment belonging to the HCPC or the HCPTS for financial or material benefit.

d) **Abuse of position**: Exploiting a position of trust within the organisation for financial or material benefit.

### **4. Culture**

The HCPC or the HCPTS fosters honesty and integrity in its entire employees and members. Directors, employees, Council & Committee members and Partners are expected to lead by example in adhering to policies, procedures and practices. Equally,

members of the public, service users and external organisations (such as suppliers and contractors) are expected to act with integrity and without intent to commit fraud against the HCPC.

As part of this, the HCPC or the HCPTS will provide clear routes by which concerns may be raised by Directors, employees, and members and Partners. Details of this can be found in the HCPC's Fraud Response Policy. Alternatively employees may email [bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org](mailto:bribery&fraud@hcpc-uk.org)

Also see the HCPC Whistle Blowing policy for further information.

Senior management are expected to deal promptly, firmly and fairly with suspicions and allegations of fraud or corrupt practice. The HCPC may use the 'Serious Event Report' process which can be found on the Quality Management System [https://hcpcuk.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/QualityManagementSystemISO9001/EdZXHaYD9j1Cmaoojm1JhfABVPzMt5SP9DgU\\_07glaUv2g?e=mTQZ4a](https://hcpcuk.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/QualityManagementSystemISO9001/EdZXHaYD9j1Cmaoojm1JhfABVPzMt5SP9DgU_07glaUv2g?e=mTQZ4a)

## **5. Responsibilities**

In relation to the prevention of fraud, theft, misuse of equipment and abuse of position, specific responsibilities are as follows:

### a) Council members and ELT:

The Directors are responsible for establishing and maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the HCPC's policies, aims and objectives.

The system of internal control is designed to respond to and manage the whole range of risks which the HCPC faces.

The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify the principal risks, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them effectively. Managing fraud risk is seen in the context of the management of this wider range of risks.

Audit Committee will approve such measures on an annual basis.

### b) The Chief Executive Officer:

Overall responsibility for managing the risk of fraud has been delegated to the CEO. The day-to-day responsibility has been delegated to the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer (CISRO) to act on behalf of the CEO.

Their responsibilities include:

- Undertaking a regular review of the fraud risks associated with each of the key organisational objectives.
- Establishing an effective anti-fraud response plan, in proportion to the level of fraud risk identified.
- The design of an effective control environment to prevent fraud.
- Establishing appropriate mechanisms for:



- reporting fraud risk issues
- reporting significant incidents of fraud, or attempted fraud to the Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- Liaising with the HCPC's appointed Auditors.
- Making sure that all employees and members are aware of the HCPC's Fraud Policy and know what their responsibilities are in relation to combating fraud;
- Ensuring that appropriate anti-fraud training is made available to Directors, employees and members and Partners as required; and
- Ensuring that appropriate action is taken to minimize the risk of previous frauds occurring in future.

c) Executive Leadership Team (ELT) & Senior Leadership Group (SLG)

The Executive Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Group are responsible for:

- ensuring that an adequate system of internal control exists within their areas of responsibility and that controls operate effectively;
- preventing and detecting fraud as far as possible;
- assessing the types of risk involved in the operations for which they are responsible;
- reviewing the control systems for which they are responsible regularly;
- ensuring that controls are being complied with and their systems continue to operate effectively; and
- implementing new controls to reduce the risk of similar fraud occurring where frauds have taken place.

d) Employees and members

All employees and Council or Committee members are responsible for:

- acting with propriety in the use of the HCPC's resources and the handling and use of funds whether they are involved with cash, receipts, payments or dealing with suppliers;
- conducting themselves with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- being alert to the possibility that unusual events or transactions could be indicators of fraud;
- alerting their manager when they believe the opportunity for fraud exists e.g. because of poor procedures or lack of effective oversight;
- reporting details immediately if they suspect that a fraud has been committed or see any suspicious acts or events; and
- cooperating fully with whoever is conducting internal checks or reviews or fraud investigations.

e) Partners

Every Partner is responsible for:

- Acting with propriety in the use of the HCPC's resources and the handling and use information and of funds whether they are involved with cash, receipts, payments or dealing with suppliers;

- Conducting themselves with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership;
- Being alert to the possibility that unusual events or transactions could be indicators of fraud;
- Alerting their manager when they believe the opportunity for fraud exists e.g. because of poor procedures or lack of effective oversight;
- Reporting details immediately if they suspect that a fraud has been committed or see any suspicious acts or events; and
- cooperating fully with whoever is conducting internal checks or reviews or fraud investigations.

## **6. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by ELT and agreed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on a bi-annual basis or if there is a significant change in the appropriate areas of law.

## **Fraud Response Plan**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This fraud response plan provides a checklist of actions and a guide to follow in the event that a fraud is suspected. It covers:
- Notifying Suspected Fraud
  - The investigation process
  - Liaison with police and NAO
  - Initiation of recovery action
  - Reporting Processes
- 1.2 Its purpose is to define authority levels, responsibilities for action and reporting lines in the event of suspected fraud. Theft or other irregularity.

### **2. Notifying Suspected Fraud**

- 2.1 It is important that all employees are able to report their concerns without fear of reprisal or victimisation and are aware of the means to do so. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (the “Whistle Blowers Act”) provides appropriate protection for those who voice genuine and legitimate concerns through the proper channels. See the separate Whistle Blowing Policy for further details.
- 2.2 In the first instance, any suspicion of fraud, theft or other irregularity should be reported, as a matter of urgency, to your line manager. If such action would be inappropriate, your concerns should be reported upwards to one of the following persons:
- Head of Governance
  - A member of OMT
  - A member of SMT
  - Director of Finance
  - Chief Executive Officer
- 2.3 Concerns may also be raised with the Chair of the Audit Committee
- 2.4 Every effort will be made to protect an informant’s anonymity if requested. However, HCPC will always encourage individuals to be identified to add more validity to the concerns and allow further investigations to be more effective. In certain circumstances, anonymity cannot be maintained. This will be advised to the informant prior to release of information.

### **3. The Investigation process**

- 3.1 Suspected fraud must be investigated in an independent, open-minded and professional manner with the aim of protecting the interests of both HCPC and the suspected individual(s). Suspicion must not be seen as guilt to be proven.
- 3.2 The investigation process will vary according to the circumstances of each case and will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Director of Finance, the appropriate Director and Head of Governance. An Investigating Officer will be appointed to take charge of the investigation on a day-to day basis. This will normally be the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer or, exceptionally, another independent manager.
- 3.3 The Investigating Officer may appoint any investigation team as needed.
- 3.4 Where initial investigations reveal that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, and to facilitate the ongoing investigation, it may be appropriate to suspend an employee against whom concerns have been raised. This decision will be taken by the Chief Executive Officer and/or the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development and the Investigating Officer. Suspension should not be regarded as disciplinary action, nor should it imply guilt. The process will follow guidelines set out in HCPC's Employee Handbook. Council & Committee members are subject to the Code of Conduct, in the code of Corporate Governance.
- 3.5 It is important from the outset, to ensure that evidence is not contaminated, lost or destroyed. The Independent Investigator will therefore take immediate steps to secure physical assets, including computers and any records thereon, and all other potentially evidential documents or electronic or document saving devices. They will also ensure, in consultation with management, that appropriate controls are introduced to prevent further loss.
- 3.6 The Investigating Officer will ensure that a detailed record of the investigation is maintained. This should include a chronological file recording details of all telephone conversations, discussions, meetings and interviews (with whom, who else was present and who said what), details of documents reviewed, tests and analyses undertaken, the results and their significance. Everything should be recorded, irrespective of the apparent significance at the time.
- 3.7 All interviews will be conducted in a fair and proper manner. Where there is a possibility of subsequent criminal action, the police will be consulted and interviews may be conducted under caution in compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), which governs the admissibility of evidence in criminal proceedings.
- 3.8 The findings of the investigation will be reported to the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and head of Human Resources and Organisational Development who will determine, in consultation with the Investigating officer, what further action (if any) should be taken.

#### **4. Liaison with Police and National Audit office (NAO)**

- 4.1 The police generally welcome early notification of suspected fraud, particularly that of a serious or complex nature. Some frauds will lend themselves to automatic reporting to the police (such as theft by a third party). For more complex frauds, the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, Head of Governance and the Investigating Officer will decide if and when to contact the police. The Director of Finance will report suspected frauds to the NAO at an appropriate time.
- 4.2 All employees will co-operate fully with any police or NAO enquiries, which may have to take precedence over any internal investigation or disciplinary process. However, wherever possible, teams will co-ordinate their enquiries to maximise the effective and efficient use of resources and information.

#### **5. Initiation of Recovery Action**

- 5.1 HCPC will take appropriate steps, including legal action if necessary, to recover any losses arising from fraud, theft or misconduct. This may include civil action against third parties involved in the fraud, or whose negligent actions contributed to the fraud, to recover any losses.

#### **6. Reporting Process**

- 6.1 Throughout any investigation, the Investigating Officer will keep the Chief executive Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development and Head of Governance informed of progress and any developments. These reports may be verbal or in writing.
- 6.2 On completion of the investigation, the Investigating officer will prepare a full written report setting out:
- Background as to how the investigation arose
  - What action was taken in response to the allegations
  - The conduct of the investigation
  - The facts that came to light and the supporting evidence
  - Action taken against any party where the allegations were proved
  - Action taken to recover any losses
  - Recommendations and/or action taken by management to reduce further exposure and to minimise any recurrence.
- 6.3 In order to provide a deterrent to other staff a brief and anonymised summary of the circumstances may be published on HCPC's intranet.

## DOs and DON'Ts

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Make a note of your concerns</b></li> </ul> <p>Record all relevant details, such as the nature of your concern, the names of parties you believe to be involved, details of any telephone or other conversations with names, dates, times and any witnesses.</p> <p>Notes do not need to be overly formal, but should be timed, signed and dated.</p> <p>Timeliness is most important. The longer you delay writing up, the greater the chances or recollections becoming distorted and the case being weakened.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Retain any evidence you may have</b></li> </ul> <p>The quality of evidence is crucial and the more direct and tangible the evidence, the better the chances of an effective investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Report your suspicions promptly</b></li> </ul> <p>In the first instance, report your suspicions to your line manager. If this action would be inappropriate, further guidance on disclosure can be found in the Anti bribery Policy, the Fraud Policy and the Whistle Blowing Policy.</p> <p>Additionally, all concerns must be reported to the Chief Information Security and Risk Officer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Be afraid of raising your concerns</b></li> </ul> <p>The Public Interest Disclosure Act provides protection for employees who raise reasonably held concerns through the appropriate channels – whistle blowing.</p> <p>You will not suffer discrimination or victimisation as a result of following these procedures and the matter will be treated sensitively and confidentially.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Convey your concerns to anyone other than authorised persons</b></li> </ul> <p>There may be a perfectly reasonable explanation for the events that give rise to your suspicion. Spreading unsubstantiated concerns may harm innocent persons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approach the person you suspect or try to investigate the matter yourself</b></li> </ul> <p>There are special rules relating to the gathering of evidence for use in criminal cases. Any attempt to gather evidence by persons who are unfamiliar with these rules may compromise the case.</p>

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