

**Approvals Committee  
(2 February 2005)**

**Department of Education & Policy**

**Visitors Paper**

**1. Introduction**

*1.1 Visitor Training*

A programme of two-day Visitor training is currently being organized for 2005. The dates for these sessions are:

- 31 March/1 April (tbc)
- 19/20 July
- 15/16 August
- 27/28 October

The first session of Visitor Training will be delivered by Fiona Nixon and Eileen Thornton. The new Education Manager (Sharon Woolf) and the four Education Officers (Nicole Borg, Nadia Lupo and two still to be appointed) will also be attending as part of their induction training. The remaining three events will be delivered by the new Education Manager and either Eileen Thornton or John Harper (Chairs of the Education & Training Committee and Approvals Committee respectively).

133 Visitors still require to be trained from the first round of recruitment and a number of additional Visitors need to be recruited for certain professions. The first session of Visitor training will be offered to those professions that currently have a low number of Visitors and where additional recruitment is required. These are:

- Operating Department Practitioners
- Biomedical Scientists
- Orthopists
- Prosthetists and Orthotists,
- Paramedics

The remaining Visitor training events will be offered to all other appointed Visitors who have yet to be trained and those appointed from additional recruitment drives undertaken throughout the year as required.

*1.2 Visitor Guidance*

Helen Best, Sheffield Hallam University, has completed the first draft of the Visitor's Guidance document on behalf of the HPC. The document is currently being edited and is due to be published by the end of February. Once the document has been finalised a copy will be sent to all trained Visitors and also to our Education Providers to inform them of the more detailed criteria against which our Visitors will be assessing their programmes.

The document will form the basis of the two-day training sessions noted in item 1.1 above.

### *1.3 Recruitment of Visitors*

A forward plan of Visitor recruitment is currently underway. Additional recruitment has been requested for Visitors for the following professions, to meet commitments in the forward programme of visits:

By May 2005

- Operating Department Practitioners
- Biomedical Scientists
- Paramedics

By September 2005:

- Art Therapists
- Clinical Scientists
- Prosthetists & Orthotists
- Physiotherapists

### *1.4 Frequency of Events for Visitors*

The frequency of workload for Visitors varies from profession to profession. We are aiming to appoint on a ratio of one Visitor for every two programmes per profession. Our experience to date is such that at times it can be difficult to get Visitors for some events due to availability. This ratio will be reviewed after the first year and the number of Visitors for each profession reduced or increased accordingly.

It is not possible to predict the number of Approvals events a Visitor might expect to attend in a year due to the varying availability of Visitors combined with those events where a Visitor may not be able to attend due to a conflict of interest. Once the new database for the Education & Policy Department has been installed and populated, trend analysis will be undertaken for Visitors showing how many times a Visitor had been approached regarding attending a visit, how many times they were unable to attend, frequency of conflict of interest occurrences, and frequency of visits attended.

### *1.5 Lay Visitors*

Due to the requirement for at least two registrant members from the relevant part of the register to be on each Visitor Panel, and as a means of containing the cost of the Approvals programme, which is extensive, it is proposed that Lay Visitors are involved at intermittent visits to provide an external and objective review of Approvals events to ensure the robustness and rigour of the overall process. The frequency of such involvement to be determined and reviewed annually by the Approvals Committee.

## **2. Decision**

The Committee is asked **to agree to recommend to the Education and Training Committee:**

- that Lay Visitors are in attendance at intermittent Approvals visits to provide an external and objective review of the Approvals events to ensure the robustness and rigour of the overall process. The frequency of such involvement to be determined by the Approvals Committee using an agreed number of attendances per year to be set by that Committee and reviewed annually.

### **3. Background Information**

None

### **4. Resource Implications**

Visitor training is part of the standard programme of work for the Department of Education & Policy.

### **5. Financial Implications**

The cost of Visitor recruitment and training will be included in the budget of the Education & Policy Department as a standard item.

### **6. Background Papers**

None

### **7. Appendices**

None