

THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Chief Executive and Registrar: Mr Marc Seale

Park House
 184 Kennington Park Road
 London SE11 4BU
 Telephone: +44 (0)20 7582 0866
 Fax: +44 (0)20 7820 9684
 email: colin.bendall@hpc-uk.org

MINUTES of the ninth meeting of the Approvals Committee held on **Tuesday 22 November 2005** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU.

PRESENT: Miss G Pearson (Chairman)
 Mrs S Chaudhry (part)
 Ms H Davis
 Professor T Hazell (part)
 Ms A Turner
 Professor D Waller

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
 Ms N Borg, Education Officer
 Mr J Bracken, Bircham Dyson Bell, Solicitor and Parliamentary Agent
 Ms L McKell, Partner Manager
 Ms N O'Sullivan, Secretary to Council
 Mr G Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations
 Ms K Scott, Acting Education Manager

Item 1.05/72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Professor J Harper, Professor J Lucas, Mr A Mount, Miss E Thornton and Mr M Woolcock. The Committee noted that Mrs S Chaudhry and Professor T Hazell had been delayed due to travel disruption.
- 1.2 The Committee noted that in the absence of the Chairman, Miss Pearson would be chairing the meeting.

Item 2.05/73 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 2.1 The Committee noted that it was not quorate and agreed that, pending the arrival of the members necessary for a quorum, it would receive the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September and the items to note, followed by the items for discussion/approval.

Item 3.05/74 MINUTES OF THE APPROVALS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2005

- 3.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the eighth meeting of the Approvals Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4.05/75 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Items 1.1 and 1.2: Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
 4.1.1 The Committee noted that the nomination of Professor Harper as Chairman and Miss Pearson as Vice-Chairman had been ratified at the Council meeting on 5 October.
- 4.2 Item 8.8: Education Providers' Observations on Visitors' Reports
 4.2.1 The Committee noted that Mr Bracken had been invited to attend the meeting of the Education and Training Committee on 15 December to give advice on the HPC's legal obligations with respect to publishing Visitors' reports and the response of the institution concerned.
- 4.3 Item 5.1 - Summary of amendments submitted by education providers
 4.3.1 The Committee noted that, provided the Standards of Proficiency were met, the HPC could not limit the number of retrievals which students were allowed for each module of a programme.

Item 5.05/76 PROGRAMME APPROVALS: CHAIRMAN'S ACTION

- 5.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 5.2 The Committee noted details of programmes which had been approved by the Chairman of the Education and Training Committee.

Item 6.05/77 RADIOGRAPHY PROGRAMMES

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 6.2 The Committee noted the report from the Joint Validation Committee to Centres of Radiography Education (Monitoring Schedules) for 2003-4.

Item 7.05/78 FORWARD PLANNING

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that education providers had responded positively to an e-mail which had been sent in August inviting them to provide details

of programmes which required a visit. To date, 44 approval visits had been arranged for the period November 2005-June 2006. The Education Department was finalising the appointment of Visitors for each visit.

- 7.3 The Committee noted that the Department was still receiving a steady flow of requests for visits and was following up any education provider which required a visit. The Committee noted that, whilst every attempt was being made to accommodate education providers' timetables, the months of March, April and May were almost at capacity, with approximately three visits a week already arranged.
- 7.4 The Committee agreed that it would be unreasonable for an education provider to request a visit at short notice unless there were extenuating circumstances. The Committee agreed that it would not be good practice to arrange a visit at short notice, as it was likely that the Visitors would feel under pressure to recommend approval and the education provider would feel under pressure to meet any conditions which were set. The Committee noted that, to avoid undue pressure on all parties, there were no visits planned after June 2006 for programmes which were due to commence in September 2006.

Item 8.05/79 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that Ms F Taylor, alternate Radiographer member, had resigned from Council as of 7 November and had therefore ceased to be a member of the Committee. The Committee noted that a paper for discussion/approval about the election of the alternate Radiographer member would be presented to the Council meeting in December. The Committee noted that members of Council would be asked to nominate themselves for the vacancy on the Committee, in accordance with the process for appointments to non-statutory committees.

Item 9.05/80 VISITORS' REPORTS

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 9.2 The Committee noted the reports for programmes which were in the process of meeting conditions set by HPC.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that the meeting was now quorate as Mrs Chaudhry and Professor Hazell had arrived.

Item 10.05/81 APPROVALS PROCESS: REVIEW OF DOCUMENTATION

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that, during the past 12 months, the Education Department had undertaken approvals visits for programmes for all 13 professions regulated by HPC, in addition to Supplementary Prescribing and Local Anaesthesia/Prescription Only Medicine programmes. As a result, the approvals process flowchart required amendment to include more detail; to ensure that the education provider understood the role of HPC within the confines of the Health Professions Order 2001; to incorporate feedback from education providers and Visitors; and to ensure that timelines were clearly defined and communicated to all parties involved in the process.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that references to the Education and Training Committee in the flowchart would be amended to refer to the Approvals Committee. The Committee noted that section 10(b) of the process should read "The programme will be deemed not approved" and that this section should be linked to the follow up section.
- 10.4 The Committee noted that the Education and Training Committee, under the Committee's Scheme of Delegation, was responsible for approving programmes. The Committee noted that the role of the Approvals Committee was to receive the Visitors' report and the observations of the education provider and to decide whether to recommend approval of the programme; or acceptance of the Visitors' report including all the conditions; or variation of the conditions in the report; or withdrawal/non-approval of the programme. The approvals process would then be adjourned to allow time for conditions to be met by an agreed date. Once the agreed date had been reached, the Visitors would review the education provider's response to the conditions and the Approvals Committee would decide whether the conditions had been met. The Approvals Committee would then make a recommendation to the Education and Training Committee for final approval.
- 10.5 The Committee noted that the HPC reserved the right to defer a visit if appropriately qualified Visitors could not be allocated for particular dates. The Committee agreed that, in light of the timescale involved, it was important for education providers to provide early notification of programmes which would require visits. The Committee noted that it was possible for visits to incorporate profession-specific meetings, if the Visitors felt that this was necessary.

- 10.6 The Committee agreed that, subject to the amendments discussed, the revised Approvals flowchart should be approved.

Action: KS (by 2 March 2006)

Item 11.05/82 MAJOR AND MINOR CHANGES: FORMS AND GUIDANCE

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that, at its meeting in September, it had approved a flowchart for the minor/major change process and agreed that education providers should be provided with standard forms and supplementary information to assist with submission of minor/major changes. The Committee noted that the paper included a booklet providing information on the process and a separate application form.
- 11.3 The Committee agreed that it would be unreasonable to expect education providers to continually notify HPC of minor changes. The Committee agreed that education providers should be advised that they should notify HPC if there was any doubt on whether a change was minor or major. The Committee noted that the monitoring process would also enable identification of changes. The Committee noted that the guidance notes provided an example of a change having an impact on staff/student ratio and agreed that this should be amended to refer to impact on teaching and learning.
- 11.4 The Committee noted that section 6 of the guidance notes should refer to the Standards of Proficiency for all professions regulated by HPC and that there was a typing error in the application form.
- 11.5 The Committee noted that the Ongoing Quality Monitoring and Enhancement Process (OQME) did not reflect the requirements of standards set by HPC and it would not be appropriate to link HPC's processes with OQME.
- 11.6 The Committee agreed that, subject to the amendments discussed and legal and internal assessment, the forms, flowcharts and supplementary information for the minor/major change process were those that would be issued as standard information to education providers.

Action: KS (by 2 March 2006)

Item 12.05/83 ANNUAL MONITORING: FORMS AND GUIDANCE

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.

- 12.1 The Committee noted that the purpose of annual monitoring was to ensure that programmes previously approved by HPC continued to meet the Standards of Education and Training, thereby ensuring that graduates would meet the Standards of Proficiency. The Committee noted that the paper contained the audit form, self declaration form and guidance notes for education providers. The Committee noted that these documents would form the basis of the process and be underpinned by the Guidance on the Standards of Education and Training which was being developed by the Policy Department.
- 12.2 The Committee agreed that section 2 of the audit form should request details of any changes. The Committee noted that not all universities produced an internal quality report and agreed that the form should request details of equivalent documents (e.g. external examiner's report, courses reviews) if there was no internal quality report. The Committee noted that the timing of internal quality reviews varied greatly between and within institutions. The Committee agreed that the audit form should request information at the start of the academic year or within 28 days of the completion of the internal quality review.
- 12.3 The Committee agreed that the self declaration form should be entitled "Declaration form" as it related to information about a programme rather than an individual.
- 12.4 The Committee agreed that the forms should be piloted by three education providers and suggested that these should be older institutions and should include a provider of a biomedical science programme, given the number of branches within that profession.
- 12.5 The Committee agreed that, subject to the amendments discussed, legal and internal assessment, the forms and guidance attached to the paper were those that would be issued as standard information to education providers.

Action: NB (by 2 March 2006)

Item 13.05/84 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATION PROVIDERS

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 13.2 The Committee noted that, at its meeting in September, it had agreed that education providers should be provided with feedback forms to give details of their experience of approval events. The Committee noted that forms would be available on the HPC website for completion and submission as hard copies. The forms would be referenced in all related HPC documentation and at the visit. It was proposed that, subject to budgetary

constraints, the form would eventually be submitted through a secure, on-line process.

- 13.3 The Committee agreed that the form should invite comments on all of the ratings but there should be no requirement for comments to be made.
- 13.4 The Committee agreed that, subject to the amendments discussed, legal and internal assessment, the form attached to the paper was that to be completed by education providers at the end of the approval process.

Action: NB (by 2 March 2006)

Item 14.05/85 REQUESTS FOR DEFERRAL OF APPROVALS VISITS

- 14.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 14.2 The Committee noted that a small number of education providers were undergoing internal review in 2006-7 and had asked the HPC to delay the approval visits. The Committee noted that HPC had stated that it would co-ordinate with the education provider's internal validation processes wherever possible and, whilst the Education Department made best attempts to do so, this was not a formal requirement. The Committee noted that as the programmes which had been scheduled for a visit in the 2005-6 academic year had not been assessed against the QAA benchmark statements, the programmes would have been on the HPC list of approved programmes for two years without an approval visit.
- 14.3 The Committee agreed that programmes which had not been assessed against the benchmark statements, and which requested a deferral of their approvals visit on the basis of internal review processes, should be granted a deferral unless there was cause for concern about a programme. The Committee agreed that, if a deferral was granted, a maximum time limit of 12 months would be permitted.

Action: KS (by 2 March 2006)

Item 15.05/86 REPORT OF MAJOR AND MINOR AMENDMENTS

- 15.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 15.2 The Committee noted a summary of amendments to approved programmes.
- 15.3 The Committee approved a minor change (module changes to the BSc

(Hons) Physiotherapy and GDip Physiotherapy programmes at the University of the West of England). The Committee agreed that visits should be organised due to major changes to the BSc (Hons) Radiography programme at the University of Leeds and the BSc (Hons) Dietetics programme at the University of Ulster.

Action: NB (by 29 December 2005)

Item 16.05/87 FORWARD PLANNING ISSUES FOR OPERATING DEPARTMENT PRACTITIONER PROGRAMMES

- 16.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 16.2 The Committee noted that the Education Department had scheduled 24 of the 26 Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) programmes which required visits in the period from January-June 2006. All ODP programmes were currently undergoing a Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) major review and would undergo a further curriculum review by the Association of Operating Department Practitioners (AODP) in 2006/7, which aimed to align more closely with the Standards of Proficiency. The AODP had advised that the new curriculum was to be implemented by September 2007 and it was expected that the curriculum review would result in major changes for the majority of the programmes which were currently approved by HPC. The Committee noted that the Education Department therefore proposed that, in order to reduce the burden on providers, visits to ODP programmes should be postponed until after the completion of the curriculum review.
- 16.3 The Committee agreed that, in light of the timing of the QAA major review and the AODP curriculum review, HPC visits to ODP programmes would be scheduled for the period May 2006-September 2007.

Action: KS (ongoing to September 2007)

Item 17.05/88 PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION OF VISITORS' REPORTS

- 17.1 The Committee noted that, in the document "Key Decisions from our Consultation on Standards of Education and Training and the Approvals Process", the HPC had agreed that the Approvals Committee would consider Visitors' reports and decide whether to recommend approval of the programme. The Committee noted that it was proposed that the Approvals Committee should meet on a monthly basis to consider Visitors' reports, annual monitoring reports and major and minor changes to programmes. It was proposed that the quorum for considering these items

of business would be less than that presently required by the standing orders. The Committee noted that the proposed arrangements would require amendments to the Approvals Committee standing orders and to the Education and Training Committee Scheme of Delegation. The Committee noted that these amendments would require approval from the Education and Training Committee and the Council.

- 17.2 The Committee agreed that, subject to approval by the Education and Training Committee and the Council, an Approvals Panel should meet on a monthly basis to consider Visitors' reports, annual monitoring reports and major and minor changes to programmes. The Committee agreed that the panel should comprise three members of the Approvals Committee, one of whom should act as panel chairman. The Committee agreed that the Approvals Committee would continue to meet four times a year to discuss policy and procedural issues. The Committee agreed that the Secretary to the Committee should contact members to check their availability for the panel meetings.

Action: CB (by 15 December 2005)

Item 18.05/89 PROGRAMMES FOR APPROVAL

- 18.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 18.2 The Committee noted the Visitors' reports and final condition reports for programmes which required approval by the Committee. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Education and Training Committee that the programmes should be approved.

Action: KS (by 15 December 2005)

Item 19.05/90 EDUCATION PROVIDER OBSERVATIONS ON VISITORS' REPORTS

- 19.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 19.2 The Committee noted that the visit to the Supplementary Prescribing (Allied Health Professionals) programme at Anglia Ruskin University (formerly Anglia Polytechnic University) had taken place on 27 July. The Committee noted the Visitors' report and the observations made by the education provider. The Committee noted that HPC representatives at visits explained the number of conditions which could be expected and that more conditions might be set than in a Quality Assurance or validation report. The Committee noted that its function was to decide whether to

accept the recommendations of the Visitors' report, or to make appropriate amendments to the report, or to provide a response to the education provider's observations.

- 19.3 The Committee agreed that condition 1 (the education provider must include details of the delivery of the programme, including a timetable and flowchart of the proposed course to indicate the schedule of how the curriculum is taught and how the learning objectives are achieved) should instead be a recommendation. The Committee noted that the education provider had agreed to provide publicity material and a Module Guide following approval.
- 19.4 The Committee agreed that condition 2 (the means by which the AHP provision would link with the existing programme for Nursing and Pharmacy, thus ensuring the security of the future of the AHP-SP course, must be clearly stated within the course documentation) should be removed. The Committee agreed that this information could be provided verbally by the education provider.
- 19.5 The Committee agreed that condition 3 (the education provider must demonstrate how its programme of staff development ensures continuity of professional and research development and, in particular, provide details about how staff involved in the delivery of the classroom-based element of the course, link with current medical and pharmacological research) should be amended. The Committee agreed that it was unreasonable to require a link with current research and that this part of the condition should be deleted. The Committee agreed that, whilst the education provider's observations had responded to this condition, written evidence should be provided to demonstrate that the condition had been met. The Committee noted that the education provider had agreed to provide updated CVs for members of staff.
- 19.6 The Committee agreed that condition 4 (evidence of the student experience of the programme must be provided) was reasonable and should be retained. The Committee noted that the visit date had changed and therefore students had been unavailable to meet the HPC representatives. The Committee noted that the education provider had agreed to provide student feedback and evaluation forms.
- 19.7 The Committee agreed that condition 5 (the education provider must indicate within its documentation which elements of the taught and practice-based learning programmes are mandatory. The education provider must indicate its methods of monitoring student attendance throughout all elements of the programme) should be retained. The Committee noted that all elements of the programme were compulsory and it was the education provider's standard practice for students to sign a

register at each session. The Committee agreed that, whilst the education provider's observations had responded to this condition, written evidence should be provided to demonstrate that the condition had been met.

- 19.8 The Committee agreed that condition 6 (the education provider must describe how it will ensure that the additional Medical Supervisors needed to deliver the programme are identified, prepared, trained and supported to undertake their role as placement supervisor) should be retained. The Committee agreed that this condition was reasonable.
- 19.9 The Committee agreed that condition 7 (the education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements. This aspect of the course programme cannot be devolved to an intermediary or third party) should be amended to remove the second sentence. The Committee agreed that the condition, as amended, should be retained.
- 19.10 The Committee agreed that condition 8 (the education provider must clearly articulate its method of identification of students who are at risk of failure and its required actions taken, and protocols used in those cases where students do not achieve a pass grade in any element of the placement assessment process) should be retained. The Committee noted that the education provider had agreed to provide this detail in the Module Guide.
- 19.11 The Committee agreed that conditions 9 (evidence of how anti-discrimination policies are implemented), 10 (a process of frequent and ongoing clinical assessment), 11 (the student clinical portfolio should link to the learning outcomes of the programme) and 12 (a system of continuous clinical assessment to highlight those areas of knowledge and skill within the student's clinical practice which were to the expected standard or less than the expected standard) should be retained. The Committee agreed that, whilst the education provider's observations had responded to these conditions, written evidence was required to demonstrate that the conditions had been met.
- 19.12 The Committee agreed that condition 13 (the education provider's assessment regulations should include detail of the student's right to appeal the assessor's decision) should be retained. The Committee agreed that, whilst the education provider's observations had responded to this condition, written evidence was required to demonstrate that the condition had been met.
- 19.13 The Committee agreed that condition 14 (the criteria for the appointment of the external examiner must be outlined in the course documentation) should be retained. The Committee noted that the SET mapping

documentation sent to the education provider had omitted this requirement.

- 19.14 The Committee agreed that the Visitors' report should be revised and a final copy should be sent to the Chairman. The Committee agreed that the education provider and the Visitors should be informed of the amendments.

Action: KS (by 29 December 2005)

Item 20.05/91 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 20.1 There was no other business.

Item 21.05/92 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 21.1 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 2 March 2006 at 11.00 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

DATE