

**Health Professions Council
Approvals Committee – 17 May 2006**

**EXTERNAL EXAMINERS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PRESCRIBING
PROGRAMMES**

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

Since February 2005, HPC has considered for approval a number of Supplementary Prescribing Programmes across the UK. Education Providers have found it difficult, and impractical, to recruit external examiners to represent each of the professions in the student cohort.

The HPC visiting panels have discussed the recruiting and cost implications for education providers faced with this problem, and believe that it would be appropriate for the education provider to provide an external examiner from just one of the represented Allied Health Professions.

A paper was presented to the Approvals Committee in March 2006 regarding the appointment of external examiners for supplementary prescribing programmes which included a broad range of professions including Allied Health Professions. The Committee noted:

“that it would be more appropriate to ensure that the external examiner was a registered professional (not necessarily registered with the HPC) with an academic background which was acceptable to the education provider”

Decision

The Committee is asked to **agree** the following regarding the interpretation of SET 6.4.7 for Supplementary Prescribing programmes:

For supplementary prescribing programmes for allied health professions only, where more than one allied health profession is represented in the student cohort, a reasonable interpretation of 'from the relevant part of the Register' would be to have an external examiner from one of the professions.

and

For supplementary prescribing programmes where allied health professionals and nurse/midwives and/or pharmacists are represented in the student cohort, a reasonable interpretation of 'from the relevant part of the Register' would be to have an external examiner who is either on our Register, or another appropriately qualified and registered health professional, with appropriate prescribing rights (such as an extended formulary or supplementary nurse prescriber, pharmacist, or a registered medical practitioner).

Background information

The suggested interpretations above are designed to be in line with the purpose of SET 6.4.7, which is clearly to ensure that there is an external examiner with adequate professional knowledge. Because supplementary prescribing has been in existence for nurses, midwives and pharmacists for a longer period of time than for allied health professionals, it is often therefore more practical and useful to ensure this professional knowledge by using an external examiner from another statutory register, rather than the HPC Register. It is suggested therefore, that using the above interpretations will not compromise professional standards, and provides a more useful and pragmatic way to ensure that standards are upheld.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Background papers

None

Appendices

None

Date of paper

5th May 2006