

Health Professions Council
12th September 2006

HPC's Equality and Diversity Scheme

Executive Summary and Recommendations

HPC is currently conducting a five-year project to create an Equality and Diversity scheme. To create the scheme all procedures will be assessed to ensure that HPC is positively promoting a diverse and inclusive society.

A pilot will be conducted in the Fitness to Practise Department to ensure the methodology proposed to create the scheme is sound. Following this, all remaining departments will be covered.

Introduction

In recent years Government policy has moved from legislating to ensure that public bodies (such as HPC) treat all people they impact equally, to legislating to ensure that public bodies positively promote a diverse and inclusive society.

This move has been evident in legislation such as the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, which demand that public bodies meet the following duties:

Race Relations Act

- To eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- To promote equality of opportunity
- To promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Disability Discrimination Act

- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- To encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- To take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

HPC is under no legal obligation to write an Equality and Diversity scheme under either of the above pieces of legislation in order to meet its duties. However, as a matter of best practice one will be produced.

In order to ensure that the HPC Equality and Diversity scheme will be thorough, comprehensive and meaningful, the creation of the scheme will be managed as a project. A project team has therefore been established and a project timeline has been drafted.

As a primary project task, the Equality and Diversity project team have defined the following format for the scheme, using the Race Relations Act as guidance:

- A statement (previously submitted to Council in March 2006) of HPC Equality and Diversity policy on each of the following:
 - o Disability
 - o Age
 - o Gender
 - o Sexual orientation
 - o Race
 - o Religion

- A list of specific action points for each of the Equality and Diversity areas to ensure that HPC meets its policies and duties

- A list of general action points to ensure that HPC meets its Equality and Diversity duties and policies

- A timeline and a statement of measurability for each of the above action points

In order to create the scheme, the following broad tasks have been agreed upon by the Equality and Diversity project team:

- To engage the services of an Equality and Diversity consultant to provide the project team with general training on the concept of Equality and Diversity and specific guidance on the processes required to create a scheme

- To set up a Project reference group, made up of internal volunteers to review all procedures within the organisation with regards to Equality and Diversity

- As a result of the procedure review, to determine a set of Equality and Diversity action points to ensure that HPC adheres to its policies

- To engage with external representatives of minority groups to verify that the action points identified are appropriate and adequate

- To gather demographic data on partners, employees, registrants, applicants, witnesses and complainants

- To use the demographic data gathered to create additional action points or modify those already drafted following the procedure review

In order to assure the quality of the scheme, the project team have determined that a pilot procedure review and demographic data gathering exercise will be undertaken prior to the main project. Since the Fitness to Practise (FTP) department has previously been identified as one of three priority areas (FTP, Communications and International Registrations) it has been chosen as the most appropriate department in which to conduct the pilot.

Given the widely acknowledged complexity of compiling and subsequently actioning an Equality and Diversity scheme, the project will be conducted over five years. For this reason it will be broken into two specific phases:

Phase 1 – The procedure review, the demographic data gathering and the writing of the Scheme

Phase 2 – The implementation of the action points listed in the Scheme

A template for each department’s section of Phase 1 is depicted in Appendix 1 – this may be subject to change following the Fitness to Practise pilot.

Given the procedure review and demographic data collection timeline template and project resource restrictions, the broad timeline for Phase 1 of the project is listed below.

Each project task listed below will be subject to phased approval by Council and may therefore move as a consequence.

Project Tasks	Timeline Q = Calendar year quarter
Project preparation	Q3 to Q4 2006
Fitness to Practise department procedure review and demographic data gathering pilot	Q1 to Q3 2007
Communications and International Registrations departments procedure review	Q1 2008
UK Registrations, Approvals & Monitoring and IT departments procedure review	Q4 2008
HR and Partners departments procedure review	Q2 2009
Secretariat and Policy departments procedure review	Q4 2009
Office Services and Finance departments procedure review	Q3 2010
Applicant and Registrant demographic data gathering	Q3 2007 – Q1 2008
Job applicant and employee demographic data gathering	Q2 2009 – Q4 2009
Partner demographic data gathering	Q2 2009 – Q4 2009
HPC Equality and Diversity scheme to be published	Q2 2011

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Project preparation					
	Fitness to Practise Pilot				
		Communications and Int'l Registrations			
		UK Registrations, Approvals & Monitoring and IT			
			HR and Partners		
			Secretariat and Policy		
				Office Services and Finance	
				Public consultation	
					Scheme published

Since Phase 2 is dependent on the type of action points identified, the timeline for this phase will be compiled as the Fitness to Practise pilot is being conducted.

Decision

The Council is asked to:

1. Agree the project approach for the Equality and Diversity project, as described in this paper
2. Request the Executive to report back to Council to:
 - Provide a project update – 14th December 2006
 - Approve the commencement of the next project stage – the Fitness to Practise pilot – 14th December 2006

Council is asked to provide comments to Claire Phillips (Project Manager) either prior to or during the Council meeting.

Contact details:

Tel: 0207 8409 774

Email: Claire.phillips@hpc-uk.org

Background information

None

Resource implications

Due to the nature of the project, the majority of resources required to create the Equality and Diversity scheme will be internal.

During Phase 1, initial calculations show that all participants involved in the procedure reviews will be required to spend an estimated 20 - 30% of their working week on the project.

During Phase 2, it is estimated that the continued capture of demographic data will increase workloads in the UK Registrations, International registrations, HR, Partners and Fitness to Practise departments by 2-5%.

In addition to this, it is estimated that the implementation of all actions identified in the Scheme will increase workloads in all departments by 5%.

Therefore it is estimated that the combined increased workload in Phase 2 will be 10% across the majority of departments within the organisation.

The above figures are, however, purely estimates and will be reviewed once the pilot conducted within the Fitness to Practise Department is complete.

To mitigate the resource risk involved in this project, the procedure reviews will be staggered to ensure that the project will only impact workloads for approximately 6 months in each of the five years for which the project is scheduled.

Financial implications

The financial implications of this project can be split into project costs and post implementation costs – both of which will be significant.

The main project costs will be incurred when collecting the demographic data. This is due to the fact that systems holding registrant, partner, employee, witness and complainants data will need to be modified to record demographic information. The systems will additionally require modifications to enable HPC to perform sophisticated statistical analysis in order to validate the action points identified during the procedure reviews.

Until the business requirements for the systems' modifications have been identified and assessed, meaningful financial estimates cannot be provided. However it is to be noted that each system will be assessed on an individual basis and the IT costs will be broken down into its component parts when budgets are applied for.

Significant additional costs will also be incurred when implementing all action points identified during the procedure reviews. However, these cannot be assessed until the procedure reviews have been completed.

Post implementation costs will mainly be focussed on the continuing task of collecting demographic data. This ongoing task will incur additional postage, printing and form design costs; again further information will be available following the Fitness to Practise pilot.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Procedure review and demographic data gathering timeline template.

Appendix 2 – Project team list

Date of paper

29th August 2006

Appendix 1 – Procedure review and demographic data gathering timeline template.

Month 1	Month 2			Month 3			Month 4			Month 5			Month 6			Month 7			Month 8																				
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18	Week 19	Week 20	Week 21	Week 22	Week 23	Week 24	Week 25	Week 26	Week 27	Week 28	Week 29	Week 30	Week 31	Week 32							
Identification of all relevant procedures and documentation																																							
	Review of all relevant procedures and documentation with project reference group			Compilation of all action points			Inclusion of action points in Scheme			Procedures and proposed action points to be discussed with external minority group representatives																													
Devise method to capture target group demographic data	Determine systems requirements			Produce required technology documentation			Conduct systems build			Perform systems testing			Perform user acceptance testing			Train users & rollout system			Receive back and record target group data			Review and modify action points																	

Appendix 2 – Project team list

The project team is made up of at least one senior member of staff from each department.

Project Sponsor – Marc Seale

Project Manager – Claire Phillips

Operations Department – Greg Ross Sampson

Registrations Departments – Richard Houghton

Approvals and Monitoring Department – Abigail Creighton

Fitness to Practise Department – Kelly Johnson, Eve Seall

Communications Department – Victoria Nash

Secretariat Department – Niamh O’Sullivan

Policy Department – Rachel Tripp

Finance Department – Simon Leicester

HR Department (including Partners Team) – Larissa Foster, Kelly Webster, Yasmin Hussain

IT Department – Roy Dunn

Office Services Department – Steve Hall