

Council, 3 December 2013

Outcomes of consultation on HCPC registration fees and HCPC Registration and Fees Rules

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The HCPC's registration fees were last increased from 1 April 2009. We consulted between 10 July 2013 and 1 October 2013 on proposals to increase the fees. The renewal fee was proposed to increase from £76 to £80 per year.

A copy of the draft consultation responses document is attached. This includes our response to the comments made in the consultation, which proposes that the different fee types are increased from 1 April 2014 to the levels proposed in the consultation document.

This paper was discussed by the Education and Training Committee at its meeting on 14 November 2013. The paper (less the attached Rules) was also considered by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21 November 2013 who recommended the decisions below to the Council. The consultation responses document has been amended to reflect the discussions of those Committees.

Decision

The Council is invited to discuss the attached paper and to agree the following.

- The fee levels as set out in the attached document effective (subject to necessary amendments to the relevant Rules) from 1 April 2014.
- The text of the consultation responses document (subject to minor editing amendments and any changes agreed by the Council at this meeting).

Having made the decisions above, the Council is further invited to agree to make the Rules in Appendix 1 by applying the Council seal.

Background information

- Article 7(1) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 ('the Order') requires the Council to 'consult' the Education and Training Committee before making Rules about registration and the payment of fees. This took place at the Committee's meeting on 14 November 2013.

- Article 7(3) of the Order means that the Council is required to consult publicly before varying its fees. This includes 'consulting' the Education and Training Committee.
- If agreed by the Council at this meeting, the necessary Rules will be delivered to the Privy Council. Subject to formal confirmation from the Department of Health that they are content for the Rules to be made, they will be laid for a period of 28 days before coming into force on the planned date of 1 April 2014.

Resource implications

- Amending the draft consultation responses document as necessary (prior to consideration by the Council in December 2013).

These resource implications are accounted for in Policy and Standards Department planning for 2013-2014.

Financial implications

- None as a result of this paper.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013 Order of Council 2013

Date of paper

22 November 2013

Consultation on HCPC registration fees

Analysis of responses to the consultation on HCPC registration fees and our decisions as a result

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1. Introduction

About the consultation

- 1.1 We consulted between 10 July 2013 and 1 October 2013 on proposals to increase the fees we charge for registration.
- 1.2 We proposed a £4 increase (an increase of 5.3%) to the annual renewal fee. This would increase the renewal fee from £76 to £80 per year. We also proposed a similar level increase to the other fees we charge.
- 1.3 We informed a range of stakeholders about the consultation including professional bodies, employers, and education and training providers, advertised the consultation on our website and also issued a press release.
- 1.4 We would like to thank all those who took the time to respond to the consultation document. You can download the consultation document and a copy of this responses document from our website:
www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/closed.

About us

- 1.5 We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). We are a regulator and our job is to protect the health and wellbeing of people who use the services of the professionals registered with us. We regulate the members of 16 different health, social work, and psychological professions.
- 1.6 To protect the public, we set standards that professionals must meet. Our standards cover the professionals' education and training, behaviour, professional skills, and their health. We publish a Register of professionals who meet our standards. Professionals on our Register are called 'registrants'. If registrants do not meet our standards, we can take action against them which may include removing them from the Register so that they can no longer practise.

About this document

- 1.7 This document summarises the responses we received to the consultation.
- 1.8 The document starts by explaining how we handled and analysed the responses we received, providing some overall statistics from the responses. Section three provides a summary of the responses we received. Section four is structured around the comments we received to specific questions. Our responses and decisions as a result of the comments we received are set-out in section five.
- 1.9 In this document, 'you' or 'your' is a reference to respondents to the consultation, 'we', 'us' and 'our' are references to the HCPC.

2. Analysing your responses

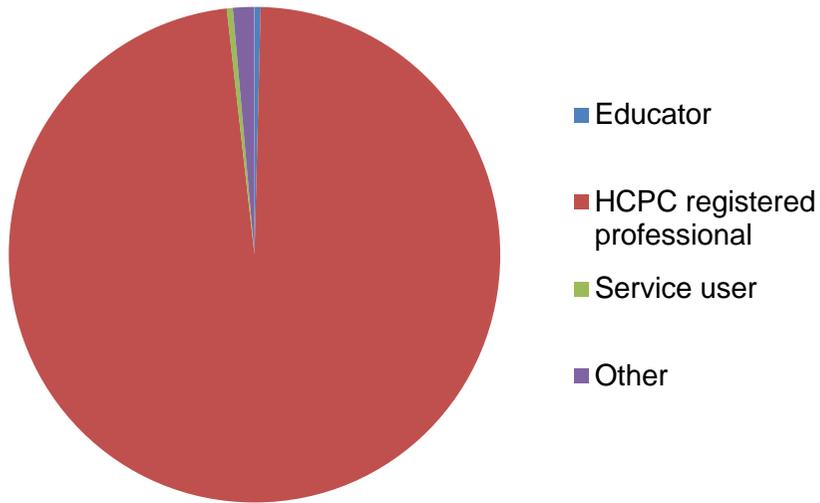
- 2.1 Now that the consultation has ended, we have analysed all the responses we received.

Method of recording and analysis

- 2.2 The majority of respondents used our online survey tool to respond to the consultation. They self-selected whether their response was an individual or an organisation response, and, where answered, selected their response to each question (e.g. yes; no; partly; don't know). They were also able to give us their comments on each question.
- 2.3 Where we received responses by email or by letter, we recorded each response in a similar format.
- 2.4 When deciding what information to include in this document, we assessed the frequency of the comments made and identified themes. This document summarises the common themes across all responses, and indicates the frequency of arguments and comments made by respondents.

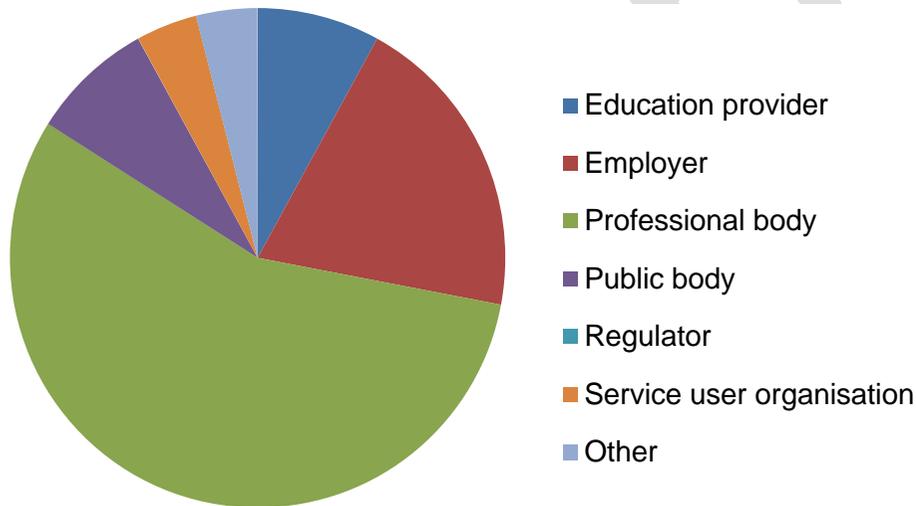
Statistical analysis

- 2.5 We received 521 responses to the consultation document. 496 responses (95%) were made by individuals, of which 485 (98%) were HCPC registered professionals. 25 responses (5%) were made on behalf of organisations.
- 2.6 The breakdown of respondents and responses we received to each question are shown in the graphs and tables that follow.



Graph 1 – Breakdown of individual responses

Respondents were asked to select the category that best described them. The majority of respondents who selected 'other' identified themselves as new graduates or students not yet registered with the HCPC.



Graph 2 – Breakdown of organisation responses

Respondents were asked to select the category that best described their organisation. The organisation which selected 'other' described itself as a learned society. No regulators responded to this consultation.

Table 1 – Breakdown of responses to each question

| Questions | Yes | No | Partly | Unsure | No answer |
|--|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Question 1: Do you agree that the renewal fee should increase from £76 to £80? | 78 (15%) | 399 (76%) | 36 (7%) | 6 (1%) | 2 (0.4%) |
| Question 2: Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for applicants from approved programmes should increase from £53 to £56? | 103 (20%) | 312 (60%) | 35 (7%) | 43 (8%) | 28 (5%) |
| Question 3: Do you agree that the readmission fee should increase from £191 to £200? | 109 (21%) | 307 (59%) | 47 (9%) | 29 (6%) | 29 (6%) |
| Question 4: Do you agree that the restoration fee should increase from £191 to £200? | 257 (49%) | 168 (32%) | 41(8%) | 24 (5%) | 31 (6%) |
| Question 5: Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for international and EEA applications should increase from £420 to £440? | 252 (48%) | 153 (29%) | 39 (8%) | 48 (9%) | 29 (6%) |
| Question 6: Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for grandparenting applications should increase from £420 to £440? | 177 (34%) | 195 (37%) | 28 (5%) | 87 (17%) | 34 (7%) |

- Question 7 invited any further comments rather than a ‘yes or no’ answer, so is not included in the above tables. Responses to this question are included in Section 4 of this document.
- Percentages in the tables above have been rounded to the nearest whole number and therefore may not add to 100 per cent.

3. Summary of responses

Renewal fee

- 3.1 The majority of respondents disagreed with the proposed increase to the renewal fee. Many of these respondents argued that an increase was unfair at a time when registrants had not seen their wages rise with inflation and some respondents further argued that the HCPC should be able to make cost savings instead of increasing fees.
- 3.2 However, a number of respondents agreed with the proposed increase, arguing that it was a small increase which was below the rate of inflation. Others who agreed with the increase in this fee commented that the increase was necessary to uphold current standards.

UK application scrutiny fee

- 3.3 The majority of respondents disagreed with the proposed increase in the scrutiny fee paid by applicants from UK approved programmes. Some of these respondents argued that new graduates are likely to be in a difficult financial position, and others questioned the need for scrutiny of applicants qualifying from approved programmes.
- 3.4 Respondents who agreed with this increase argued that it is an increase in a one-off scrutiny fee and that the proposed increase was very low.

Readmission fee

- 3.5 Over half of respondents disagreed that the readmission fee should increase from £191 to £200. A number of these respondents requested that the HCPC provide more information about how the cost of readmission is calculated. Others were concerned about the potential deterrent impact of the readmission fee on those wishing to return to practice.
- 3.6 Respondents who agreed argued that the proposed increase was low and below the rate of inflation and several commented that as registrants voluntarily request removal, an increase in the readmission fee was fair.

Restoration fee

- 3.7 Nearly half of all respondents agreed with the proposed increase in the restoration fee. These respondents commented that the increase was necessary to maintain the high level of scrutiny required of former registrants who had been struck off.
- 3.8 Respondents who did not agree with an increase in this fee argued that the restoration fee was already high and that an increase is likely to act as a further barrier to those who have been out of practice for a substantial period of time and had therefore experienced a reduced income.

International application scrutiny fee

- 3.9 Most respondents agreed that the scrutiny fee for international and EEA applications should increase. The majority of respondents who answered this way argued that the increase was necessary to maintain a high level of scrutiny of applicants who had trained outside the UK.
- 3.10 Respondents who disagreed with this proposal argued that the fee itself was already high enough and some argued that an increased fee may create further barriers for more economically disadvantaged applicants. Several respondents argued that EEA applicants should be exempt from this fee.

Grandparenting scrutiny fee

- 3.11 There was no clear majority view in response to the proposed increase in the grandparenting fee. A relatively high proportion of respondents indicated that they were unsure or did not answer the question. A number of respondents commented that they did not understand what the grandparenting fee was and therefore felt unable to comment.
- 3.12 Respondents who disagreed with this proposed increase commented that the fee was already high and responded more generally about the pay freeze that many health and care professionals had experienced.
- 3.13 Respondents who agreed with the proposed increase argued that it was necessary in order to maintain the high level of scrutiny needed to ensure that applications considered via this route met the appropriate standards.

4. Responses to consultation questions

4.1 This section contains comments made in response to the questions within the consultation document.

1) Do you agree that the renewal fee should increase from £76 to £80?

Summary

- 4.2 76% of respondents disagreed that the renewal fee should increase. 15% of respondents agreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.3 There was some difference between the responses we received from organisations and those from individuals. 40% of organisational responses agreed with the proposed increase, while only 14% of individuals agreed.
- 4.4 A number of respondents argued that registrants received little support and few benefits in return for their fees. A smaller number of respondents recognised that the HCPC is designed to protect the public but argued that the public or government should bear the cost of regulation instead.

Comments

- 4.5 Over half of respondents disagreeing with this question argued that though the proposed increase is small, it should be avoided as many registrants have not seen their wages increase in line with inflation or have experienced pay cuts. Other reasons respondents gave for disagreeing with the proposed increase are outlined below.
- Many respondents felt that the HCPC should aim to save costs rather than increase fees.
 - A number of respondents requested that the HCPC clarified the justification for the proposal to increase this fee by providing a more specific breakdown of the organisation's expenditure.
 - A number referred to the fact that the proposed increase would result in a significant increase compared to the fees social workers in England previously paid for registration with the General Social Care Council.
 - Several respondents argued that the renewal system was inefficient and registrants should not be expected to pay more for the current service. A few respondents commented that they would support an increase if it improved the renewal process.
- 4.6 Respondents who agreed with the proposed increase pointed out that the proposed increase in the renewal fee was low and less than the increase in inflation. Several respondents also commented that the renewal fee has not been increased for several years and an increase was needed now in order to cover increased running costs.

2) Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for applicants from approved programmes should increase from £53 to £56?

Summary

- 4.7 60% of respondents disagreed that the scrutiny fee should increase. 20% indicated that they agreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.8 There was a significant difference between the responses we received from organisations and those of individuals. 48% of organisation responses agreed with the proposed increase, while only 18% of individuals agreed.

Comments

- 4.9 Many respondents who disagreed with the proposed increase in the scrutiny fee argued that new graduates are likely to have acquired debt while training and will either be unemployed or on low entry level wages and therefore would be financially unable to absorb an increase in this fee. Other respondents who disagreed with the increase did so for the following reasons.
- A number of respondents requested that the HCPC clarified the justification for this fee by providing a breakdown of the cost to scrutinise an application for registration.
 - Some respondents questioned the need for scrutiny of applications made by graduates of a programme approved by the HCPC.
 - A few respondents argued that the increased cost would create barriers to those attempting to enter the profession.
- 4.10 Several respondents who indicated agreement with the proposed increase commented that it was preferable that the scrutiny fee increase over the renewal fee as it is a one-off payment. Other respondents emphasised the importance of scrutiny and the low level of increase proposed.

3) Do you agree that the readmission fee should increase from £191 to £200?

Summary

- 4.11 59% of respondents did not agree that the readmission fee should increase. 21% agreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.12 While 40% of organisation responses agreed with the proposed increase, only 20% of individual responses agreed.
- 4.13 Several respondents disagreed in principle with the readmission fee and commented that the HCPC should be encouraging former registrants back into practice, arguing that the readmission fee created a barrier to this.

Comments

- 4.14 Respondents who did not agree with the proposed increase to the readmission fee did so for the following reasons.
- A number of respondents requested that the HCPC provided further justification for the rise in this fee, to demonstrate that the amount of work involved in the readmission process was in line with the cost of this fee. Many of these respondents sought a breakdown of the costs of the readmission process to determine how the fee was calculated.
 - Some respondents were concerned that the readmission fee would fall disproportionately on female registrants taking time out of practice to have children and registrants who had voluntarily been removed from the Register due to a prolonged period of illness. Several added that these groups were likely to have a reduced income as a result of being out of practice and therefore less likely to be able to afford the increase.
 - Several of these respondents suggested that the readmission fee be applied on a case-by-case basis, dependent on the reason for voluntarily deregistering.
- 4.15 Many respondents who agreed with the proposed increase commented that the readmission fee is a one off cost, and that the proposed increase was low and below the rate of inflation. A few respondents argued that an increase was justified as registrants had voluntarily requested removal and could factor in the cost of readmission before doing so.

4) Do you agree that the restoration fee should increase from £191 to £200?

Summary

- 4.16 49% of all respondents agreed with the proposed increase in the restoration fee. 32% of respondents disagreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.17 There was little difference in the way this question was answered by organisations and individuals.
- 4.18 A number of respondents argued that a registrant who had been struck off should not be restored to the Register and commented that there should be no need for a restoration fee.

Comments

- 4.19 Many respondents agreeing with the proposed restoration fee commented that the increase was necessary to maintain a high level of scrutiny of restoration applications.
- 4.20 Other respondents who agreed with the fee increase saw the restoration fee as a financial penalty for being struck off and commented that this was fair. Several of these respondents argued for this fee to be increased further.
- 4.21 Respondents who commented on their reasons for disagreeing with the proposed increase in the restoration fee gave the following reasons.
- The increase in this fee would create further barriers for those wishing to return to practice as they are likely to have experienced a reduced income during the period they were unable to practise.
 - The restoration fee was already very high and could act as an unfair financial penalty in addition to being unable to practise for five years.
- 4.22 A few respondents questioned why the restoration fee was set at the same level as the readmission fee, either because they argued that a higher level of scrutiny should be required for restoration, or because restoration was as a result of previous wrong doing, whereas readmission was not.

5) Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for international and EEA applications should increase from £420 to £440?

Summary

- 4.23 48% of all respondents agreed that the scrutiny fee for international and EEA applicants should increase. 29% disagreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.24 There was little difference in the way this question was answered by organisations and individuals.

Comments

- 4.25 Many respondents agreeing with the proposed increase argued that it was necessary to ensure the maintenance of a high level of scrutiny of these applications.
- 4.26 Some respondents sought clarification as to what the international and EEA application process involved, arguing that an increase would be justified only if it reflected the cost of the work involved in this process.
- 4.27 A few respondents differentiated between international and EEA applications, arguing that EEA applicants have been granted the right to work in the UK and that their fee should either be the same or only nominally higher than the UK application scrutiny fee.
- 4.28 Respondents who disagreed with the proposed increase in this fee gave the following reasons.
- The fee is already very high.
 - The increased fee will create barriers for those applicants from economically disadvantaged countries.

6) Do you agree that the scrutiny fee for grandparenting applications should increase from £420 to £440?

Summary

- 4.29 37% of respondents disagreed with the increase in this fee. 35% agreed with the proposed increase.
- 4.30 A higher proportion of respondents compared to the previous consultation questions answered that they were unsure whether this fee should increase, or skipped this question.
- 4.31 There was little difference in the way this question was answered by organisations and individuals.
- 4.32 Several respondents questioned the grandparenting process and argued that registration should not be granted without completing an approved course. A number of further respondents sought clarification as to what the grandparenting process was.

Comments

- 4.33 Those who agreed with this proposed increase argued that the increased fee was required to maintain a high level of scrutiny to ensure that professionals applying via this route meet the threshold standard for entry to the Register.
- 4.34 Most respondents who gave reasons for disagreeing with the proposed increase to this fee argued that it was already very high and that many health and care professionals are likely to have experienced a pay freeze. Several also commented that the HCPC could make savings instead of increasing fees.

7) Do you have any further comments?

- 4.35 Most of the comments we received to this question repeated answers given to the other questions including comments about pay freezes, making cost savings and clarifying the cost of registration processes, and as such they have not been repeated in this section.
- 4.36 Many respondents also commented that the consultation had not been publicised widely enough. A number of respondents further argued that the consultation should have been sent to all registrants on the Register via email.
- 4.37 Several respondents commented in this section that the HCPC could use this fee review as an opportunity to differentiate the cost of fees, charging lower rates for unemployed, part time or low income registrants who will struggle with the increase in fees.

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5. Our comments and decisions

- 5.1 The following section sets out our response to the range of comments we have received to the consultation. We have not responded to every individual comment, but grouped the comments we received into themes and discussed our comments and decisions in response.
- 5.2 A summary of our decisions following the consultation are set out at the end of this section.

Increasing the registration and scrutiny fees

- 5.3 We have decided to increase our fees in line with the proposals set out in the consultation document.
- 5.4 We are sensitive to the concerns of respondents who said that the proposed fees increase was unfair at this time because some registrants had not seen increases to their wages in line with inflation or, in some cases, had actually experienced pay cuts. Some respondents in the social work profession in England also commented that this would make the registration fee significantly higher than that charged by their predecessor regulator, the General Social Care Council (GSCC), prior to its abolition.¹
- 5.5 However, we have not increased our fees since April 2009. Over the four years since then, cumulative inflation has been 13.7%. If the fees had risen in line with inflation over the last few years, we calculate the renewal fee would be £86.95. The level of increase we have proposed is significantly less than the rate of inflation over the relevant period. Therefore, even with the increase to our fees, there has been a real terms cut in the level of fees since they were last increased.
- 5.6 The registration fees we charge pay for all our operating costs. This is unlike the former GSCC which received funding from government. This meant that the fees paid by social workers to the GSCC were heavily subsidised by the taxpayer. As an independent regulator, we do not receive any regular funding from government. We need to set our fees at a level which ensures that we have sufficient income so that we can continue to operate as a regulator which is able to efficiently and effectively protect the public. Even with the increase to our fees, we will continue to have the lowest renewal fee of the nine regulators overseen by the Professional Standards Authority. The next highest registration fee of these regulators is significantly higher, at £100 per year.
- 5.7 We are always conscious of the need to manage our costs efficiently whilst improving the effectiveness of what we do. Value for money is one of our key principles as an organisation. For example, in the area of fitness to practise (which accounts for a significant proportion of our expenditure) we have further developed our processes for disposing of cases via consent, which avoids, where appropriate, costly and unnecessary contested hearings. We have also

¹ Social workers are registered by separate regulators in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They are unaffected by the decisions made as a result of this consultation.

enhanced our use of pre-hearing case management processes to ensure the smooth and timely running of hearings, amongst other improvements. We have invested in IT systems which has improved the efficiency of what we do and saved money. For example, we introduced online renewal which is now used by the majority of registrants when they renew, and which has clear benefits both for registrants and for us in more efficiently managing our resources. We are always looking for ways to improve efficiency, whilst ensuring that we still meet our statutory duties as set out in legislation.

- 5.8 Efficiencies such as those described above have meant that we have been able to keep our fees the same since 2009, despite rising costs. We will continue to improve, look for efficiencies and manage our costs. However, the fact remains that our fees have remained the same since 2009 and have fallen in real terms. As a result, we now need to increase them. This will avoid the financial difficulties which might otherwise necessitate large, unplanned increases in our fees in the future. In a previous consultation we received feedback from registrants that they would prefer smaller, more frequent increases in fees, avoiding such large, unexpected increases. In timing any proposed fee rise we also have to be mindful that because we register each profession on a two-year cycle, it will take two full financial years before any increase in the renewal fee has full effect.
- 5.9 Registration fees are tax deductible for standard rate UK taxpayers. This means that the £80 renewal fee would in effect be reduced by 20%, reducing the proposed fee by £16 to £64. Although this information is available on our website and was included in the consultation document, it may be the case that some registrants are not aware that they may be able to claim tax relief on their registration fees. We will undertake a communications campaign around the time the renewal fee is increased to encourage registrants to take advantage of this.

Consultation process

- 5.10 We received a number of comments that we had failed to publicise the consultation widely enough.
- 5.11 A link to the consultation document was emailed to over 500 different organisations and individuals. A follow-up email was sent prior to the closing date. A letter was also sent to all of the professional bodies representing the professions we register. The consultation was publicised via an article in our newsletter, 'HCPC In Focus', and via a press release which was picked-up by a number of professional body journals. The consultation document was also available on the HCPC website. In response to early feedback that the consultation was not promoted enough on our website, we added a 'Get Involved' highlight on the front page of the website for the remainder of the consultation period which provided a direct link to the consultation document.
- 5.12 We need to strike the right balance between consulting widely and keeping the costs of any consultation exercise at a reasonable level. When we consulted on changes to our fees in 2006-2007, we sent a copy of the consultation document to every registrant on our Register. We received feedback from many registrants who were concerned about the costs of this exercise. Since that consultation we have now introduced an online survey tool which makes it easier for individuals

and organisations to respond to our consultations. For comparison, when we last consulted on our fees in 2008, we received 49 responses, compared to 521 responses received to this consultation. We also received a far higher proportion of responses from individuals, the vast majority of which were our registrants. However, we are always looking at ways to encourage responses to our consultations and will consider how we might communicate better with registrants when we consult on any proposals we might make in the future.

Financial information

- 5.13 We received a number of comments that the consultation document should have provided more specific information about the HCPC's expenditure.
- 5.14 In the consultation document we provided a breakdown of expenditure by Department in 2012-2013 and provided income and expenditure figures for 2008-2009 to 2012-2013. We outlined that, based on our projections of future activity levels, we had forecasted that without the proposed increase to our fees we would make an unsustainable deficit in future years. That remains the position.
- 5.15 We need to strike a balance between providing enough information to help respondents make an informed response to the consultation and signposting those respondents who are interested to further sources of more detailed financial information, for example, in our annual report and accounts. We consider that an appropriate balance was struck but, in light of the feedback received in this consultation, we will review the level of information we provide in future consultation documents.²
- 5.16 We received some responses about how the different scrutiny fees had been calculated. These fees were set in 2007 following a previous exercise undertaken on our behalf by our internal auditors to cost the different registration processes. A small increase to all the fee types in line with inflation was subsequently agreed from April 2009. As a result of a previous consultation on the level of our registration fees we agreed that, where possible, there should not be substantial cross-subsidisation between the different fee types. The exception to this is the scrutiny fee for applicants from UK approved programmes. This includes the cost of processing and scrutinising applicants for registration, and a proportion of the cost of visiting and approving education and training programmes to make sure they meet our standards. The costs for international and grandparenting applications are higher than the other scrutiny fees as these applicants have not completed an HCPC approved programme. Each of these types of applications is scrutinised on an individual basis by two registration assessors. We also undertake a number of other steps to check the identity and qualifications of applicants, including checking the authenticity of the documentation we receive.

² For example, our most recent annual report and accounts is available here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/reports/index.asp?id=686>

Readmission, unemployed, part time and low income registrants

- 5.17 We received a number of comments suggesting that we might consider introducing differential fees for unemployed, part time or low income registrants. Some respondents were also concerned about the impact of the readmission fee on those seeking to readmit to the Register, particularly those who had taken career breaks owing to child care commitments or because of illness.
- 5.18 We have carefully considered these comments and are sensitive to the concerns that have been expressed. However, we consider that it is reasonable to continue charging a fee for readmission which reflects the costs involved. This fee will continue not to be charged where the applicant is applying to be re-registered within a month of their removal from the Register, or, on rare occasions, where an administrative error has occurred.
- 5.19 We have concluded that it would not be appropriate to introduce discounted fees for unemployed, part time or low income registrants. This is because our costs in undertaking our role as a regulator are the same, regardless of whether a registrant is working part time or is on a relatively lower income compared to other registrants. We would also be concerned that the costs in implementing a system whereby we would need to verify whether a registrant was working part time or had a low income would inevitably need to be passed on to all registrants.

Renewal of registration

- 5.20 We received some responses that expressed concern about the efficiency of the current system of renewing registration.
- 5.21 Registrants are required to renew their registration every two years. They can do this online or by completing a paper renewal form. The introduction of online renewal of registration in 2010 and our communications strategy around renewal has seen an increase in the number of registrants successfully renewing their registration without any difficulties. Although renewal rates vary, we now see frequently around 95% of professions renewing successfully, with smaller numbers of registrants who are removed from the Register subsequently seeking to become re-registered soon afterwards. We have also found that, in the past, generally fewer issues around renewal come-up once a profession new to the Register has become more familiar with our renewal process.
- 5.22 However, we are always looking at ways to improve our processes. The fee increases will assist us in funding work we intend to undertake to improve further our registration processes, including arrangements for renewal of registration. Where administrative errors occur, we will always try to put things right and put steps in place to try and prevent the same problem occurring again.

Grandparenting

- 5.23 Some respondents argued that grandparenting should not take place because all applicants should have completed an approved programme. Some others asked for further explanation about grandparenting, responding that they were unsure of their answer. Others did not answer this question.
- 5.24 Grandparenting is a time-limited and transitional route to registration. It is only available for a limited period after we begin to regulate a profession that has not previously been subject to statutory regulation. Grandparenting is an acquired rights process which, on a transitional basis, recognises individuals who were lawfully practising their profession before it was regulated. Applicants make individual applications to us which are scrutinised by registered professionals against clear criteria and standards, and decisions are made about whether we are able to register them.
- 5.25 Once a grandparenting period closes, entry to the register is limited to applicants who hold an approved qualification. At present, none of the professions we regulate are subject to grandparenting.
- 5.26 Given the comments we received during the consultation, we will consider providing more information about the grandparenting process in any future consultations.

Summary of our decisions

- 5.27 The following are the decisions we have made following the consultation.
- The renewal / registration fee will increase to £80 per year.
 - The scrutiny fee for applications for applicants from approved programmes will increase to £56. Applicants from UK approved programmes applying within two years of their qualification will continue to receive a 50% discount on the cost of registration for the first two years of professional registration.
 - The readmission fee will increase to £200. This fee includes the first year of registration. Applicants for readmission applying within one month of their removal from the Register will continue to only pay the registration fee.
 - The restoration fee will increase to £200. This fee includes the first year of registration.
 - The scrutiny fee for international and EEA applications will increase to £440. Where an application is successful, the registration fee is also payable.
 - The scrutiny fee for grandparenting applications will increase to £440. Where an application is successful, the registration fee is also payable.
- 5.28 The above will be effective from 1 April 2014, subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary amendments to the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003.

5.29 Existing registrants will pay the renewal fee from their next renewal after 1 April 2014. This means that the new fee will be charged to registrants whose professions enter their renewal period after this date.

5.30 Dates when the new renewal fee would apply to existing registrants in each profession are given overleaf.

Table 1: Dates when the proposed new renewal fee would apply to existing registrants in each profession

| Profession | Renewal period starts and new renewal fee applies |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Dietitians | April 2014 |
| Hearing aid dispensers | May 2014 |
| Chiropodists / podiatrists | May 2014 |
| Social workers in England | September 2014 |
| Operating department practitioners | September 2014 |
| Practitioner psychologists | March 2015 |
| Orthoptists | June 2015 |
| Paramedics | June 2015 |
| Clinical scientists | July 2015 |
| Prosthetists / orthotists | July 2015 |
| Speech and language therapists | July 2015 |
| Occupational therapists | August 2015 |
| Biomedical scientists | September 2015 |
| Radiographers | December 2015 |
| Physiotherapists | February 2016 |
| Arts therapists | March 2016 |

6. List of respondents

Below is a list of all the organisations that responded to the consultation.

Academy for Healthcare Science
Association for Perioperative Practice
Association of Clinical Scientists
British Association of Art Therapists
British Association of Occupational Therapists
British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists
British Chiropody and Podiatry Association
British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
College of Paramedics
European Herbal and Traditional Medicine Practitioners Association
Fairfield General Hospital (Diagnostics and Clinical Support)
Institute of Biomedical Science
Liverpool Council
Nagalro
Nails Academy
Nottingham County UNISON branch
Partnerships in Care
Play Therapy UK
Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust
Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership Trust
The Nutrition Society
UNISON
Unite in Health

2013 No. 0000

HEALTH CARE AND ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONS

The Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013 Order of Council 2013

| | | |
|---|---------|------|
| <i>Made</i> | - - - - | *** |
| <i>Laid before Parliament</i> | | *** |
| <i>[Laid before the Scottish Parliament</i> | | ***] |
| <i>Coming into force</i> | - - | *** |

At the Council Chamber, Whitehall, the *** day of ***

By the Lords of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council

The Health and Care Professions Council has made the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013 which are set out in the Schedule to this Order, in exercise of the powers conferred by articles 7(1) and (2) and 41(2) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001(a).

In accordance with articles 7(1) and (3) and 41(3) of that Order, the Health and Care Professions Council has consulted the Education and Training Committee and representatives of groups of persons it considers appropriate, including representatives of the groups listed in articles 7(3) and 41(3) of that Order.

In accordance with articles 41(1) and 42(1) of that Order, such Rules shall not come into force until approved by Order of the Privy Council.

Citation and commencement

1. This Order may be cited as the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013 Order of Council 2013 and comes into force on ***.

Privy Council approval

2. Their Lordships, having taken the Rules contained in the Schedule to this Order into consideration, are pleased to and do approve them.

(a) S.I. 2002/254. By virtue of section 214 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (c. 7), the body corporate known as the Health Professions Council was re-named the "Health and Care Professions Council" and the Health Professions Order 2001 was renamed the "Health and Care Professions Order 2001".

SCHEDULE

The Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013

The Health and Care Professions Council makes the following Rules in exercise of the powers conferred by articles 7(1) and (2) and 41(2) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001.

In accordance with articles 7(1) and (3) and 41(3) of that Order, the Health and Care Professions Council has consulted the Education and Training Committee and representatives of groups of persons it considers appropriate, including representatives of the groups listed in article 41(3) of that Order.

Citation and commencement

1. These Rules may be cited as the Health and Care Professions Council (Registration and Fees) (Amendment) Rules 2013 and come into force on 1st April 2014.

Amendment of the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003

2.—(1) The Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules 2003^(a) are amended as follows.

(2) In rule 14 (registration fee)—

(a) in paragraph (1)(a), for “£76” substitute “£80”; and

(b) in paragraph (1)(b), for “£152” substitute “£160”.

(3) In rule 15 (renewal fee), in paragraph (b), for “£152” substitute “£160”.

(4) In rule 15A (readmission fee), for “£267” substitute “£120 plus the registration fee prescribed by rule 14(1)(b)”.

(5) In rule 16 (restoration fee), for “£267” substitute “£120 plus the registration fee prescribed by rule 14(1)(b)”.

(6) In paragraph (1) of rule 16A (reduced fees), for “, readmission fee or restoration fee” substitute “or renewal fee”.

(7) In rule 17 (scrutiny fees)—

(a) in paragraph (1), for “£53” substitute “£56”; and

(b) in paragraph (2), for “£420” substitute “£440”.

Given under the official seal of the Health and Care Professions Council this ***

Anna van der Gaag
Chair

Marc Seale
Registrar

(a) S.I. 2003/1572.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order approves rules made by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) that amend the fees it charges for scrutinising and processing applications for admission to its register, for renewal of registration and for readmission or restoration to its register. These fees have been raised by between 4.7% and 5.3% since they were last increased in 2009.

The standard fee for registration, or renewal of registration, is now £160 (up from £152), although this is reduced to £80 (up from £76) in the case of applicants with an approved qualification who have qualified in the previous two years. Applicants for readmission or restoration to the HCPC's register must pay £120 plus the new registration fee of £160 (a total fee of £280 and up from £267).

Additionally, the two scrutiny fees charged by the HCPC have been increased. These are separate fees paid by all applicants for registration in the HCPC register whose qualifications (and in some cases experience) need to be assessed – typically, first time registrants. The scrutiny fee is £56 (up from £53) for applicants relying on approved United Kingdom qualifications and £440 (up from £420) for all other applicants.