

Council, 25 November 2021

Unconfirmed minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting of 11 November 2021

Committee Chair's summary to Council

Performance reporting

Reports were received from the registration department and the education department. These reports continue to progress in terms of content and transparency. Progress has been made with some of the registration department KPIs since the last ETC. Concerns in some areas still remain. There continues to be an increase in international applications, and these are still taking longer than desired to register. Work is underway in England with HEE to look at how we align work and understand how we can support each other.

The Executive have recruited additional staff although turnover is an issue. Reasons for this are understood by the executive and they are looking at how some roles are redesigned or automated to make roles more rewarding. There continues to be a reputational risk related to how quickly we deal with enquires from registrants and how we communicate standard pieces of information. It is recognised that improvements in processes will in turn improve the communication and response times.

The performance data from the education team has shown that the process to approve a programme is slightly quicker than under the old process and the executive are confident that further time can be released as the process embeds. Early feedback from provider organisations is that the process is more supportive and it is building a culture of partnership and collaboration.

The model was seen to be supportive of the recommissioning of programmes in Wales and it is believed that it reduced the demand on the executive through this change. The team have been proactive in supporting professional bodies that have not been as actively engaged in the changes to date and are meeting with them to address any concerns.

New educational approval model

The resourcing framework to support the new education model was presented for approval. This should not result in increased costs despite the introduction of new roles and responsibilities because of the alignment of other roles. The committee were asked to identify if they would like all programmes to progress through the revised QA model over a 2 or 3 year period. Risks and mitigations were discussed, and it was agreed that we would like this to be done over 3 years. It was felt that any risks were mitigated by processes and data that are now regularly included in the model.

Future workstreams and agendas

The policy team bought an overview and update of what they have done over the last year. This included an update on the professional qualifications bill and a duty to consult. The duty to consult was requested and is welcomed. The recent decision on mandatory vaccination for health care staff was discussed and it was noted that the position is different in the different nations. The HCPC have not yet agreed their approach to this but are working closely with other regulators to ensure consistency and be clear about what needs to be dealt with at an employer level as opposed to a regulatory level.

Each of the Executive teams highlighted the work that they are planning to bring through the Committee in the coming year and this will inform the Committee's future work plan.

The Committee noted the length and clarity of the papers presented today and thanked the executive for this input.

Maureen Drake, Chair of the Education and Training Committee

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the 101st meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Thursday 11 November 2021

Time: 10am

Venue: MS Teams

Members: Maureen Drake (Chair)
Helen Gough
Luke Jenkinson
Penny Joyce
Kathryn Thirlaway

In attendance:

Claire Amor, Head of Governance
Zoe Allan, Governance Coordinator
Matthew Clayton, Acting Policy Manager
Brendon Edmonds, Head of Education
Richard Houghton, Head of Registration
Jamie Hunt, Education Manager
Emma Leary, Head of Policy, Standards and Strategic Relationships
Naomi Nicholson, Executive Director of Professional Practice and Insight
Tracey Samuel-Smith, Education Manager (from Item 9)
Andy Smith, Executive Director of Regulation

Public Agenda

Item 1 – Chair’s welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members of the Committee and the Executive to the 101st meeting of the Education and Training Committee, extending a special welcome to Emma Leary, Head of Policy, Standards and Strategic Relationships, as it was her first meeting of the Committee, having recently joined the organisation.
- 1.2 No apologies were received

Item 2 - Approval of agenda

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda

Item 3 - Declaration of members’ interests

- 3.1 No public interests were declared.

Item 4 - Public minutes of the Education and Training Committee meetings of 10 September 2021 (ETC 33/21)

- 4.1 The Committee approved the public minutes of its meeting of 10 September 2021.

Items for discussion/approval

Item 5 - Registration Performance (ETC 34/21)

- 5.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Registration.
- 5.2 The Committee noted the following points:
 - A comparison RAG rating had been added to the measures within the report to illustrate performance trajectory;
 - there had been an increase in UK and international applications since April 2021; the department were coming out of the peak period for UK applications and were able to re-assign resources to other processes which were under pressure;
 - the Executive Leadership Team had approved an additional 12 temporary Registration Advisors until the end of 2021, the additional resource had improved performance;

- renewal rates were in line with previous years, however the department were receiving increased contact from Registrants requesting assistance;
- the department were working closely with the Communication department to improve direct mail outs and responsiveness, including the provision of a priority email address to respond to enquiries within 48 hours (weekend inclusive), as well as working proactively with professional bodies;
- telephone response rates were stable, but improvement was needed; the Executive noted that there was ongoing training with Registrant Advisors in this area;

5.3 The Committee asked about the recruitment challenges in light of the vacant Registrant Advisor posts. The Executive noted that the department had moved to ongoing, monthly assessment days as well as continuing to work with recruitment agencies to address the challenges.

In addition to recruitment, the Committee reflected on the need to consider retention; the Executive acknowledged this point and noted the entry level nature of the Registration Advisor roles which meant that colleagues progress to different roles within HCPC, a positive for the organisation but a challenge for Registration. The Executive Director of Regulation noted that the movement to self-service portals would help with retention, as the Registration Advisor role would be able to focus on more value adding tasks

The Committee noted that improving recruitment and retention was an ongoing focus of the People and Resources Committee and that the HCPC's first People Strategy, setting out how the HCPC would seek to improve recruitment and retention, would be presented to Council on 25 November.

5.4 The Committee noted that the move to self-service portals for Registrants was a positive step which should improve performance but asked whether there were any risks associated. The Executive noted that there were risks, particularly around the implementation and that HCPC were currently engaged with the supplier with the aim to be ready to implement online applications in May 2022. The Committee welcomed the positive work in moving to a self-service model.

5.5 The Committee reflected on the increase in international applications and asked whether the Executive understood the drivers for this and if the increase was providing more income to reinvest into the business. The Executive noted that the increase was creating additional revenue but there were also additional processing costs associated. The Executive Director of Regulation noted that HCPC were engaged with key stakeholders responsible for workforce planning across the 4 nations such as Health Education England (HEE) but that stakeholders were not yet able to share expected future volumes of applicants with the HCPC.

5.6 The Committee noted the report and the key issues discussed around registration team recruitment, reputational management and international applications.

Item 6 - Education Performance (ETC 35/21)

6.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Education.

6.2 The Committee noted the following points

- the format of the report would continue to evolve alongside the new Education QA model, focusing on balancing the timeliness and quality indicators, enabling a greater focus on quality;
- the new model had seen a significant reduction in conditions applied on approval which was expected as the new model sought to resolve issues prior to formal decision points;
- the length of time taken to complete approvals processes was exceeding the performance target. This was attributed in part to pilot activities getting underway and familiarity of running new processes;
- the Performance review process had seen a variance in outcomes driven mainly by provider type; conversations were underway to understand quality; and
- a regional based structure had been put in place within the Education team with regional leads able to undertake focused engagement and understand regional differences.

6.3 The Committee welcomed the improved experience for providers as a result of the new model and its preventative approach, as well as the use of external data to provide independent assurance on programme quality.

6.4 The Committee reflected on the focused review cases and the strategic funding review which had resulted in a reshaping of AHP education delivery in Wales. The Committee asked whether the Executive were anticipating large scale changes following the review and what impact this would have on the HCPC's Education team resources. The Executive noted that they had been engaged with HEIW over the previous 18 months to support them with their recommissioning exercise and noted that HEIW were encouraging providers to work collaboratively.

6.5 The Committee reflected on the issue of timeliness and asked whether the new model would provide a good return on investment by improving processes without costing more than the previous model. The Head of Education noted that 6 months was a good starting point for the timeliness KPI and was confident this could be reduced and return on investment would be achieved.

6.6 Committee welcomed the style of the report, reflecting regions and noted the importance of reflecting all regions within the report, once the data was available

Item 7 - Education partner resourcing framework (ETC 36/21)

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Education Lead
- 7.2 The Committee noted that the framework had been updated based on with the introduction of the new Education quality assurance model, process changes, the introduction of new partner roles, and the legislative requirements for programme approval assessments.
- 7.3 The Committee noted that some areas of the framework set out within the table needed to be clearer to ensure ease in understanding. The Executive acknowledged this point and noted that the approach needed operationalising internally
- 7.4 The Committee asked about the financial implications and whether the partner fees would remain unchanged as stated in the paper. The Executive confirmed that the actual fee structure had not changed and would be included within the department budget.
- 7.5 The Committee approved the paper, confirming the framework replaced the framework for the legacy model.

Item 8 - Education QA model planning - performance review scale up options (ETC 37/21)

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper from the Education Lead.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that the paper was provided following discussion at the Committee's September meeting, where the Executive noted that an options paper would be presented to discuss how soon the Committee wished all programmes to cycle through the new model.
- 8.3 The Committee agreed its preference for option two, which was for the HCPC to complete the performance review process for existing providers in three years. The Committee felt this option was more sustainable and took into account the pressures on the Education team and providers. It would also enable the review to be resourced within the current budget envelope.

Item 9 - Policy and Standards update (ETC 38/21)

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Acting Policy Manager setting out the progress of key Policy and Standards work for 2021-22 and a timetable for completion of current key projects.

The Chair noted that it was good to pause and reflect on how much had been achieved over the last year despite resourcing challenges in the Policy function.

- 9.2 The Committee noted the following points: -

- the Executive were currently reviewing the Standards of Proficiency for all 15 professions and were on track to conclude the review by March 2022. Discussions remained with professional bodies and other stakeholders for the standards for radiographers and the Executive were engaged with HEE to ensure standards being set at the right threshold;
- the Executive Director of PPI noted that since writing the paper, the amendments to the Professional Qualifications Bill (PQB) HCPC had wanted had been implemented and HCPC were delighted with its work in this area, had been able to reinforce its public protection role. The Executive would continue to monitor progress in this area and any associated risks.
- HCPC's response to the Government's proposal to make Covid-19 vaccines mandatory took a neutral position.

9.3 The Committee reflected on the very live issue of the vaccine mandate in England and the implications for HCPC and its Registrants, recognising the challenge of achieving consistency in approach across the 4 nations as the legislation was not UK wide.

The Executive Director of PPI noted that HCPC had been proactive in responding and had provided a holding position, there would need to be further discussion at Executive Leadership level to ensure appropriate action.

The Committee noted their concerns for students and the impact on being accepted on to placements, recognising the implications in terms of compensation. The Executive noted that following on from national level guidance, HCPC would play their role in terms of providing support and clear guidance for learners around student admissions.

The Executive Director of Regulation further acknowledged the potential implications in terms of FtP referrals and noted that HCPC were engaged with other regulators to ensure there was a joint up approach in thinking.

The Committee reflected on discussions and noted that although the discussion was one predominantly for employers, HCPC had an umbrella duty as a regulator to ensure it has a process to be clear how it supports employers to have conversations with its staff to do what is right.

9.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 10. Education and Training Committee business 2022 - initial discussion

10.1 The Head of Governance invited colleagues to provide the Committee with an overview of relevant work planned for 2022.

10.2 The Committee noted the following areas of 2022 business for the Policy and Standards function

- Standards development - review of Standards update for Conduct, Performance, and Ethics; Podiatric surgery Standards, Orthoptist Exemption Standards and Standards of Education and Training;
- Guidance - health disability guidance documents and Becoming a Health professional guidance document;
- Advanced Practice – continue with development of definition of and guiding principles of advanced practice;
- Cosmetic practice – plan and approach to consider risks and regulatory implications of cosmetic practice;
- Regulatory reform – continue to engage with the Department of Health and Social Care, other regulators and key stakeholders on the proposals for regulatory reform and the draft legislation;
- Continuing professional development (CPD) – review of approach to CPD;
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – roll out delivery of our EDI Action Plan.

10.3 The Committee noted the following areas of 2022 business for the Education function

- ongoing Education QA model development;
- understanding and providing broader assurance of the Education sector as a whole;

10.4 The Committee noted the following areas of 2022 business for the Registration function

- continuation of operational data;
- in partnership with HEE, exploring opportunities to expand the CQL;
- end to end review of international process policy and legal framework and ensuring quality and improvement of decision making;
- continuing format of performance reporting;

10.5 The Committee noted the volume of work planned for 2022 The Committee further noted the quality of the papers in presented at this meeting, all of a reasonable size and manageable in terms of preparing for the meeting.

Item 11 - Any other business

11.1 There was no further business.

Item 12 - Date and time of next meeting

12.1 Wednesday 9 March - virtual

Item 13 - Resolution

The Committee is invited to adopt the following:

‘The Committee hereby resolves that the remainder of the meeting shall be held in private, because the matters being discussed relate to the following;

- (a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or application for registration;
- (b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;
- (c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- (d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
- (e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;
- (f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;
- (g) the source of information given to the Council in confidence; or
- (h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council’s functions.’

| Item | Reason for Exclusion |
|------|----------------------|
| 14 | B |
| 15 | A |

Signed

Date