

confirmed

The Health Professions Council

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Minutes of the 36th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held on **Tuesday 10 June 2008** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU.

Present: Ms E Thornton (Chairman)
Professor K Bryan
Ms H Davis
Mr J Donaghy
Ms E Ellis
Ms C Farrell (items 2-20 inclusive)
Ms D Haggerty
Professor J Harper (items 2-20 inclusive)
Professor T Hazell
Dr S Hutchins (items 11-20 inclusive)
Professor C Lloyd
Professor J Lucas
Mr A Mount
Ms P Sabine
Mrs B Stuart
Professor D Waller
Mr N Willis

In attendance:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Ms A Creighton, Head of Education
Mr M Guthrie, Head of Policy and Standards
Mr S Mars, Policy Officer
Ms N O'Sullivan, Secretary to Council
Mr G Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations
Ms C Urwin, Policy Officer
Dr A van der Gaag, President
Ms N Williams, Team Administrator, Secretariat Department

Item 1.08/43 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mrs S Drayton and Ms G Pearson. The Committee noted that Professor Harper had been delayed due to travel problems. (Secretary's note: Dr Hutchins was also delayed due to travel problems).
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed members, employees and members of the public to the first meeting of the Committee to be held in the new Council Chamber.

Item 2.08/44 Approval of agenda

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 3.08/45 Minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting held on 26 March 2008

- 3.1 The Committee agreed that the minutes of the 35th meeting of the Education and Training Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4.08/46 Matters arising

- 4.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.
- 4.2 The Committee noted the action list as agreed at the last meeting.
- 4.3 The Committee noted the following points from the paper:
 - the consultation on the proposed amendment to the standards of proficiency for radiographers would run from 28 April 2008 to 1 August 2008. It was expected that the outcome of the consultation would be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 25 September 2008;
 - a further paper on student fitness to practise would be considered at item 13;
 - West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust had now offered a number of possible dates for the approval visit to its IHCD programme;
 - Training for the chairmen of Education and Training Panels was due to be held that afternoon.

Item 5.08/47 Chairman's report

- 5.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Chairman.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that, at its last meeting, the Chairman had reported on a meeting between the HPC and Skills for Health, including issues around the Skills for Health consultation on Enhancing Quality in Partnership (EQuIP). The outcome of the consultation had been published and it appeared that there was majority support for the proposed additional quality assurance framework for healthcare education. However, the summary of written responses indicated that HPC, other healthcare regulators, several universities and some professional bodies had expressed concerns about the impact and the increased burden of the proposed framework. The outcome of the consultation was available in the paper received at item 18.
- 5.3 The Committee noted that the Head of Education would be attending an event organised by the Higher Education Regulation Review Group. The event would discuss the role of professional bodies in higher education.
- 5.4 The Committee noted that a PSRB (Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies) forum was due to be held by the Quality Assurance Agency on 24 June 2008 to discuss the need to rationalise regulation and share good practice. Representatives of regulators and professional bodies were due to attend the meeting. The Committee noted that the Head of Education would attend the forum and there was one place available for a member of the Committee. Members were invited to express interest in attending.

Item 6.08/48 Head of Education's report

- 6.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Education - Approvals and Monitoring Department.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the Department had concentrated on operational activities since March 2008. The annual monitoring process was completed for the majority of programmes. A number of approval visits were due to be held in June and July. Interviews would be held to fill a number of vacancies for visitors.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that a member had ongoing concerns that the IHCD paramedic award continued to operate. The Committee noted

that the decision to continue to offer the IHCD programme was one made by the awarding body (Edexcel) and individual ambulance trusts, and not the HPC. The Committee noted that the purpose of the current approval visits to IHCD programmes was to enable the HPC to decide whether the programmes delivered by individual ambulance trusts continued to meet the standards of education and training and therefore remain approved.

Item 7.08/49 Consultation on standards of proficiency and the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register for hearing aid audiologists

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that amendments had recently been made to the Health and Social Care Bill, which was before the UK Parliament. If the legislation was enacted, the Hearing Aid Council would be abolished, subject to the making and approval of an Order under section 60 of the Health Act 1999. Responsibility for registration of hearing aid audiologists would be transferred to the HPC and it was anticipated that a new part of the Register would open in April 2009 (with protected titles of 'hearing aid audiologist' and 'hearing aid dispenser'). It was therefore necessary for the HPC to consult on draft standards of proficiency, the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register and the necessary amendments to the Registration and Fees Rules.
- 7.3 The Committee noted that the paper proposed that the HPC should consult in conjunction with the Hearing Aid Council on the standards of proficiency and the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register. Whilst the HPC would usually not undertake a consultation with another organisation, the paper proposed that it would be appropriate in this case because the Hearing Aid Council was the existing statutory regulator. The Committee agreed with this approach and agreed that any consultation document should clearly explain the reasons for consulting with the Hearing Aid Council.
- 7.4 The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that it should: (1) consult in conjunction with the Hearing Aid Council on the standards of proficiency; and consult in conjunction with the Hearing Aid Council on a proposal that the threshold level of qualification for entry to the hearing aid audiologists part of the Register should be set at a foundation degree; and

(2) consult on a proposal that the Health Professions Council (Registration and Fees) Rules be amended to provide for the registration renewal cycle for hearing aid audiologists.

Action: MG (by 3 July 2008)

Item 8.08/50 Reviewing the generic standards of proficiency

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that, at its meetings on 4 December 2007 and 26 March 2008, it had considered papers on the generic standards of proficiency. A professional liaison group which had met in September-October 2007 had drafted standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists. Some members of that group had argued that the generic standards were focused on health and social care, which was inappropriate for all practitioner psychologist disciplines. It had also been argued that terms used in the generic standards were not universally applicable. The chairman of the professional liaison group had suggested that the British Psychological Society should prepare a statement outlining their concerns about the generic standards and possible ways of making the standards inclusive of practitioner psychologists. The statement had now been received and was included in the paper.
- 8.3 The Committee noted that the HPC had consulted on the proposed standards of proficiency and the threshold level of qualification for entry to the practitioner psychologists part of the Register. However, the legislation to enable statutory regulation of psychologists by the HPC had been delayed and progress with the legislation would be awaited before the HPC made decisions on the consultations. It was now expected that the responses to the consultations would be considered by the Education and Training Committee and the Council in December 2008.
- 8.4 The Committee noted the following points:
- a consultation on the standards of proficiency had already resulted in minor changes to the standards, with effect from 1 November 2007;
 - the Executive had collated comments about the generic standards of proficiency received during various consultations on changes to the profession-specific standards;

- language used in healthcare had changed since the standards had first been prepared, with terms such as 'welfare' and 'well being' now used;
- arts therapists had expressed unhappiness about the language used in the standards and had discussed whether the standards should more widely define health and well-being.

8.5 The Committee agreed that, for all of these reasons given above, it would be sensible to review the generic standards but that a review should not take place solely because of the comments made by a single professional body.

8.6 The Committee agreed that:
 (1) the generic standards of proficiency should be reviewed from January 2009;
 (2) a workplan for the review should be brought to the Committee's meeting on 2 December 2008, but the workplan should include draft guiding principles for the review, based on the discussion above.

Action: MG (ongoing to 2 December 2008)

Item 9.08/51 Amendment to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists and podiatrists: Consultation responses

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

9.2 The Committee noted that a consultation on proposed amendments to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists and podiatrists had been held in 2007-8. The proposed amendments were that the standards relating to prescription only medicines (POM) and local anaesthetics (LA) should become compulsory. The Committee noted that both of these components were already included in all pre-registration programmes in the UK and therefore programme approval would not be affected.

9.3 The Committee noted that existing registrants would not be affected and would not be required to undertake additional education and training in order to meet the new requirements. Every registrant had to ensure that they practised safely and effectively in the area or areas in which they practised.

- 9.4 The Committee noted that, in order to ensure that the change was communicated effectively, it was proposed that the changes in the standards should become effective from 1 September 2009.
- 9.5 The Committee noted that there had been few responses to the consultation. The Committee noted that this was because the proposals were uncontroversial and reflected the existing situation in pre-registration programmes.
- 9.6 The Committee noted that there were mechanisms for the HPC to consider the approval of stand-alone programmes leading to the POM and LA entitlements.
- 9.7 The Committee agreed and recommended to the Council:
 (1) that the standards of proficiency for chiropodists and podiatrists relating to prescription only medicines and local anaesthetics should become compulsory from 1 September 2009; and
 (2) the text of the consultation responses document included in the paper, subject to an amendment that the total number of respondents should be mentioned near the start of the document.

Action: MG (by 3 July 2008)

Item 10.08/52 Post registration qualifications: Outcome from discussion meeting

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that a meeting with stakeholders had been held on 26 February 2008 to discuss post-registration qualifications, in light of recommendations in the White Paper 'Trust Assurance and Safety: The regulation of health professionals in the 21st century' and the HPC's response to the review of non-medical regulation. The paper summarised the meeting, highlighted points for discussion and identified possible next steps.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that the Chairman had chaired the meeting on 26 February and that Mr Mount and Mrs Stuart had also attended it. The meeting had agreed that the HPC should consider annotating the Register to indicate a greater range of post-registration qualifications. The following issues had been raised at the meeting:
- how meaningful it would be to the public and registrants to annotate the Register;

- what risk to public protection would be addressed by annotating the Register;
- whether annotation would restrict functions and fetter the development of the professions.

10.4 In discussion, the Committee made the following points:

- post-registration training might not necessarily lead to the award of a qualification;
- if the HPC were to approve post-registration qualifications, this would have financial implications (additional costs in the approvals and monitoring processes); and
- whether the information recorded in annotations would better inform the public.

10.5 The Committee agreed that the Executive should undertake further research on post-registration qualifications, exploring any relevant developments in medicine, nursing and pharmacy. The Committee agreed that it would also be useful to consider the issue in the light of the conclusions of the professional liaison group on continuing fitness to practise. The Committee agreed that a further paper should be prepared for its meeting on 2 December 2008.

Action: MG (ongoing to 2 December 2008)

Item 11.08/53 Standards of education and training and guidance consultation

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that a professional liaison group had met in 2007-8 to review and amend the standards of education and training (SET) and the related guidance. The paper contained a covering letter and a draft consultation document on the proposed amendments to the standards and guidance.
- 11.3 The Committee noted that one of the most significant proposals was a new SET (3.13) requiring education providers to have ‘a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students’ conduct.’ The Committee noted that the draft SET had been amended on the basis of legal advice from Mr Jonathan Bracken, HPC’s solicitor, to remove a requirement for a ‘fitness to practise process’. The Committee felt that the draft standard should refer to a process for dealing with ‘...concerns about students’ professional conduct’ and asked the Executive to seek legal advice

on whether this would be possible. The Committee felt that without the inclusion of the word 'professional', education providers might misinterpret this standard to only cover disciplinary issues, whereas this new standard was intended to cover a wider range of concerns about professional practice. The Committee noted that members had experience of dealing with issues of student conduct and that these usually related to professional conduct.

- 11.4 Subject to confirmation of the wording of SET 3.13 and minor editing changes, the Committee agreed and recommended to the Council the text of the draft consultation document.

Action: SM (by 3 July 2008)

Item 12.08/54 Making a complaint about an education or training programme

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 12.2 The Committee noted that, on 4 December 2007, it had agreed a process to consider complaints about education and training programmes. The paper contained a draft document, to provide information to anyone considering making a complaint to the HPC about an approved programme. The Committee noted that the document would be subject to editing by the Plain English Campaign and would be published on the HPC website in due course.
- 12.3 The Committee agreed that the document should be amended as follows:
- a statement near the beginning of the document that individuals should have gone through the education provider's complaints process, where possible, before approaching the HPC;
 - the document should explain how other organisations such as the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education and the Quality Assurance Agency could help complainants and how those organisations' processes related to HPC's consideration of complaints, if relevant.
- 12.4 The Committee agreed that, once the document had been amended, the Chairman should take Chairman's action to approve the document. The Committee agreed that, following that approval, the document should be published on the HPC website.

Action: SM / Chairman (by 25 September 2008)

Item 13.08/55 Guidance on ethical issues for students – workplan

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 13.2 The Committee noted that, at its meetings on 4 December 2007 and 26 March 2008, it had considered papers regarding student fitness to practise and the possibility of producing guidance on ethical issues for students. The Committee had agreed on 26 March 2008 that the Executive should begin drafting the guidance. The paper set out the draft workplan and the proposed timetable for producing the guidance.
- 13.3 The Committee noted that it was proposed that the guidance should be based upon the Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.
- 13.4 The Committee agreed that the guidance should be applicable to a range of professions and should therefore avoid the use of terms such as 'clinical'.
- 13.5 The Committee agreed that the guidance should address issues, which would particularly apply to students (including plagiarism and the fact that patients would usually regard students as practitioners).
- 13.6 The Committee agreed:
- (1) that the Policy and Standards Department should work with the Communications Department to establish a section for students on the HPC website;
 - (2) the proposed timetable for the production of the guidance outlined in the paper; and
 - (3) the ethical guidance should be based on the Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

Action: CU (ongoing to December 2008)

The Committee noted the following papers:

Item 14.08/56 Health and character declarations

Item 15.08/57 Annual review of actions taken in 2007-8: Public meetings

Item 16.08/58 Minutes of the Continuing Fitness to Practise Professional Liaison Group held on 11 March 2008

- 16.1 The Committee noted that a further meeting of the Group had been held on 13 May 2008. The Group had noted that there appeared to be little information available from other organisations on the costs of revalidation. The Group had decided that it was not necessary to meet on 17 June 2008. The Group would consider a draft report on continuing fitness to practise at its last scheduled meeting on 4 September 2008.

Item 17.08/59 Minutes of the Education and Training Panel held on 26 March 2008

Item 18.08/60 Skills for Health Enhancing Quality in Partnership consultation report

- 18.1 Discussion had taken place on this paper at item 5.

Item 19.08/61 Any other business

- 19.1 There was no other business.

Item 20.08/62 Date and time of next meeting

- 20.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.30 am on Thursday 25 September 2008.
- 20.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 10.30 am on:
- Tuesday 2 December 2008
Wednesday 25 March 2009 (new date, instead of 26 March 2009)
Thursday 11 June 2009

Chairman

Date