

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the 59th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Thursday 14 November 2013

Time: 10:30 am

Venue: The Council Chamber, Health and Care Professions Council, Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

Members:

Eileen Thornton (Chair)
Jo-anne Carlyle
Mary Clark-Glass
June Copeman
Helen Davis
John Donaghy
Stephen Hutchins
Jeff Lucas
Stuart Mackay

Arun Midha
Robert Smith
Jois Stansfield
Hilary Tompsett
Joy Tweed
Diane Waller
Joanna Watson
Stephen Wordsworth

In attendance:

John Barwick, Head of Investigations
Brendon Edmonds, Acting Director of Education
Selma Elgaziari, Policy Officer
Claire Gascoigne, Secretary to the Committee
Claire Harkin, Customer Services Manager
Jamie Hunt, Education Manager
Christopher French, Customer Services Manager
Jamie Hunt, Education Manager
Paula Lescott, Education Manager
Angela Scarlett Newcomen, Communications Officer
Marc Seal, Chief Executive
Jane Tuxford, Pa to the Director of Communications and the Director of Policy and Standards
Anna van der Gaag, Chair of Council

Part 1 – Public Agenda

Item 1 - Chair's welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The Chair asked the Chair of Council to provide the Committee with an update on the governance reconstitution progress.
- 1.2 The Committee noted that the recruitment process has concluded and the HCPC has made its recommendation to the Privy Council to appoint 11 Council members. However, this recommendation cannot be confirmed until after the Constitution Order is in place. It is currently expected that this will be in place in early January 2014. Education and Training Committee members were informed that today's meeting is likely to be the last of its current constitution.

Item 2 - Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Penny Renwick and Jeff Seneviratne.

Item 3 - Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4 - Declaration of members' interests

- 4.1 Members had no interests to declare in connection with the items on the agenda.

Item 5 - Minutes of the meeting of 12 September 2013 (ETC 52/13)

- 5.1 The minutes were accepted as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

Item 6 - Matters arising from previous meetings (ETC 53/13)

- 6.1 The Committee noted the list of actions agreed at previous meetings.

Item 7 - Director of Education's report (ETC54/13)

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Director of Education detailing the work of the Education Department between September and November 2013, providing updates on on-going projects, progress against the Department's work plan and statistics on the approval and monitoring processes.
- 7.2 The Committee noted the following points in the report:-

- since the Committee's last meeting in September, 15 visits covering 27 programmes have taken place. To date, 71 visits have been scheduled in 2013-14;
- the majority of these visits are to social worker programmes (75%);
- the Department has now completed annual monitoring for the 2012-13 academic year. Scheduling for the 2013-14 academic year is now underway;
- the Department has received one new concern since its last report to the Committee. Two concerns have been referred to the Fitness to Practice Department and there is one outstanding concern which is on today's agenda for consideration;
- preparations are underway for the approval of independent prescribing programmes following recent legislative changes; and
- the Department has delivered the first six education seminars planned for 2013-14. Two more seminars are planned in January and February 2014, both focusing on service user and carer involvement.

7.3 The Committee discussed developments in the education profile of the Paramedic profession. The Committee noted that the profession had made progress in moving towards a norm of degree level entry.

7.4 The Committee discussed the use of the major change process. It was noted that the Department aims to work on improving education providers understanding of this process and its appropriate use.

7.5 The Committee noted the report.

Item 8 - Outcomes of consultation on HCPC registration fees and amendments to the HCPC Registration and Fees Rules (ETC 55/13)

8.1 The Committee received a paper containing the draft fees consultation responses document.

8.2 The Committee noted that the HCPC held a public consultation between 10 July 2013 and 1 October 2013 on proposals to increase its fees. In order to increase the fees, an amendment to the Registration and Fees (Order of Council) Rules 2003 is required.

8.3 During discussions the following points were made:-

- 521 responses were received 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;

- this response rate represents a significant increase on the last fees consultation in 2009. However this still represents a small proportion of the HCPC's registrant population;
- 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
- a number of respondents agreed with the proposed increase, arguing that it was a small increase which was below the rate of inflation and that the increase was necessary to uphold current standards.

- 8.4 The Committee discussed the impact of the fee increase on the HCPC's newest profession, social workers. It was noted that this group saw a fee increase in August 2012 when the HCPC assumed regulation responsibility from the state subsidised GSCC. It was noted that the HCPC had made no assurances of a fee freeze for this group.
- 8.5 The Committee discussed the possibility of staggering a fee increase over a number of years. It was noted that this would be administratively burdensome and that the current 2 year renewal cycle would make a staggered increase difficult to implement.
- 8.6 The Committee noted that past consultation has shown that registrants prefer small and more frequent fee increases, to larger less regular increases.
- 8.7 The Committee requested that the wording of the response document be revisited to strengthen the HCPC's arguments for the increase. It was noted that the absence of an increase in line with inflation has in real terms amounted to a cut. The Committee felt that this should be emphasised. It was agreed that these suggestions would be put to the Council during its consideration of the document.
- 8.8 The Committee noted the report.

Item 9 - Fees review 2013 – consequential amendments to HCPC admission forms (ETC 56/13)

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper for approval from the Executive.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that if the proposed fee increase is agreed by Council in December 2013, the HCPC's admission forms will need to be amended to show the change agreed. If agreed, the new fees will be effective from 1 April 2014; however it is necessary to amend the admission forms ahead of this date to provide adequate preparation.

- 9.3 The Committee noted that the Registration Department currently returns approximately 20% of UK and readmission application forms received for the first time, due to incorrect completion. It is hoped that the addition of a new instructional page at an early part of the forms will reduce the number that need to be returned, saving time and resources for both HCPC and registrants.
- 9.4 The Committee agreed to recommend the paper to Council for approval.

Item 10 - Consultation on standards of proficiency for hearing aid dispensers (ETC 57/13)

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive. The paper formed a consultation paper and draft standards of proficiency for hearing aid dispensers.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that as few changes were suggested to the profession-specific standards of proficiency for hearing aid dispensers by the British Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists, the HCPC has not sought further advice on the changes from an individual hearing aid dispenser. This advice may be sought from a hearing aid dispenser HCPC partner following the results of the consultation.
- 10.3 The Committee agreed to recommend the paper to Council for approval, subject to minor editing changes and legal scrutiny.

Item 11 - Health and Character review (ETC 58/13)

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper from the executive detailing the findings of a recent health and character process review.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that the Fitness to Practise Department has conducted a review of the health and character process, which covers the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013. Going forward, the Fitness to Practise Department will produce a Health and Character Review on a biennial basis, covering a two-year period from 1 June-31 May, to coincide with the registration renewal cycle of the professions regulated by the HCPC.
- 11.3 The Committee noted the following points;
- during the review period, 1327 cases with declarations were logged. Of that number, 1276 were declarations made on application for admission or readmission to the Register and 51 were declarations made on renewal;
 - the total number of cases where registration or renewal of registration was refused during the period is 46 out of a total of 831 cases considered by panels;

- a total of 40 appeals have been received against decisions made by Registration Panels under the health and character policy to refuse entry or renewal to the register; and
 - Registration Panels are chaired by a member of the Council who is not a member of the Education and Training Committee.
- 11.4 The Committee discussed the proportion of declarations considered by registration panels. It noted that 64% of declarations received in the review period were considered by a Registration Panel, compared to 88% in the last review. This can in part be explained by updates to the Health and Character Policy, which sets out the types of matters declared which can be approved administratively, without the need to be put before a Registration Panel.
- 11.5 The Committee discussed the audit of Registration Panel decisions. It was noted that the Fitness to Practise Department has a dedicated audit team who continuously review processes for compliance. The Committee discussed the merits of this team sitting within or outside the Department.
- 11.6 The Committee noted the report.

Item 12 - Review of approval visits to social work pre-registration programmes in the 2012–13 academic year (ETC 59/13)

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper from the executive providing analysis of the first year of visits to social work education and training programmes in England
- 12.2 The Committee noted the following points
- the average number of conditions set for social work programmes is broadly comparable with new programmes from other professions, with on average, one fewer condition set per programme;
 - programme management and resources, curriculum and assessment, and practice placements was an area in which a higher proportion of conditions were applied;
 - as of 31 August 2013, 43 programmes have now completed the approval process and were granted approval on an open-ended basis, subject to meeting on-going monitoring requirements;
 - in total, 26 education providers closed programmes;
 - the primary audience of the report is education providers;
 - the report will be promoted via social media and online, but would not be printed; and

- with regards to the student suitability scheme, between 1 August 2012 and 31 May 2013, 16 new cases concerning social work students were received. No cases have required consideration by an Assessment Panel or Adjudicator to date.

12.3 The Committee noted the report.

The Committee noted the following items:

Item 13 - Education System Build Major Project – update (ETC 60/13)

Item 14 - Paramedic Evidence Based Education Project (PEEP) (ETC 61/13)

Item 15 - Guidance for disabled people wanting to become health and care professionals - update (ETC 62/13)

Item 16 - Professional indemnity - update (ETC 63/13)

Item 17 - Any other business

17.1 The Chair of Council expressed her thanks to the Committee for their service and contribution development of the HCPC's Education and Training Committee. Particular thanks were given to the Chair for her many years of leading the Committee.

Item 18 - Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 6 March 2014, 10.30am

Resolution

The Committee agreed to adopt the following resolution:

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

- (a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
- (b) information relating to an employee or officer 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 Committee or the Council;
- (f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
- (g) the source of information given to the Committee 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 Committee's or Council's functions.'

| Item | Reason for Exclusion |
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Summary of those matters considered whilst the public were excluded

Item 19 - Private minutes of the meeting of 6 June 2013 (ETC 50/13)

The minutes were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair

Item 20 - Education provider concern (ETC 65/13)

The Committee discussed an education provider concern.

Chair

Date

Unconfirmed