

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Education and Training Committee held in public as follows:

- Date:** Wednesday 5 March 2025
- Time:** 10am
- Venue:** Videoconference (Microsoft Teams)
- Present:** Katie Thirlaway (Chair)
Rebekah Eglinton
Helen Gough
- Apologies:** None

In attendance:

Claire Amor, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs
Francesca Bramley, Governance Manager
Madeleine Connor, Policy Manager (for item 18)
Brendon Edmonds, Head of Regulatory Development and Performance
David Fell, Operational Manager, UK Registration and Contact Centre
Karen Flaherty, Head of Governance
Rosemary Flowers-Wanjie, Policy Lead
Claire Garcia, Interim Head of Policy and Standards
Jamie Hunt, Head of Education
Bex Kidson, Senior Policy Officer
Tom Miller, Policy Manager
Helen Molloy, Operational Manager, International Registration
Andrew Smith, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards
David Stirling, Council member
Dabbi Taylor, Student Representative
Helen White, Observer

Public agenda

1 Welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting, in particular Dabbi Taylor, who would be attending Education and Training Committee (ETC) meetings as a student representative, and Helen White, who had been appointed as the HCPC's Independent Education and Training Committee member and was due to take up her role imminently subject to employment checks. Carl Stychin, a newly appointed Council member, would also join the ETC when he joined the HCPC on 1 April 2025.

2 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

3 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

4 Declaration of members' interests in relation to agenda items

- 4.1 No interests were declared.

5 Minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting held in public on 6 November 2024

- 5.1 The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of its meeting held in public on 6 November 2024.

6 Matters arising

- 6.1 The Committee noted the matters arising from its previous meetings.

Performance reports

7 Registration performance report

- 7.1 The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards presented the performance report, which outlined performance for the period from October 2024 to January 2025 and service improvements under way.

7.2 The following areas were highlighted:

- the full implementation of the new Registration operating model in January 2025, with all new managerial posts successfully recruited to;
- the maintenance of consistently high performance standards across most Registration service areas;
- a drop in international application performance due to a spike of 3,329 applications in December 2024 and January 2025 thought to be linked to the launch of the new English language proficiency requirements in January, with seven additional posts approved by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in February 2025 to ensure the team was adequately resourced;
- a small number of administrative process errors identified through frontline quality assurance checks had been fed back to the individuals concerned, noting these checks would be routinely undertaken and the process would continue to evolve, informed by the methodology used within the Fitness to Practise (FTP) department;

7.3 The Committee discussed the wellbeing and morale of colleagues working in the Registration department. The proactive approach to recruitment had eased the operational pressure, with a continued focus on training and supporting colleagues within the new team structure. The recent pulse survey response rates for the Registration department had been high and scores had been generally positive. The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards had reviewed feedback received through the pulse survey and action was being taken to address the emerging themes of employee recognition, visibility of senior leadership and training/development. The Operational Manager, International Registration reported that the new management structure provided a closer level of support to Registration department employees and more frequent team meetings supported information sharing.

7 Education performance report

7.1 The Head of Education outlined the performance measures across the operational processes in the Education team and current performance against these.

7.2 The percentage of active assessments over service level had increased from 6% to 17%, resulting in an amber rating for this performance measure. This was primarily due to additional focused review cases resulting from a review of education providers performance data changes for the first time. Approximately one third of education providers had been identified for an internal review, and 24% of these had been investigated further. This proportion was not considered to be a cause for concern, but smaller-scale reviews of specific data points would be routinely completed and this would help to identify any trends, themes and anomalies.

- 7.3 The time taken to complete the approval process had increased during the reporting period, resulting in a red rating for this performance measure. This was due to several complex assessments for programmes due to start in January 2025 concluding during the reporting period. No programme start dates had been delayed.
- 7.4 Programme capacity had increased across most professions. The Head of Insight and Analytics had been engaged in work to understand the completion rate for programmes alongside programme capacity to enable the Education team to share insights with the Committee, education providers and other stakeholders.
- 7.5 The Education annual report addendum 2023-4 and supporting materials for education providers had been published in January 2025. Initial stakeholder feedback had been positive. Further supporting materials were due to be published through the first quarter of 2025-26 alongside more proactive engagement, including a series of webinars.

Consultations and reviews

8 English language proficiency implementation update

- 8.1 The Committee received an update from the Policy Manager on the implementation of the revised English language proficiency requirements. The new requirements had launched on 29 January 2025 as planned, with the Business Change, International Registration and Communications and Engagement working together to ensure a smooth transition to the new process. The International Registration team had worked closely with the providers of the Occupational English Test (OET) to develop the portal and to train and support colleagues using the new system.
- 8.2 Prior to the Committee meeting, a monitoring and reporting plan had been circulated to Committee members as requested.
- 8.3 The spike in international applications had occurred in January 2025, with 875 international applications in December 2024, 2,500 applications in January 2025 and 337 applications in February 2025. The timing of the spike in applications indicated that this was attributable to the introduction of the new English language proficiency requirements. The Policy and Standards team were reviewing the communications plan, which had included early communications and communication at the time of the launch, to identify any learning for communicating future policy changes to registrants.
- 8.4 The position would be closely monitored by the Senior Policy Officer over the coming months to determine if the number of international applications returned to previous levels or remained consistently lower to identify any actions required and to consider any associated implications for workforce planning. A monitoring and reporting plan had been circulated to Committee members prior to the Committee meeting and a full update would be provided to the Committee

at its meeting in March 2026, one year on from the launch of the new requirements.

- 8.5 The Committee commended all those involved in the successful launch of the new English language proficiency requirements.

Governance

9 Review of Committee effectiveness

9.1 The Committee noted the feedback provided from Committee members and attendees in response to the questionnaire circulated in advance of the meeting and the themes identified. A number of the themes were consistent with the previous review of Committee effectiveness undertaken in 2024 with actions either completed or in progress to address the concerns raised.

9.2 The review had provided some helpful points for reflection, in particular the additional perspectives provided by independent members of the Committee and opportunities to meet in person to support communication and cohesion among Committee members. The Governance team had initiated a process for sharing a summary of updates from Council meetings and the wider HCPC with independent Committee members to share information without compromising the members' independence. Independent Committee members would also be encouraged to observe Council meetings to gain further insights into the wider context within which the Committee operated. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to meet in person once a year and asked for this to be investigated further, ideally to coincide with a Council meeting to minimise travel time.

Action: The Committee Chair and the Governance Manager would consider whether meeting in person in 2025 would be feasible.

10 Review of Committee standing orders

10.1 The Committee reviewed the proposed changes to the standing orders, which intended to clarify and streamline the information about the decision-making processes for the Education and Training Panel.

10.2 The Committee approved the amendments to the Committee's standing orders and would recommend these to the Council for approval at its next meeting on 27 March 2025.

11 Committee forward plan

11.1 The Committee's forward plan was noted.

12 Resolution to move the meeting to private session

12.1 The Committee resolved that the remainder of the meeting would be held in private, because the matters being discussed related to matters which, in the opinion of the Chair, were confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or Council's functions.

12.2 The meeting was briefly adjourned.