

THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Chief Executive and Registrar: Mr Marc Seale

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Minutes of the twenty-first meeting of the Registration Committee of the Health Professions Council held on **Tuesday 18 January 2005** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU.

PRESENT: Professor R Klem (Chairman) (Part)
Mrs S Chaudhry
Miss M Crawford
Mr P Frowen
Miss P Sabine
Mr G Sutehall
Dr A van der Gaag

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms S Dawson, International and Grandparenting Registration Manager
Miss C Harkin, Manager, UK Registration
Miss K Johnson, Director, Fitness to Practise (part)
Miss N O'Sullivan, Acting Secretary to the Committee
Mr M Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

Item 1.05/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Dr R Jones, Mr I Massey, Mr A Mount, Miss E Thornton.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were also received from the President, Professor N Brook.
- 1.3 The Committee noted that Mr A Mount, alternate Operating Department Practitioner member on Council, had been appointed as a member to the Committee. This appointment had been ratified by Council.

Item 2.05/02 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- 2.1 The Committee approved the Agenda. The Committee noted that Professor Klem had been delayed in getting to the meeting and that in her absence Miss Sabine, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, would act as Chairman.

Item 3.05/03 MINUTES

- 3.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the twentieth meeting of the Registration Committee be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman (in the absence of the Chairman).

Item 4.05/04 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Item 4.1 Matters Arising
 - 4.1.1 The Committee noted that the paper entitled “Managing your Fitness to Practise” on which the Committee had submitted comments had been ratified by Council on 7 December 2004.
- 4.2 Item 4.3.1 Matters Arising
 - 4.2.1 The Committee noted that a statement which explained that the dates on the Register reflected the beginning and the end of the professions’ current registration cycle and did not indicate how long a registrant had been qualified or practising had been put on the HPC website.
- 4.3 Item 4.6.1 - Self-Referrals
 - 4.3.1 The Committee noted that a paper on self-referrals had been considered by the Investigating Committee at its meeting on 11 November 2004. The Committee had referred the paper to the Education and Training Committee for consideration at its meeting on 16 February 2005.
- 4.4 Item 8.5 – Article 12 Approvals
 - 4.4.1 The Committee noted that the recommendation outlined in 8.5 of the notes had been circulated to the Committee by email and had been ratified electronically. An updated paper on this issue had been included on the agenda for the current meeting.
- 4.5 Item 9.2 – English Language Tests
 - 4.5.1 The Committee noted that the recommendation outlined in 9.2 of the notes had been circulated to the Committee by email and had been ratified electronically.
- 4.6 Item 11.3 - Registration Appeals
 - 4.6.1 The Committee noted that a paper on this issue had been included on the agenda for the current meeting.
- 4.7 Item 12 – Health and Character Declarations
 - 4.7.1 The Committee noted that work was ongoing on the preparation of a scheme of delegation from the Education and Training Committee to its sub-committees and that when this had been completed further consideration

would be given to the documentation of the process to be followed when an applicant has made a health or character declaration.

Item 5.05/05 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 5.1 There was no Chairman's report.

Item 6.05/06 REPORT FROM THE UK REGISTRATION MANAGER

- 6.1 The Committee received a report from the UK Registration Manager.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the registration process for the Operating Department Practitioners (ODP) had been completed and that all ODPs who had been on the voluntary register and who had not registered with the HPC by 10 December 2004 had been identified as lapsed. It was difficult at this stage to analyse the reasons why the 900 ODPs whose registration had lapsed had failed to register but possible reasons included retirement, failure to meet the deadline because of holidays or sickness absence or failure to sign the registration form. It was likely that the majority of those who had failed to register would eventually come onto the register. In the meantime they should not be working. It was agreed that the Chief Executive should write to the Department of Health to enquire whether Operating Department Practitioners had been included in all relevant Department of Health circulars regarding the requirement for registration.

Action: MJS

- 6.3 The time being taken to answer telephone calls to the Registration Department had been significantly reduced and, currently, 90% of calls were being answered within 37 seconds.
- 6.4 A project was being undertaken to consider the registration renewal process particularly in relation to improvements which could be made.
- 6.5 A project to put the application form for registration on-line was on track and it was likely that applicants could complete their registration form on-line by June 2005.
- 6.6 The Committee noted that the majority of the feedback which was received from registrants was about the delay in sending out registration certificates. To combat this registrants and employers were being encouraged to check their registration status on-line as the on-line register was updated in real time.

Item 7.05/07 REPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL AND GRANDPARENTING REGISTRATION MANAGER

- 7.1 The Committee received a report from the International and Grandparenting Registration Manager.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that a registration officer had been appointed to the International and Grandparenting Department in October and that the Department was now fully staffed with 11 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Registration Officers.
- 7.3 The Committee noted that the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine (CPSM) international registration processes were being wound up and that all applicants who had applied under this system were being informed that they now had to either withdraw their application or re-apply using the HPC process.
- 7.4 The Committee noted that the number of applications under the grandparenting process appeared to be declining. However, the Executive had a contingency plan in place in case there was a significant increase in applications before the close of the grandparenting window on 8 July 2005. Applicants who had submitted their application by close of business on 8 July 2005 could continue to use the relevant protected title while the application was under consideration and also while any appeal was outstanding. The Chief Executive had written to the Chief Executives of all the professional bodies reminding them of the 8 July 2005 cut off date.

Item 8.05/08 ARTICLE 12 APPROVALS

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval.
- 8.2 At its last meeting the Committee had agreed to recommend a process to the Education and Training Committee by which a qualification awarded outside the United Kingdom could be assessed as being comparable with an approved UK qualification. The Committee noted that the paper under consideration developed that process further and included a table of international qualifications which had been approved by the registration assessors for registration and the number of applicants who had applied with each of these qualifications.
- 8.3 The Committee noted that the registration assessors considered the qualification and the individual applying for registration separately and that in order for an international qualification to be assessed as comparable with an approved UK qualification the registration assessors had to accept that specific qualification as leading to registration in 100% of cases.
- 8.4 The Committee noted that it was extremely important that the process used in assessing qualifications as comparable was transparent and that it was also

clear that qualifications were assessed on a year-by-year basis by registration assessors using their professional judgement.

- 8.5 The Committee agreed the procedure and the table of comparable qualifications set out in the paper subject to the substitution of 'comparable qualification' for 'approved qualification' in point 2 of the proposed procedure. This would be recommended to the Education and Training Committee for ratification.
- 8.6 The Committee agreed that a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the agreed process should be prepared for the HPC website and that these FAQs should be included in the paper to be considered by the Education and Training Committee.

Action: SD

Item 9.05/09 REGISTRATION APPEALS

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper to note.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that, in the period from September to November 2004, 80 cases had been considered under the registration appeals process. A further 262 cases were ready to go to a hearing. Hearings had been scheduled on a monthly basis since May 2004 with a schedule in place until May 2005.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that a number of changes had been made to the international application system to assist both applicants and registration assessors and that this had contributed to a reduction in the number of appeals against decisions made.

Item 10.04/10 STANDARD LETTERS

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper to note.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that work had begun on editing the content of HPC's standard letters relating to the registration process. It was envisaged that a complete set of letters would be ready by February 2005. These would be reviewed by the Communications Officer and the HPC's solicitor and parliamentary agent. A crystal mark would be sought from the Plain English Campaign for the final set of documentation.
- 10.3 A complete set of crystal marked standard letters would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on 12 April 2005.

Action: CH/SD

Item 11.05/11 REGISTRATION REVIEW PROCESS

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper to note.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that the registration managers had been reviewing the workloads in the UK and the International Registration Teams. The aim of the review was to even out the peaks and troughs in the work of the UK Registration Team. A programme of change would commence from January 2005 with an expectation of implementing flexible working options by April 2005 for registration officers.

Item 12.05/12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 12.1 They were no items of any other business.

Item 13.05/13 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 13.1 The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 April 2005 at 10 a.m.
- 13.2 Further meetings would be held on the following dates;
 - Monday 5 September 2005
 - Monday 28 November 2005
 - Wednesday 22 February 2006
 - Wednesday 5 April 2006

CHAIRMAN