Internal Audit Report

1. Audit overview

1.1	Date	Thursday 16 November 2006
1.2	Department	International
1.3	Auditor	Ruth Bacon
1.4	Person being audited	Mark Potter
1.5	Date report was issued	Tuesday 28 November 2006
1.6	Observations Made	√
1.7	Non conformities Issued	x

2. Audit information

The audit was conducted with Mark Potter – Customer Service Manager of the International Registration team.

Mark reports to Richard Houghton – Registration Manager.

What is the structure of the international registration team?

There are:

- 9 full time Registration Officers
- 1 Acting Team Leader
- 1 Customer Services Manager

There is currently 1 new starter who has been with the team 3 weeks and there will be one new starter in January 2007.

Processing of forms is currently happening on the same day as forms are received.

There are on average 15 forms received to the department per day.

There are 1.5 people working on forms each day. I was shown a copy of the rota. On the day I visited, Sarah was on form in the morning and Jessica and Ben where on forms in the afternoon.

What is the situation with the purge of old applications?

At the moment there is a purge going on the office, this is part of an improvement project to clean up the filing system. There had previously been no purge for 3 years. The types of files that were purged were applications that were part way through the process:

- Hadn't paid
- Hadn't done a test of competence

Hard copies of the files were building up and just sat there. The office was also running low on space and the office was a mess.

What progress has been made so far?

Since the work started over 5 filing cabinets have been cleared.

How were you sure what information could be purged and what could not?

Mark sough legal advice from HPCs lawyers before commencing the purge. There were certain legal issues that had to be taken into consideration when removing files from the system. For example EEA applications can not be rejected.

A purge letter was written to all those in the system, the letter included a deadline for a response from the applicant.

If the applicant then contacted HPC the application was continued.

If the applicant did not make contact a rejection letter was sent and the LISA record was logged as rejected.

In total there were 173 purge letters sent (to Grandparenting applicants).

How will purging fit in with other work in the future?

Purging will become a new task on the rota. And the plan is to carry out purging periodically and perhaps every month but this is yet to be decided.

One of Mark's goals and objectives was purging GP applications. On the monthly management reports you can see that the figures have gone from 284-86 since the purge. 86 applicants are still in the process. From the data you can see that the processing times have improved. In January 2006 it was taking 102 days to get a decision on an international application. This was due to there being lots of work in the system because of the closure of the grandparenting window (July 2005). The target now is to have a decision within 5 weeks for an international application.

What lessons were learned from the closure of the grandparenting window?

- Forward planning is needed for the numbers of applications received
- A contingency budget for additional employees for the next window closure
- Ensuring there are adequate numbers of assessors to assess the applications
- Ensure that there is adequate resource on the team

How are you going to use your experiences from the last window to make the process more effective next time?

Some ides for the next window are:

- To enhance communication
- Possible separate out the processing of international and grandparenting applications at this time
- Testing has shown that it might be more effective to run assessment days rather than doing assessments on an individual basis
- There is the possibility that there could be a longer grandparenting window (it's currently 2 years)

Mark has been reviewing some of the peaks when the GP applications are returned to us. There is a peak:

- at the begging of the window
- another after 6 months and
- again at the end of the window

Professional bodies provide rough information on the numbers of GP applications, though no one knows the exact numbers.

Communications had advertised at the beginning of the window, mark would like advertising throughout the period.

What happens about the need for additional assessors?

For the first round of grandparenting additional assessors were recruited.

For the ODPs

- 47 Grandparenting applicants applied
- 46 International applicants applied

There are 8 assessors for ODPs and over the 2 year period this was enough.

Partner training

Once every 2 years partner training is held. This time it will be run every Friday in March 2007.

How is the training planned?

As a result of some bad registration assessor decisions and the regular need for further training, sessions are organised regularly.

A draft invitation letter is created by the Partner manager (Yasmin Hussain) and this letter contains suggested dates for the training to take place.

Yasmin is responsible for booking the venues, organising the assessors and paying them fees for attendance.

Mark reads a draft letter that will be sent to assessors and provides the content. Currently the final content of the training for the next sessions has not been decided, this decision will be taken after Christmas.

Mark gets advice from the other departments that use the same partners. Marc would like to move towards the separation of roles so that assessors can only do one of the roles. Fro example Registration assessors will not be allowed to sit on panels. It will be Yasmins decision on what happens ultimately.

Partner conference

What is the purpose of the conference?

- To get everyone together
- Networking
- Building relationships
- For both parties to give feedback (HPC employees and partners)

There are breakout groups during the conference that will be run by managers.

A couple of the registration officers will be going to the conference too. Marc and some of council will also be there.

How is feedback from the conference captured and what is done with it?

- Formal framework is provided for feedback (feedback forms etc)
- Informal feedback is received via phone calls etc
- Numbers of people attending etc

Observation 1: What happens to the feedback that is collected at the partner conference?

3. Resources

People, Environment, Equipment, Tools, Communications and Services

- ➢ 1x Customer Service Manager
- ➢ 9 full time Registration Officers
- ➢ 1 Acting Team Leader

4. Criteria

Criteria (Legislation and Regulation, Corporate Policy, Local Policy, Customer requirements and Procedural Requirements)

- HPC Order 2001

- Legal advise from HPC lawyers

- Requirements for partner training

5. Records

- Application forms

- Purged applications

- LISA

- Rota

- Marks goals and objectives

- Management reports

- Partner training documents

6. Measures

- Processing times
- Criteria for purging (set out by lawyers)
- Partner training feedback

7. OBSERVATIONS AND NON CONFORMITIES

This is information regarding any observations and non conformities recognised during the audit.

As a result of this audit there was 1 observation (see below) and 0 non conformities.

Observations

Reference	Observation	Proposed action	Responsibility of
Observation 1	What happens to the feedback that is collected at the partner conference?		Partner Manager