

**confirmed**

**The Health Professions Council**

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Minutes of the 35th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held on **Wednesday 26 March 2008** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU.

**Present:** Ms E Thornton (Chairman)  
Professor K Bryan (items 1-6 inclusive)  
Ms H Davis  
Mr J Donaghy  
Mrs S Drayton  
Ms E Ellis  
Ms D Haggerty  
Professor J Harper (items 1-17 inclusive)  
Professor T Hazell  
Professor C Lloyd  
Mr A Mount  
Ms G Pearson  
Mrs B Stuart  
Professor D Waller  
Mr N Willis

**In attendance:**

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee

Mr J Bracken, HPC's solicitor

Ms A Cowie, Professional Adviser, Regulation and Workforce Standards, Scottish Government Health Directorates (items 1-6 inclusive)

Ms A Creighton, Head of Education

Mr M Guthrie, Policy Manager

Professor S Hill, Chief Scientific Officer, Department of Health (item 6 only)

Mr R Houghton, Head of Registration

Professor S Heard, Department of Health (item 6 only)

Ms K Johnson, Director of Fitness to Practise

Mr S Leicester, Director of Finance

Mr S Mars, Policy Officer

Ms N O'Sullivan, Secretary to Council

Mr G Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations

Ms T Samuel-Smith, Education Manager

Ms E Seall, Fitness to Practise Manager

Mr M J Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

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2008-03-25

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Ms R Tripp, Director of Policy and Standards  
Ms J Tuxford, Personal Assistant to President and Chief Executive  
Ms C Urwin, Policy Officer  
Dr A van der Gaag, President

**Item 1.08/1 Apologies for absence**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Ms C Farrell, Mr S Hutchins, Professor J Lucas and Ms P Sabine.
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed members of the public.

**Item 2.08/2 Approval of agenda**

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

**Item 3.08/3 Minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting held on 4 December 2007**

- 3.1 The Committee agreed that the minutes of the 34th meeting of the Education and Training Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**Item 4.08/4 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 that the Chairman's report (item 7) would include a progress report on discussions with Skills for Health.

**Item 5.08/5 Regulation of healthcare support workers: Presentation**

- 5.1 The Committee received a presentation on a pilot project by the Scottish Government Health Directorates to regulate healthcare support workers. The steering group had agreed that the project should be employer-led, which meant that employers were responsible for considering fitness to practise issues. The Committee noted that the Director of Operations had been a member of the steering group.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that a stakeholder event was due to be held in Edinburgh on 28 October 2008 to receive an evaluation report on the pilot project. A final decision on whether to fully implement the project would be made by the Scottish Government in early 2009.

- 5.3 The Committee noted that, at pilot stage, the list of support workers was accessible by the NHS boards. It was expected that, if the project was fully implemented, there would be an independent register with different levels of access for different types of stakeholder. The project was linked to the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework and would enable individuals to transfer between different roles.
- 5.4 The Committee thanked Ms Cowie for the presentation.

**Item 6.08/6 Modernising scientific careers: Presentation**

- 6.1 The Committee received a presentation on the Department of Health project to modernise scientific careers.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that healthcare scientists included highly specialist roles across 51 disciplines, which were grouped into three divisions (life sciences; physiological sciences; physical sciences and clinical engineering). Biomedical scientists and clinical scientists were currently statutorily regulated by the HPC and the Council had recommended to the Department of Health that five other professions should be regulated.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that the project aimed to address issues around workforce planning; service issues (linking careers to the needs of the NHS and service priorities); education and training funding and commissioning; and standards and patient safety (addressing inconsistent outcomes from training).
- 6.4 The Committee noted that it was proposed that there would be a common entry point for general science graduates into a rotational training programme in one of the three divisions, the outcome of which would be general registration as a healthcare scientist. It was intended that there would be a new Bachelor of Medical Sciences degree for entry into the career pathway. Following general registration, there would be competitive selection into a higher specialist training programme or into employment with further professional development, based on workforce planning requirements. It was proposed that individuals who completed specialist training would be registered separately.
- 6.5 The Committee noted that implementation would involve ongoing discussions with stakeholders including the four home countries, the professions and members of the HPC Executive. It was expected that implementation would take four years and would take priority over existing recommendations by the HPC for

statutory regulation of the five disciplines in healthcare science. The Committee noted that the proposals would continue to permit people with a wide variety of backgrounds (such as engineers) to pursue a career as a healthcare scientist.

6.6 The Committee thanked Professor Hill for the presentation.

#### **Item 7.08/7 Chairman's report**

7.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Chairman.

7.2 The Committee noted that the Chairman had undertaken the following meetings and activities:

- 15 January 2008: meeting of the Professional Liaison Group on continuing fitness to practise;
- 26 February 2008: a meeting to consider issues around post-registration qualifications;
- reviewing and approving the section on the Education and Training Committee for the 2007-8 annual report; and
- reviewing applications for registration assessor and visitor partner roles for applied psychologists. Interviews were due to be held in June and July 2008.

7.3 The Committee noted that a meeting had been held on 15 February 2008 to discuss HPC's concerns about the consultation by Skills for Health on Enhancing Quality in Partnership (EQulP), which proposed an additional quality assurance framework for healthcare education. The meeting had been attended by John Rogers, chief executive of Skills for Health; Christine Pond (executive director of Skills for Health, responsible for quality assurance work); the President; the Chairman; the Chief Executive and Professor Lucas. Representatives of the Department of Health and a strategic health authority had attended via telephone.

7.4 The Committee noted that Skills for Health had been commissioned by the Department of Health to carry out the consultation on this project and the final decision on it being adopted rested with the Department. The Committee noted that, whilst the meeting had discussed concerns about the quality of training for nurses, no evidence had been produced to support concerns about the quality of pre-registration education and training approved by HPC. The HPC's representatives had felt that existing quality assurance mechanisms were sufficient to ensure programme quality. The HPC had offered to arrange a further meeting of all interested parties in May or June 2008.

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- 7.5 The Committee felt that HPC's continuing concerns about the EQuIP consultation and wider issues concerning Skills for Health should be made known to the relevant decision-makers. The Committee agreed that the draft minutes of the meeting should be included as part of a letter inviting interested parties to the further meeting, together with any minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2008.

#### **Item 8.08/8 Head of Education's report**

- 8.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Education - Approvals and Monitoring Department.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that the Department was entering its peak period of activity for approval visits and annual monitoring processes. The report also included a summary of completed and upcoming project work.
- 8.3 The Committee noted that initial research had been conducted on programmes for biomedical science and clinical science. The Executive would meet the relevant professional bodies to discuss arrangements for approval visits to the programmes.

#### **Item 9.08/9 Fees rise consultation document**

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the Finance and Resources Committee had considered the draft document on 6 February 2008 and, as a result, there had been minor changes to the document and the wording of the consultation questions. The Executive had also added a general question, asking for any further comments on the proposals.
- 9.3 The Committee agreed that no further changes were needed to the consultation document and agreed to recommend approval of the document by the Council.

**Action: MG (by 27 March 2008)**

#### **Item 10.08/10 Proposed fee rise: Update**

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that, on 4 December 2007, it had agreed that any fee increase in 2009 should take effect in June 2009.

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Since that time, further planning had highlighted that any fee rise should take effect from April 2009, before the start of the renewal cycle and to avoid the busy processing time for UK graduates applying to join the register. The implementation of any increase would be subject to the outcome of the consultation process.

- 10.3 The Committee agreed that any fee increase should take effect in April 2009 rather than June 2009.

**Action: SL (ongoing to April 2009)**

**Item 11.08/11 Amendment to the standards of proficiency for radiographers**

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that the revised standards of proficiency for the first 12 professions regulated by the HPC had become effective on 1 November 2007. At the request of the Society and College of Radiographers, the standards of proficiency had been amended at that time to require diagnostic radiographers 'to be able to assist with ultrasound imaging procedures and perform standard first trimester ultrasound measurements' (standard 2b.4)
- 11.3 The Committee noted that the Society and College of Radiographers had since informed the Executive that the first part of the standard reflected current practice, whilst the second part in fact reflected emerging practice and was therefore not appropriate as a threshold standard for safe and effective practice. In addition, the Society had indicated that there would be insufficient numbers of clinical placements in pre-registration education and training to allow the second part of the standard to be met. The paper proposed that there should be consultation on removing the second part of the standard.
- 11.4 The Committee agreed that the consultation document should provide more context and the background to the consultation, explaining that, whilst the HPC was responsible for taking the decision to amend the standards, this had been in light of feedback received during a public consultation. The Committee agreed that the consultation document should also explain that first trimester ultrasound measurements were an optional module in some, but not all, education programmes.

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- 11.5 The Committee agreed that it was important to learn lessons about how the HPC considered, and acted on, the responses of stakeholders to future consultations.
- 11.6 The Committee agreed:
- to recommend to the Council that a consultation should be held on amending profession-specific standard 2b.4 of the radiographers standards of proficiency, as outlined in the paper;
  - to recommend to the Council the text of the consultation document, subject to the amendments agreed at paragraph 11.4 above.

**Action: MG (by 27 March 2008)**

**Item 12.08/12 Standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners – Consultation responses**

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 12.2 The Committee noted that the Council had consulted in 2007-8 on revised profession-specific standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners. The draft document summarising responses to the consultation was attached to the paper. The Committee noted that the proposed revised standards had been mistakenly copied and collated with the paper considered at item 33.
- 12.3 The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council:
- the text of the consultation responses document;
  - the text of the revised standards for publication.

**Action: MG (by 27 March 2008)**

**Item 13.08/13 Health and character review**

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 13.2 The Committee noted that, in June 2007, it had agreed to review the process for considering declarations of health and character by applicants or registrants. The current paper reviewed health and character cases received between June 2005 and December 2007.
- 13.3 The Committee noted that declarations by registrants from some professions were disproportionate to the total number of

registrants in those professions. The Committee noted that it was possible that this reflected greater awareness of the need to declare health and character issues.

13.4 The Committee agreed that the paper was of very high quality.

13.5 The Committee agreed that:

- guidance should be provided on health and character issues for applicants, registrants and education providers, in the form of a single document. The draft guidance should be presented to the Committee for consideration at its meeting on 25 September 2008;

**Action: RT (ongoing to 25 September 2008)**

- formal guidance should be produced for Registration Panels which would be available to partners when they sat in that capacity. A further paper should be produced, with draft guidance and legal advice should be sought.

**Action: KJ (ongoing to 25 September 2008)**

#### **Item 14.08/14 Student fitness to practise – guidance on ethical issues**

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

14.2 The Committee noted that the paper provided a progress report on work by the HPC and other healthcare regulators regarding student fitness to practise, in particular the publication of ethical guidance for students. The Committee noted that, in relation to appendix 2 of the paper, the British Dietetic Association had student members but did not produce ethical guidance for students.

14.3 The Committee noted that the Communications Department was working to produce information for students and the paper discussed whether guidance on ethical issues should be included as part of this. The Communications Department was currently undertaking research to identify what students knew about the HPC and what types of information students might find useful. The Committee agreed that guidance on ethical issues should be produced at this stage, as it would be helpful for students and education providers and would help to promote the HPC's work to these stakeholders.

14.4 The Committee agreed that:

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- it would be helpful to produce ethical guidance for students at present;

**Action: CU (ongoing to 2 December 2008)**

- that the Policy and Standards Department should work with the Communications Department as appropriate on the information pack for prospective registrants;
- that the Policy and Standards Department should continue to work with the Fitness to Practise Department as part of the review of the health and character process;
- that the Policy and Standards Department should continue to work with colleagues in other organisations working on student fitness to practise and provide regular updates to the Committee as appropriate.

**Action: CU (ongoing)**

**Item 15.08/15 Approvals and monitoring commendations**

- 15.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 15.2 The Committee noted that visitors' reports on education programmes included commendations, which allowed visitors to highlight any area of the programme which they considered to be good practice or particularly noteworthy. Visitors had not previously had any formal guidance on criteria for awarding commendations, but guidance had now been included in the revised format of the visitors' report. The paper analysed the types of commendations given in the 2005-6 and 2006-7 academic years.
- 15.3 The Committee noted that the paper proposed that the format of the visitors' report should be amended so that commendations would provide contact details for further information or internet links to relevant documents. This would enable good practice to be shared between education providers. The Committee also suggested that good practice could be distributed via organisations such as the Higher Education Academy.
- 15.4 The Committee noted that the paper proposed that the approvals and monitoring annual report would analyse commendations, alongside the existing analysis of conditions and recommendations. The Committee noted that an Education and Training Panel could decide to amend or remove commendations, if the Panel felt that the commendations were inappropriate.

15.5 The Committee agreed that the purpose of commendations should be to highlight good practice and then enable it to be shared with other education providers. The Committee agreed that:

- the revised visitors' report should be amended to ask visitors to provide links to documents online or contact details if appropriate, when identifying good practice worthy of commendations. Visitors would also be asked to confirm that education providers were happy to share the information before the report was finalised;

**Action: Approvals and Monitoring Department (ongoing)**

- commendations for good practice should be highlighted within the approvals and monitoring annual report and analysed in a similar way to the conditions and recommendations received by programmes.

**Action: AC (ongoing)**

**Item 16.08/16 Approval and Monitoring Department work plan 2008-2009**

- 16.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 16.2 The Committee noted that the work plan gave details of the main operational processes, supporting activities and projects planned for the 2008-9 financial year. The Committee noted that it was intended that project work would take place in the periods when there was less activity in the approvals and monitoring processes.
- 16.3 The Committee discussed the role of curriculum guidance prepared by professional bodies in the HPC approvals and monitoring process. The Committee noted that the Policy and Standards Department workplan, due to be considered by the Council on 27 March 2008, proposed initial work considering this area.
- 16.4 The Committee noted that the workplan included preparing a model for approval of professional body programmes. The Committee noted that the work might also apply to programmes for practitioner psychologists and for any post-registration qualifications work that could be undertaken in the future.
- 16.5 The Committee agreed the contents of the workplan.

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**Action: AC (ongoing to March 2009)**

**Item 17.08/17 Historical approval of programmes leading to entitlements under Prescription Only Medicines (Human Use) Order 1997**

- 17.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 17.2 The Committee noted that, at the meeting on 12 June 2007, it had agreed that 13 stand-alone prescription only medicines (POM) programmes which had been approved by the Chiropodists board of the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine (CPSM) should be approved by the HPC. The Committee had also agreed at that meeting that there was insufficient evidence to approve any standalone local analgesia programmes or any standalone POM programmes delivered at postgraduate level.
- 17.3 The Committee noted that the Executive had contacted the Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists for details of programmes which might have been previously approved by the Society on behalf of the CPSM. No additional information had come to light.
- 17.3 The Committee agreed that there was insufficient evidence to approve any standalone local analgesia programmes or any standalone POM programmes delivered at postgraduate level.

**Item 18.08/18 Pre-registration education and training for paramedics**

- 18.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 18.2 The Committee noted that, on 12 June 2007, it had agreed that all NHS ambulance trusts offering Institute of Health Care Development (IHCD) approved awards should be visited by the HPC over the next 12 months, unless the trusts confirmed that the programme would cease to enrol students.
- 18.3 The Committee noted that the Executive had contacted all ambulance trusts and 14 trusts had confirmed that an approvals visit would be required, as they would continue to enrol students after 1 September 2008. Dates for approval visits had been arranged for 13 programmes but the Executive had not yet received a response from West Midlands Ambulance Trust, despite many reminders. South Central Ambulance Trust had confirmed that the last date of enrolment for its IHCD award was 11 February 2008.

- 18.4 The Committee noted that the paper proposed that the list of approved programmes on the HPC website currently did not identify ambulance trusts as the education provider, and therefore could not indicate when a trust had stopped running the programme.
- 18.5 The Committee agreed that:
- the HPC's records, including the list of approved programmes on the website, should be amended to show the ambulance trust as the education provider and the IHCD as the validating body;
  - the Education – Approvals and Monitoring Department should contact West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust to clarify that, if dates for an approval visit were not agreed within two weeks, then the withdrawal of approval process would be commenced;
  - South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust did not require a visit and that once the last cohort of students completed the IHCD paramedic award, the withdrawal of approval process could be instigated.

**Action: TS-S (ongoing)**

- 18.6 The Committee noted that some members had concerns that the IHCD paramedic award continued to operate and that the proposed end date for the award had been delayed. The Committee noted that it could not pre-judge the outcome of the approvals visits which were currently being undertaken and that the HPC could only refuse to approve a programme if it did not meet the standards of education and training.
- 18.7 In accordance with its standing orders, the Committee agreed to continue with the meeting as the duration had exceeded three hours.

**Item 19.08/19 Approval of overseas qualifications**

- 19.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 19.2 The Committee noted that the Executive had received some correspondence from education providers asking if it would be possible for the HPC to approve programmes delivered outside the UK, which in terms of curriculum and learning outcomes could be considered to be the same as an HPC approved programmes. Some of these requests referred to franchise arrangements (where a programme was validated and delivered

by a UK education provider in the UK and an equivalent programme delivered, supported and assessed through an arrangement with an overseas partner) whilst some referred to collaborative arrangements (where the UK education provider acted as the awarding/validating body and the programme was delivered, supported and assessed through an assessment with an overseas partner. In these cases, there was no equivalent programme delivered in the UK).

- 19.3 The Committee noted that the Executive had sought legal advice from HPC's solicitor on the extent to which the power in article 15(6) of the Health Professions Order 2001 enabled HPC to approve education programmes which were provided outside of the UK. The legal advice was that article 15(6) could only be used to approve all or part of a programme which was run by an approved UK institution. Consequently, its application was limited to situations where a UK education provider was delivering all or part of an approved programme outside of the UK (for example, where practice placements were provided in the Republic of Ireland) and could not be used to approve programmes provided by a non-UK provider.
- 19.4 The Committee agreed that, under the Health Professions Order 2001, it was not permitted to approve overseas programmes or franchised programmes of any nature for the purposes of registration with the HPC.

**Item 20.08/20 University Campus Suffolk – BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography and BSc (Hons) Oncology and Radiotherapy Technology programmes**

- 20.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 20.2 The Committee noted that an approvals visit had been held to the above programmes on 14-15 June 2006. This had been due to a major change and had been the first time the programme had been assessed against the HPC's standards of education and training. The documentation for the visit reflected both full time and part time modes of study and the visitors' reports had therefore referred to both modes. Both modes of study had been approved by the Approvals Panel on 3 August 2006.
- 20.3 The Committee noted that, as part of the annual monitoring process for 2007-8, the education provider had confirmed that it had never provided part-time routes for both programmes. The education provider had asked that the Committee should withdraw approval from the part-time routes of both programmes.

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- 20.4 The Committee agreed to withdraw approval from the following programmes:
- the part-time route for BSc (Hons) Diagnostic Radiography at University Campus Suffolk;
  - the part-time route for BSc (Hons) Oncology and Radiotherapy Technology at University Campus Suffolk.

**Action: AC (by 10 June 2008)**

### **Item 21.08/21 Governance of Education Panels**

- 21.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive.
- 21.2 The Committee noted that, at the request of the Executive, HPC's solicitor had observed the Education and Training Panel on 14 November 2007, to review how the panels were operating after their first year of work. Mr Bracken had advised that it was not appropriate for panels to follow a committee model of operation and that they should instead follow a tribunal model, with a limited, itemised list of matters to be considered. In addition, legal advice was that there should be a record of decisions, rather than minutes of the Panels; and, to ensure that Panels operated smoothly, the Chair of each Panel should be appointed in advance of the meeting.
- 21.3 The Committee agreed:
- (1) to adopt the tribunal model of governance for Education and Training Panels, with effect from the Panel meeting on 29 May 2008;
  - (2) that records of decisions made, rather than minutes, should be used for Education and Training Panels;
  - (3) that Panels should not debate broader issues which were properly within the remit of the Education and Training Committee, including themes or issues arising from the specific business before the Panel. If such themes or issues did arise, members should bring them to the attention of the Secretariat as items for potential inclusion on a future agenda of the Education and Training Committee;
  - (4) that, in order to ensure that Panels operated smoothly, the Chair of each Panel should be appointed in advance;
  - (5) that a small group of members should be appointed and trained as Panel chairmen.

**Action: CB (ongoing to 29 May 2008)**

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The Committee noted the following papers:

**Item 22.08/22 Education provider feedback report**

**Item 23.08/23 Continuing Professional Development progress review**

**Item 24.08/24 Committee membership**

**Item 25.08/25 Reports from Education and Training Committee representatives at external meetings**

**Item 26.08/26 Minutes of the review of the Standards of Education and Training Professional Liaison Group held on 22 November 2007**

26.1 The Committee noted that the Executive was currently seeking legal advice on the wording of proposed amendments to the standards of education and training. It was intended that the revised standards would be presented to the Committee for discussion at the meeting on 10 June 2008.

26.2 The Chairman thanked Professor Lloyd (chairman of the Group) and the other members of the Group for their work.

**Item 27.08/27 Minutes of the review of the Standards of Education and Training Professional Liaison Group held on 15 January 2008**

**Item 28.08/28 Minutes of the review of the Standards of Education and Training Professional Liaison Group held on 18 February 2008**

**Item 29.08/29 Minutes of the Continuing Fitness to Practise Professional Liaison Group held on 13 November 2007**

**Item 30.08/30 Minutes of the Continuing Fitness to Practise Professional Liaison Group held on 15 January 2008**

30.1 The Committee noted that the statistics quoted in paragraph 3.5 of the minutes should refer to 23 complaints per 1000 registrants at the General Medical Council, rather than the NHS.

**Item 31.08/31 Minutes of the Education and Training Panel held on 4 December 2007**

**Item 32.08/32 Minutes of the Education and Training Panel held on 4 February 2008**

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**Item 33.08/33 Generic standards of proficiency: Issues**

- 33.1 The Committee received a paper for information from the Executive, explaining that a paper about the possible review of the generic standards of proficiency would be brought to the meeting on 10 June 2008. The paper would take account of comments on the generic standards made during the consultation on the draft standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists.

**Item 34.08/34 Health and character declarations**

- 34.1 The Committee received a paper for information from the Executive, giving statistics on health and character declarations made on application for admission, readmission and renewal.

**Item 35.08/35 Any other business**

- 35.1 There was no other business.

**Item 36.08/36 Date and time of next meeting**

- 36.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.30 am on Thursday 10 June 2008.
- 36.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 10.30 am on:
  - Thursday 25 September 2008
  - Tuesday 2 December 2008
  - Thursday 26 March 2009
  - Thursday 11 June 2009

**Chairman**

**Date**