

Health Professions Council — 29 May 2008

Departmental workplans

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The set of HPC's ten workplans for 2008 – 2009 is attached for reference.

Decision

The Council is requested to note the document. No decision is required.

Background information

None

Resource implications

none

Financial implications

none

Appendices

Individual work plans

Date of paper

19 May 2008

Health Professions Council

2008 – 2009

Work Plans

Approvals and Monitoring Department	Enclosure 1
Communications Department	Enclosure 2
Finance and Facilities Management Department	Enclosure 3
Fitness to Practise Department	Enclosure 4
Human Resources Department	Enclosure 5
Information Technology Department	Enclosure 6
Policy and Standards Department	Enclosure 7
Projects	Enclosure 8
Registration Department	Enclosure 9
Secretariat Department	Enclosure 10

Approvals & Monitoring Department 2008 – 2009 draft work plan

Abigail Creighton, Head of Education

Contents

Introduction.....	2
The Approvals and Monitoring Department.....	2
This document	2
Priorities 2008-2009	2
Resources.....	3
Risk management	4
Main operational processes.....	5
1 Approval process	5
2 Annual monitoring process.....	5
3 Major change process	5
Supporting activities	6
1 Publications.....	6
2 Website	6
3 Presentations	6
4 Partner visitor recruitment, selection and training	7
5 Information systems (database and electronic records).....	7
6 Committee Work	7
7 Liaison with stakeholders	7
8 Complaints about an approved programme	8
Projects 2008- 2009	9
1) List of approved programmes	9
2) LISA programme list	9
3) Withdrawing approval	10
4) Conditions catalogue	10
5) Professional body programmes.....	11
6) Result of current consultation on the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners.....	11
7) Result of current consultation on the optional standards of proficiency for chiropodist/podiatrists	11
8) Recording student cohort numbers (database).....	12

9)	Recording of contact details from education providers (database) ..	12
10)	Review of the annual monitoring process	12
11)	Allocation of visitors to operational activities.....	13
12)	Operational protocol for 'cancelling/postponing an approval visit'	14
13)	Analysis of multi-professional approval visits.....	14
14)	Communication plan for education providers.....	14
15)	Home country specialist educational knowledge	14
16)	Additional guidance for visitors on when to make the recommendation to Education and Training Committee to not approve or withdraw approval from a programme.....	15
17)	Position statement on age discrimination	15
18)	Analysis of current curriculum guidance and future revisions	15
	2009-2010	16
	Appendixes.....	17

Introduction

The Approvals and Monitoring Department

The Approvals and Monitoring Department sits within the Operations Directorate of the Health Professions Council.

The Approvals and Monitoring Department's main responsibilities are:

- assisting the Council in approving programmes which health professionals must complete before they can register with us;
- assisting the Council in monitoring programmes which health professionals must complete before they can register with us;
- co-ordinating approval visits;
- co-ordinating annual monitoring assessment days;
- co-ordinating the consideration of annual monitoring submissions, by correspondence;
- co-ordinating the consideration of major change submissions, by correspondence;
- publishing visitors' reports from approval visits;
- publishing the register of approved programme;
- assisting in the selection and training of Partner visitors; and
- liaising with education providers and education stakeholders.

This document

This document aims to set out the work priorities for the financial year April 2008 – March 2009, and provide a basis against which the work of the Approvals and Monitoring Department can be planned and measured.

This work plan attempts to show how the standard operational work and planned projects have been scheduled to ensure successful completion, given the resources and time restraints. The Approvals and Monitoring Department is both proactive and reactive in its work. As the timescales related to the regulation of practitioner psychologists have not been finalised at this stage, we will need to revisit and update this work plan to take these timescales into account once they are finalised. **The Department will therefore need to be flexible in the delivery of its work plan in order to respond accordingly. This document will be kept under review.**

Priorities 2008-2009

The main priority for the Department is the day-to-day operation of the approval and monitoring processes. For this year, this includes the preparation and expected transfer of practitioner psychologists programmes onto our register of approved programmes and their incorporation into our approval and monitoring processes. A smaller, but still significant, part of the Department's work covers the planned projects. These planned projects are

enhancement led projects at both operational process and a more strategic/policy level. In addition, the Department will continue to input into relevant Policy and Standards led work in 2008-2009, specifically the ongoing review of the standards of education and training and the discussion around post-registration qualifications and entitlements.

Resources

This work plan is based on the assumption of a team of 10 Approvals and Monitoring employees for the majority of the year and a budget of approximately £680,000. The work plan also assumes that the HPC is able to manage a maximum of 15 approval visits per month and monitoring relating to approximately 450 approved programmes at any one time. The underlying assumption is that the HPC approves pre-registration programmes in thirteen professions and post-registration entitlement programmes in three areas.

The budget of approximately £680,000 is based on an estimated 70 approval visit, 5 annual monitoring assessment days (with each considering a maximum of 40 submissions) and 80 major changes submissions. These predicted figures are based partly on the operational levels in the 2007-2008 financial year and partly on the recognition that there is emerging pattern of less approval visits and more monitoring submissions. This is because we are currently working with a large number of approved programmes which are taking advantage of our open ended system of approval and using the documentary monitoring processes, instead of routine cyclical visits, to inform us of changes to their programmes. On top of this, our risk based approach to approval and monitoring continues to make it difficult to forecast precise numbers of visits and monitoring submissions in advance. The mismatch of the financial year and the academic year also makes it complicated to plan ahead.

There are currently ten employees in the Approvals and Monitoring Department: one Head of Education, two Education Managers, five Education Officers, two Education Administrators and one Team Administrator. The 2008-2009 budget includes three new positions, coming into effective in the last quarter of the 2008-2009 year. These new positions are in preparation for the anticipated regulation of practitioner psychologists. It is likely that the total number of approved programmes will increase by 20-25%, with a concentrated number of visits in the first few years of regulation.

Recruiting and retaining employees, in order to work effectively and proactively, continues to be the biggest challenge for the Department and is likely to remain a risk for this financial year. This is captured in the HPC's risk register.

During the 2008-2009 financial year, the Approvals and Monitoring Department recruited to seven posts (four Education Officers positions and three administrator positions). This included one administrators' position

which was vacant as a result of an internal promotion to the Education Officer role. On two separate occasions, we were unsuccessful at appointment to the Education Officer role following the recruitment and selection process and consequently the Department was operating with at least one vacant post at all times throughout the 2007-2008 financial year. The difficulty to successfully recruit to the Education Officer position is mainly due to the combination of relevant experience and willingness to travel regularly needed for this role.

In March 2008, the Department reorganised their structure. The reorganisation changed the title of Education Manager to Head of Education and created two new Education Manger positions. These two new positions now line manage and co-ordinate the workload of two smaller teams. The smaller teams include Education Officers and Education Administrators and work on a mixture of operational and project work. The operational work is divided up on a regional basis and the project work is divided up on the team's focus area (approval or monitoring). We are hopeful that the creation of these new positions will create career opportunities and progression which will help employee retention in the long term. In the short term, a lot of day-to-day activity and energy will focus on implementing and fine-tuning the new departmental organisational structure.

Risk management

The Approvals and Monitoring Department manages those organisation risks that are primarily concerned with:

- Employees within the Approvals and Monitoring Department (issues such as turnover, skills development and managing performance); and
- Education providers (issues such as compliance with our processes, communication and support).

Activities outlined in this work plan also help mitigate organisation risks managed by other departments. Key areas into project management and the recruitment, training and ongoing support of both employees and partners.

Please see the appendix three for more details and links between the HPC's risk register and this work plan.

Main operational processes

There are three main processes which generate the bulk of the Department's work and are the top priorities. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

1 Approval process

The approval of pre-registration programmes will continue to be the crux of the Department's work. In 2008-2009, we are planning to undertake approximately 70 visits. We are expecting visits to paramedic science and biomedical science programmes to remain relatively high and visits to supplementary prescribing programmes to decrease considerably. We anticipate more visits to programmes as a result of major changes and more multi-professional visits. It is likely that the peak months of activity will continue to be February – June as the majority of visits piggyback education providers' internal events which take place at this time.

2 Annual monitoring process

The annual monitoring process will complete its third cycle and begin its fourth cycle in the 2008-2009 financial year. As a process it is now fully embedded and operating in a pro-active, cost effective and efficient manner. In 2008-2009, we expect to put approximately 400 approved programmes through this process. We plan to hold five annual monitoring assessment days to consider the majority of submissions. A smaller number of submissions will be considered by correspondence to ensure a timely turnaround. We anticipate that the busiest months will continue to be February – June as this is when most education providers' internal monitoring processes are complete, so they are ready to submit documentation to us.

3 Major change process

The major change process will be fully implemented during the 2008-2009 financial year. This will be the first year of operation of this revised process. We anticipate a few teething problems, but generally we are confident that the revised process and guidance will be better understood by education providers and visitors and lead to quicker and more appropriate decisions. We expect to put approximately 80 submissions through the major change process. Although we expect to provide advice and recommend that considerably more requests are directed straight into either the approval process or the annual monitoring process.

In 2007-2008, the Department created a new administrative process to consider and process changes to education providers' names and changes to their validating/awarding bodies. This new process ensures that the register of approved programmes remains up-to-date and accurate. We envisage that this administrative process will continue to complement the major change process in 2008-2009. We expect to consider approximately five changes to education providers' names and/or validating/awarding bodies this year.

Supporting activities

There are eight activities which support the main approval and monitoring processes. These activities aim to raise awareness of our processes amongst key education stakeholders and help promote an open, transparent and collaborative approach to approval and monitoring.

Whilst these activities provide a solid and desirable foundation onto which to operate our main processes, at certain times of the year they do not take priority and some activities, may, if resources are stretched need to be revisited in their totality. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

1 Publications

In 2007-2008, three publications were designed and produced for the first time, namely the approvals and monitoring annual report 2005-2006, the approvals and monitoring annual report 2006-2007 and the major change process supplementary information. These added to the existing suite of publications which include the approval process supplementary information, the annual monitoring process supplementary information, the standards of education and training and the standards of education and training guidance. The Department is responsible for updating some of these publications in 2008-2009. Minor changes are proposed to the approval process supplementary information and the annual monitoring process supplementary information to update the content and bring them in line with the new visual identity. It is likely that major revisions will be made to the standards of education and training and the standards of education and training guidance following the expected regulation of the practitioner psychologists and the conclusion of the current review of these standards. The Department will also publish their third annual report (covering the 2007-2008 academic year) in this financial year.

2 Website

The Department is responsible for the online register of approved programmes as well as the information online about our approval and monitoring processes. In 2008-2009, the Department will continue to work with the Communications Department to update the register of approved programmes, so it is more accessible and informative to prospective students and registrants. We will also complete the recent work we have started on updating the information available for education providers, so there is a comprehensive set of online resources. Once this current overhaul is complete, it is likely that future changes to the website will be minimal and less resource intensive.

3 Presentations

In 2007-2008, the Department ran the second series of presentations to education providers across the UK. In 2008-2009, we plan to run six presentations, based on a similar format to last two years but taking on board feedback from attendees and presenters. The Department is keen to include a more interactive element and allow education providers and key stakeholders the opportunity to raise questions and discuss their experiences

of our processes. The Department envisage the presentations in 2008-2009 having a dual purpose - information giving and updating combined with the eliciting of feedback.

4 Partner visitor recruitment, selection and training

In 2008-2009, the Department will work with the Partners Department to ensure that visitor numbers are maintained and appropriate for the planned operational processes. This will include the selection, recruitment and training of new visitors to fill identified gaps, and the extension of contracts of approximately 100 visitors. It is anticipated that we will need to recruit both new visitors from particular professions and visitors with clinical experience (dietitians and occupational therapists in particular) to readdress the current balance and ensure a broad pool of visitors with mixed experience. Training for new visitors will include a number of visitors recently recruited from professions which had previously been underrepresented (e.g. dramatherapists and prosthetists/orthotists). There will also be refresher training for appropriately 50% of visitors in 2008-2009. This will include refresher training on the Health Professions Order, equality and diversity and operational processes. The Department would also like to develop a routine and regular method of communicating with visitors to keep them up-to-date with approval and monitoring specific developments.

5 Information systems (database and electronic records)

In 2008-2009, the Department will work with the IT Department to both enhance and revise the bespoke approval and monitoring database. The enhancement and revisions are links to two projects outlined in the later section of this work plan. In early 2008-2009, it is expected that an upgraded financial system will come into operation. The Department will work with the Finance Department to ensure a smooth transition and also take the opportunity to review their administrative and financial processes to assist efficient ordering and payment of visitors, employees and suppliers.

6 Committee Work

In 2008-2009, the Department will continue to work with a number of committees: the Education and Training Committee, the Finance and Resources Committee and the Education and Training Panels. In 2007-2008, the Department along with Panel members and members from the Secretariat reviewed the operation of the Education and Training Panels. In 2008-2009, we will work with the Secretariat Department to implement the revised operating and recording procedures for the Education and Training Panels. We will continue to monitor the revised Education and Training Panels to ensure that decisions on programme approval and monitoring continue to be made in a timely, robust and cost effective manner.

7 Liaison with stakeholders

In 2008-2009, the Department will continue to work with stakeholders (e.g. general public, professional bodies, and educational bodies) in the broad area of education. In 2007-2008, a questionnaire was sent to each approved education provider asking for their feedback on our operational processes and

supporting activities. An analysis and report was produced and suggestions for improvement and enhancement have contributed towards some of the projects identified in this work plan. Whilst the majority of work in this area will remain to be reactive, the Department intend to circulate the questionnaire and evaluate findings on an annual basis.

8 Complaints about an approved programme

In 2007-2008, the Department worked with the Policy and Standards Department to produce a robust procedure which allows the HPC to receive and consider complaints about an approved programme. A fair and accessible procedure was approved by the Education and Training Committee and guidance for complainants will be published in the early part of 2008-2009. In 2008-2009, the Department will implement the new procedure. This will include both a period of preparation (where Department employees, visitors and committee members will be trained on the new procedure) and then a period of operation (where complaints will be received and overseen in line with the new procedure). We expect to receive a maximum of five complaints in 2008-2009.

Projects 2008- 2009

There are eighteen planned projects for the 2008-2009 financial year. All of these projects are enhancement focused; some aim to improve work at the operational level and some intend to develop areas at a more strategic/policy level. Although, the Department is primarily concerned with the operationalisation of the approval and monitoring processes, it is undertaking a number of projects beyond this scope to maximise the effectiveness of the HPC work on wider educational and registration issues. Some of the projects have been carried over from the 2007-2008 year, so are already midway through and just need to be completed in 2008-2009, rather than initiated from the start. A number of these projects will involve collaboration with the Policy and Standards, Registrations and Communications Departments.

Whilst it is important that these projects are completed, there is less of an urgency to complete them in a short time frame. Consequently, all of these projects have been allocated a long lead time and scheduled for implementation in the periods of 2008-2009, where there is less activity in the main operational areas. This hopes to make best use of the resources available in the Department , both in terms of personnel and time. **If resources become stretched at any point, then we will need to revisit the viability of running all of these projects to the proposed timescales.**

The following paragraphs summarise these planned projects.

1) List of approved programmes

This project was started in 2007-2008. The first phase, which involved the production of a definite list of approved programmes, is now complete and it is the second phase which the Department intend to complete in 2008-2009.

In conjunction with the Communications Department , we aim to update the online list of approved programmes, so that it:

- includes information about whether the approval is current or historic;
- includes a search function to allow users to search for an approved programme given their individual requirements (e.g. location, mode of study);
- includes links to education providers websites to increase user functionality; and
- can separate out post-registration entitlements programmes from pre-registration programmes.

2) LISA programme list

This project was delayed in 2007-2008, due to its incorporation into and therefore reliance on the completion of a major project (the 'LISA user access rights' project). The LISA user access rights project is scheduled to complete in late April 2008, after which the Department will be able to resume this specific project.

The Approvals and Monitoring Department is currently responsible for maintaining information about approved programmes in two different areas: the bespoke approvals and monitoring database and the online register. The Registrations Department is currently responsible for maintaining information about approved programmes in a third area; LISA (the bespoke registrations database). Until a time whereby an IT solution can be found to link all three systems, the Approvals and Monitoring Department will take over responsibility for the information in LISA. This will hopefully help ensure information is consistent and accurate and entered into LISA in a timely manner. In 2008-2009, there will firstly need to be a period of training for employees in the Approvals and Monitoring Department, followed by periods of data verification and assimilation, before incorporating the updating of future information in LISA into our main operational processes.

3) **Withdrawing approval**

This project was started in 2007-2008. The first phase (the agreement by the Education and Training Committee of the process to follow) is now complete and it is the second phase which the Department intend to complete in 2008-2009.

The Council need to withdraw approval from a number of programmes which are either no longer running or have been superseded by new programmes to ensure that all new graduates meet the standards of proficiency. The Health Professions Order allows the register of approved programmes to include a part which lists programmes which are no longer approved, together with a record of the periods in respect of which they were approved. The Approvals and Monitoring Department plan to contact all education providers to discuss withdrawing approval from programmes which are either no longer running or have been superseded by new programmes. We will then refer the outcomes to the Education and Training Committee their consideration. The Department also intend to produce a new protocol (for internal use within the Department) to ensure that withdrawal of approval will be routinely dealt with in the future when current programmes are closed and/or superseded.

4) **Conditions catalogue**

This project was started in 2007-2008. The initial phase is now complete (the setting up the IT solution) and it is the second phase which the Department intend to complete in 2008-2009.

The current approval and monitoring database does not have the capacity to record the number and type of conditions, recommendations and commendations a programme may receive through the approval process. To allow a more detailed analysis of trends in future annual reports, the Department has devised an IT solution to allow them to record and report on this type of information. The Department now need to complete a large data entry exercise to allow them to enter data from previous years to produce a complete catalogue. The Department also intend to incorporate the data entry of future visits into the current approval process so that the catalogue will be routinely and regularly updated.

5) Professional body programmes

This project was started in 2007-2008. The initial phase is now complete (the research stage) and it is the second phase which the Department intend to complete in 2008-2009.

The Council need to visit the two programmes which the biomedical science and clinical science professional bodies run, to ensure that all students who complete them meet our standards of proficiency and that the programmes themselves meet the standards of education and training. These programmes have never been visited by the HPC due to the atypical nature of their delivery and resourcing levels. The Approvals and Monitoring Department intend to recommend a model for approval, based on the standard approval process to the Education and Training Committee. It is likely that adaptations may need to be made to the standard documentation, agenda and visitor panel. The Department aim to visit these programmes during the 2008-2009 academic year.

6) Result of current consultation on the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners

The Policy and Standards Department is currently overseeing the consultation on the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners. It is assumed that results of this consultation will be considered by Council in early 2008-2009, with the publication of appropriately revised standards in mid 2008-2009.

The Approvals and Monitoring Department intend to assess the impact of changes to these standards on their processes and determine how education providers should inform the HPC that their approved programmes continue to meet these standards. The Department also need to implement changes at the operational level, including;

- updating relevant forms/reports;
- briefing education officers;
- briefing visitors;
- updating publications; and
- updating website.

7) Result of current consultation on the optional standards of proficiency for chiropodist/podiatrists

The Policy and Standards Department is currently overseeing the consultation on the optional standards of proficiency for chiropodist/podiatrists. It is assumed that results of this consultation will be considered by Council in mid 2008-2009, with the publication of appropriately revised standards in late 2008-2009.

The Approvals and Monitoring Department intend to assess the impact of changes to these standards on their processes and determine how education providers should inform the HPC that their approved programmes continue to meet these standards. The Department also need to implement changes at the operational level, including;

- updating relevant forms/reports;
- briefing education officers;
- briefing visitors;
- updating publications; and
- updating website.

8) Recording student cohort numbers (database)

The Department intend to work with the IT Department to amend the bespoke approval and monitoring database, so that it can hold information at the programme level about student cohort numbers. The HPC do not currently capture the number of students attending each approved programme. This information is needed to allow the Department to more accurately consider major changes which affect resources. It is also needed by the Finance Department and the Policy and Standards Department to improve the accuracy of figures in both the five year plan and the registrant forecast. The Department intend to develop the database (an additional field at the programme level) to capture student cohort data; collect the data from education providers and then complete a large data entry exercise to update the data for all approved programmes.

9) Recording of contact details from education providers (database)

The Department intend to work with the IT Department to redesign the bespoke approval and monitoring database, so that the contact details of education providers can be recorded and used in a different format. In autumn 2007, the Department carried out a feedback survey with all education providers (approximately 300 contacts). Across all areas, the feedback was very positive. The biggest and most consistent piece of negative feedback was about our communication with education providers. 20% of respondents said that the communication was sent to the wrong or inappropriate person. This was not due to data entry inaccuracies, but due to education providers having different positions and structures in place and requesting different lines of communication with us. The database currently has limited flexibility to allow different positions or structures to receive communication from us; as a result we send communications (including publications) to people who do not require it, or who we have been asked not to send information to, creating dissatisfaction and sometimes confusion in education providers. We hope that a redesigned database will allow us to hold different contact details and reduce the quantity and improve the quality of our communication with education providers. The current contact details and methods are also often used by the Policy and Standards Department (consultations, PLGs, working groups etc) and the Registrations Department (pass list), so the updated database will benefit the wider organisation.

10) Review of the annual monitoring process

The Department intend to carefully review the annual monitoring process during 2008-2009, based on the experiences of running it for three years. The review will have two focuses. The first focus will be on the operational process and the second on the outcome of the process to date.

At this stage, it is anticipated that there will only be minor changes to the operational process and that most of these will be to the day-to-day operationalisation of the process or to publications (annual monitoring supplementary information and annual monitoring visitors' report) to update the content and style.

This part of the review will include many aspects, particularly the following:

- review of feedback from visitors, education providers and committee members;
- analysis of the number and trends of past assessment days and submissions considered by correspondence;
- analysis of the cost and resources needed for the process (past and future);
- review of the original key decisions document;
- review of the overlap with the approval and major change process; and
- review of the role of our standards of education and training and standards of proficiency in the process.

The second part of the review will focus on the decisions made by visitors to help assess the overall effectiveness of the annual monitoring process as part of our risk based and light touch approach to regulation. We intend to build up a chronological history of each approved programme, from their initial approval or the commencement of HPC (which ever is most recent) establishing when the programme was last visited; when they last made a major change and the extent and frequency of minor changes. We will use this to assess how the annual monitoring process is recognising and dealing with longer term or more gradual pressures to a programme's ability to continue to meet our standards of education and training. We hope that this review will both assure the Education and Training Committee that the annual monitoring process is light touch, yet still rigorous and bring any areas of concern to their attention.

11) Allocation of visitors to operational activities

The Department intend to review the current practice and formulise the system used to allocate visitors to all of the operational activities (e.g. approval visits, annual monitoring assessment days, annual monitoring submissions by correspondence and major change submissions by correspondence). Until a time whereby an IT solution can be found to allow the Department database to assist in the allocation of visitors to activities, work needs to be carried out to ensure that the allocation of visitors takes into account their background (education or practitioner), their experience (e.g. induction visit, first annual monitoring assessment); their usage (past, current and scheduled) and their connections (i.e. conflicts of interest) to ensure that visitors are allocated fairly, consistently and evenly to our operational activities. Improvements need to be made to how the recruitment and selection process is recorded and authorised, so it can be audited against Committee schemes of delegation. The project will also include the creation of protocol (for internal use within the Department) which carefully details the steps which need to be taken when a visitor is unable to complete an

operational activity (e.g. attend a visit or annual monitoring assessment day) once they have been allocated, both in terms of confirming them removal and finding a replacement.

12) Operational protocol for ‘cancelling/postponing an approval visit’

The Department intend to produce a protocol (for internal use within the Department) which carefully details the steps which need to be taken when an education provider cancels or postpones an approval visit. In the 2006-2007 academic year, 11% of visits were cancelled or postponed and even though this dropped significantly from the previous academic year (25%), there is still an adequate amount of cancellations/postponements each year to justify the creation of a new protocol. The protocol will make sure that all of our information systems (database, website, calendar, reports) and filing systems are updated efficiently, that all stakeholders (employees, visitors) are kept up-to-date and that costs are not unnecessary occurred (travel, accommodation).

13) Analysis of multi-professional approval visits

The Department intend to carefully review their experience of multi-professional approval visits during 2008-2009, based on the experiences of organising, attending and concluding them in the last two academic years. At this stage, it is anticipated that feedback will be collected from education providers, visitors, professional bodies, regulatory bodies, committee members and employees. The feedback will then be analysed and suggestions for enhancements or amendments to our operational approval process discussed, agreed and implemented.

14) Communication plan for education providers

In 2007-2008, the Department recognised that education providers were receiving, at times, great amounts of correspondence from the HPC. This was not just from the Approvals and Monitoring Department (about operational processes, supporting activities and project updates) but also from the Policy and Standards Department (e.g. consultation documents, invites to working groups; questionnaires from Professional Liaison Groups) and the Registrations Department (e.g. pass list letters). After a particular concentrated period of communication, the Department noticed both confusion (over which correspondence required a response and which was just for information) and apathy (e.g. late or non responses). Consequently, the Department wish to review the amount, frequency and method of communication to education providers. In 2008-2009, the Department intend to produce an annual communication plan, with the aim of reducing the overall number of separate mailings to education providers and staggering them throughout the year. We hop to integrate smaller and less urgent mailings into a routine newsletter and work with other departments to incorporate their correspondence into this overall calendar.

15) Home country specialist educational knowledge

In 2008-2009, the Department intend to research the educational, legal and political frameworks within the four home countries, so employees and visitors

are better prepared when assessing a programme within a home country which they are less familiar with. This will include areas such as funding/commissioning, discrimination legislation and quality assurance frameworks and mechanisms. The research will feed into visitor and employee training and publications (specifically the revised standards of education and training guidance).

16) Additional guidance for visitors on when to make the recommendation to Education and Training Committee to not approve or withdraw approval from a programme.

In 2007-2008, the Education and Training Committee raised the idea of analysing the past three academic years worth of approval visits and decisions to establish whether there are any clear patterns which lead to recommendations of non-approval. They also observed the number of programmes consistently being recommended for approval with a substantial number of conditions and questioned both the robustness of a documentary process to consider these conditions, and whether the number of conditions effectively created a different programme by the end of the approval process. On 2008-2009, the Department will review the outcomes from visits over the last three years to determine if there are any consistent trends and/or underlying concerns, with the intention of producing further guidance for visitors on when to not approve, as opposed to when to approve, subject to a high number of conditions.

17) Position statement on age discrimination

In 2007-2008, the Council agreed their equality and diversity scheme which included a number of action points. One of the Approval and Monitoring Department's action point involved working with the Policy and Standards Department to produce a position statement in light of recent age discrimination legislation. The Department intend to research and produce a statement which education providers can use to better understand how the recent legislation and our standards of education and training and standards of proficiency should shape their entry requirements onto approved programmes.

18) Analysis of current curriculum guidance and future revisions

In 2008-2009, the Department will research and collate the current curriculum guidance available to each profession and identify any proposed revisions to it. In 2007-2008, the Department became aware of a number of changes to specific curriculum guidance documents and felt that, in light of standard of education and training 4.2, it would be prudent for any uniform, across profession changes to be reported to the Education and Training Committee, so they decide how to address these changes to approved programmes. The Approval and Monitoring Department intend to work with the Policy and Standards Department on this project, as there is an overlap with their work on the review of the standards of education and training and the publication in curriculum guidance on our website.

2009-2010

It is likely that 2009-2010 will be a year where the Department will have to balance their commitment to operating and fine-tuning our main operational processes for existing programmes alongside the regulation of new professions and possibly the approval of new post-registration programmes.

It is likely that the operational activities and supporting activities in 2009-2010 will primarily focus on the regulation of practitioner psychologists. Due to the build in prior notice periods of the approval and monitoring processes and the academic year calendar, it is likely that the peak of approval visits and monitoring submissions for practitioner psychologists' programmes will not be felt until six - twelve months after the opening of the register. For this reason, we currently anticipate that 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 will experience peak operational activities in response to the regulation of practitioner psychologists.

We envisage that 2009-2010 will be a year of growth as we respond to the implications of other new professions onto the register and the possible introduction of revalidation and the approval of post-registration qualifications. We intend to continue to adopt a proactive approach in terms of communicating with new education providers and stakeholders, prioritising presentations and the distribution of publications so the requirements of our approval and monitoring processes are clear and accessible from the outset.

At this stage, it is likely that project work in 2009-2010 will focus on the following possible areas; (i) developing a new information system which will increase capacity, have greater automation of administrative functions and a more sophisticated reporting function; (ii) evaluating the current Department reorganisation and preparing for future growth and (iii) communicating with and preparing education providers for the implementation of the revised standards of education and training, which are due to come into effect in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Appendixes

Appendix one provides detailed information on the activities of each operation, activity and project.

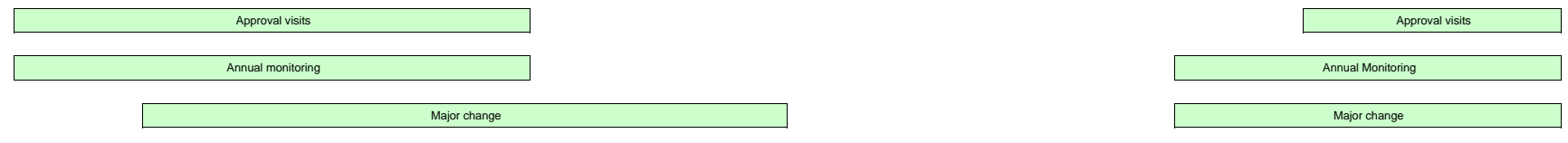
Appendix two shows the peak activities during 2008-2009 in a calendar format.

Appendix three provides information on the risks managed by the Education – Approvals and Monitoring Department.

Appendix 1

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
Main Operational Processes													
Approval	5 visits Post & Pre visit work	9 visits Post & Pre visit work	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning Review process	0 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning Review process	6 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work	10 visits Post & Pre visit work	10 visits Post & Pre visit work	
Annual monitoring	30 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	5 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	10 submissions Assessments by correspondence Post assessment day work	5 submissions Assessments by correspondence Post assessment day work	0 submissions Forward planning Review process	0 submissions Forward planning Review process	5 submissions Forward planning	20 submissions Pre assessment day work	40 submissions Pre assessment day work Assessments by correspondence	50 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	65 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	50 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	
Major change	3 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	5 submissions Post & pre assessment work	5 submissions Post & pre assessment work	2 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	8 submissions Post & pre assessment work	
Supporting activities													
Publications													
Approval supplementary information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Reprint	Distribution to stakeholders	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	
Annual monitoring Supplementary Information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Reprint	Distribution to stakeholders	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	
Major change supplementary information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	
SETs	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft (SET 1)	Review & redraft (SET 1)	Reprint	Distribution to stakeholders	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	
SETs guidance	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Review & redraft	Reprint	Distribution to stakeholders	
Annual report	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Preparation for report (statistics)	Preparation for report (statistics)	Draft report	Draft report	Final report	Distribution to stakeholders	No planned activity	No planned activity	
Website	Refresh design	Refresh design	Refresh design	Refresh design	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	
Presentations	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Planning	Planning	Planning	Presentations	Presentations	Presentations	Review	No planned activity	No planned activity	
Visitor recruitment/training	Advertise/recruit/select vacant positions	Advertise/recruit/select vacant positions	Follow up work	Recruit/select PP positions and train new visitors	Recruit/select PP positions	Refresher training for visitors	No planned activity	No planned activity	Train new PP visitors	Train new PP visitors	No planned activity	No planned activity	
Database	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 0 meetings Finances & Resources Committee	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 2 meetings Attend 1 meeting Council Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 3 meetings Attend 2 meetings Finances & Resources Committee Education & Training Committee Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 3 meetings Attend 1 meeting Council Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 1 meeting Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 4 meetings Attend 2 meetings Council Education & Training Panel Education & Training Committee	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 1 meeting Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 0 meeting Finances & Resources Committee	Ongoing activity Project work (2) Prepare papers for 3 meetings Attend 2 meetings Council	Ongoing activity Project work (2) No papers to prepare Attend 0 meetings Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Project work (2) Prepare papers for 2 meetings Attend 1 meeting Finances & Resources Committee Education & Training Panel	Ongoing activity Project work (2) Prepare papers for 4 meetings Attend 2 meetings Council Education & Training Panel Education & Training Committee	Ongoing activity
Liaison with stakeholders	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity & annual questionnaire Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity & annual questionnaire Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity & annual questionnaire Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity & annual questionnaire Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	
Planned projects													
List of approved programmes	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
LISA programme list	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Withdrawing approval	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Conditions catalogue	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Professional body programmes	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Result of current consultation on the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners	No planned activity	No planned activity	High level activity	High level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	
Result of current consultation on the optional standards of proficiency for chiropodist/podiatrists	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	High level activity	High level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	Completion	
Recording student cohort numbers (database)	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	
Recording of contact details from education providers (database)	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	
Review of the annual monitoring process	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	
Allocation of visitors to operational activities	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Operational protocol for 'cancelling/postponing an approval visit'	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	
Analysis of multi-professional approval visits	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	
Communication plan for education providers	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	
Home country specialist educational knowledge	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low planned activity	Low planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Completion	Completion	Completion	

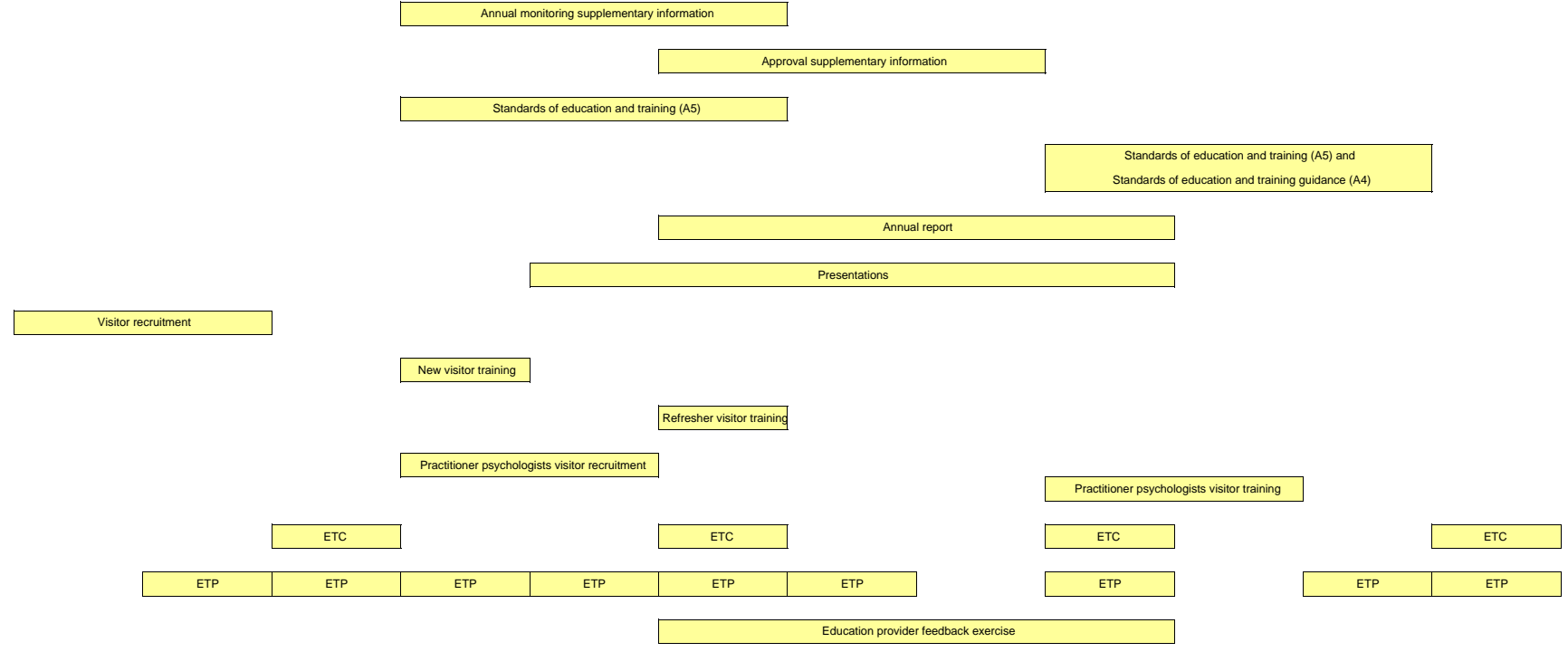
Main Operational Processes



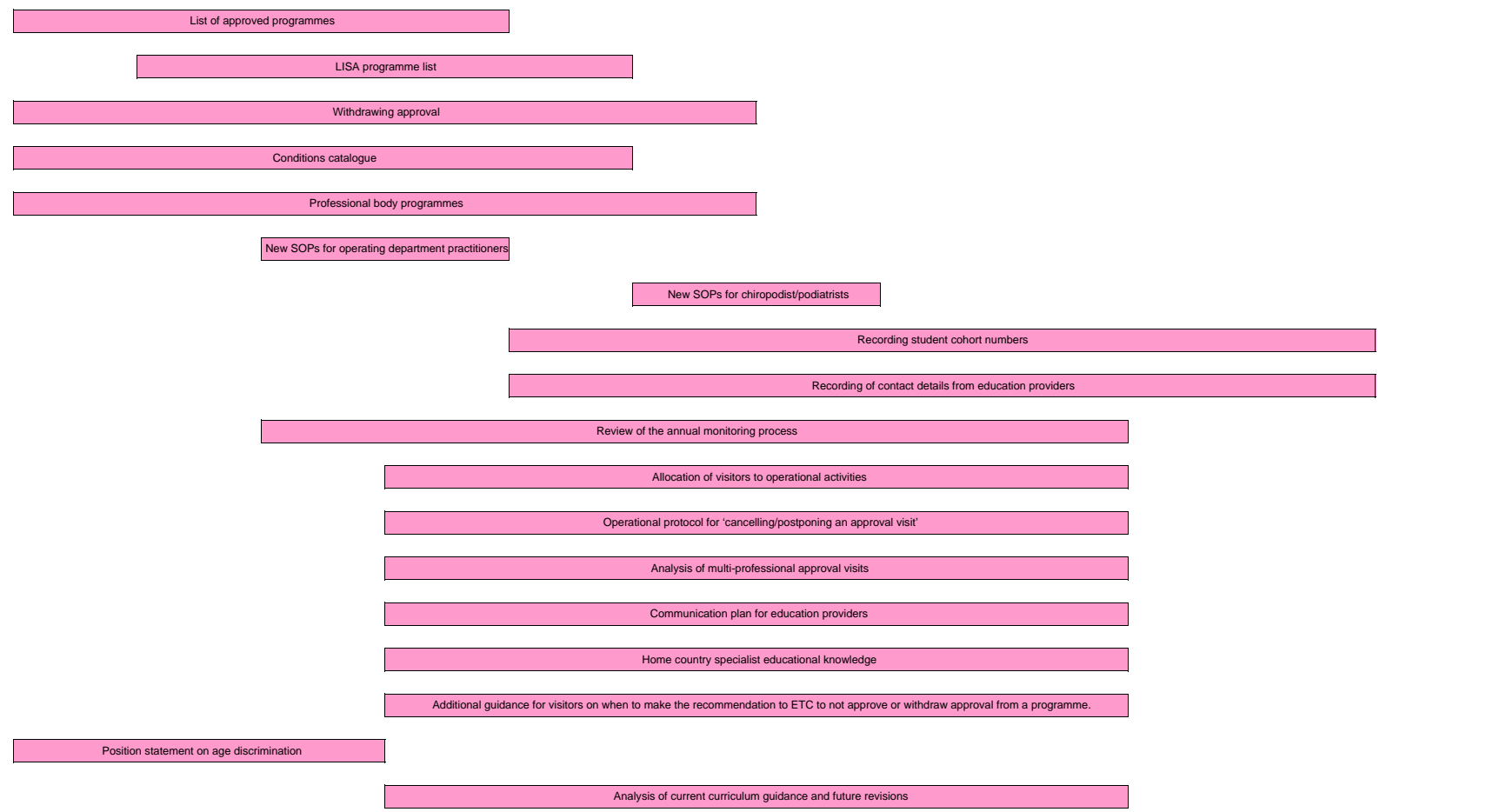
Supporting activities

Publications

Partners



Planned projects



Ongoing activities - website, database, liaison with stakeholders, committee work & complaints

Risk	Section of risk register	Risk owner	Significance (Feb 2008)	Probability (Feb 2008)
7.1 Non-detection of low education providers standards	Approvals & Monitoring	Director of Operations & Head of Education	Medium	Low
Mitigations: Main operational processes (page 5); complaints about an approved programme (page 8); review of the annual monitoring process project (page 12); operational protocol for 'cancelling/postponing an approval visit' project (page 14); additional guidance for visitors on when to make the recommendation to Education and Training Committee to not approve or withdraw approval from a programme project (page 15) and analysis of current curriculum guidance and future revisions project (page 15).				
7.2 Education providers refusing visits or not submitting data	Approvals & Monitoring	Director of Operations & Head of Education	Medium	Low
Mitigations: Legal powers (HPO 2001; additional guidance for visitors on when to make the recommendation to Education and Training Committee to not approve or withdraw approval from a programme project (page 15) and supporting activities (publications, website and presentations) (page 5/6).				
7.3 Inability to manage education provider visits	Approvals & Monitoring	Director of Operations & Head of Education	Medium	Medium
Mitigations: Adequate resourcing and training (page3); hire staff to backfill or clear backlogs of work (page 3); new department structure (page 3) and main operational processes (page 5).				
7.4 Loss of support from education providers	Approvals & Monitoring	Chief Executive	Low	Low
Mitigations: Main operational processes (page 5); supporting activities (publications, website, presentations, partner visitor recruitment, selection and training and liaison with stakeholders) (page 5-7); result of current consultation on the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners project (page 11); result of current consultation on the optional standards of proficiency for chiropracist/podiatrists project (page 11); recording of contact details from education providers (database) project (page 12); communication plan for education providers project (page 14) and position statement on age discrimination project (page 15).				

6.1 Inability to recruit and/or retain suitable Partners	Partners	Partners Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Supporting activities (publications, website and partner visitor recruitment, selection and training) (page 5-7);				
6.2 Incorrect interpretation of law and/or SI's resulting in CHRE review	Partners	Director of Fitness to Practice & Director of Operations	Low	Low
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Supporting activities (publications, website and partner visitor recruitment, selection and training) (page 5-7);				
8.4 Failure to regulate a new profession or a post-registration qualification as stipulated by legislation	Partners	Director of Operations, Project Manager, Registration Manager & Director of Policy & Standards	Medium	Low
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Main operational processes (page 5) and priorities 2008-2009 (page 2/3)				
8.9 Applied Psychologists on boarding	Project Management	Director of Operations		
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Main operational processes (page 5) and priorities 2008-2009 (page 2/3)				
11.2 High turnover of employees	HR	HR Director	Low	Low
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Adequate resourcing and training (page3); hire staff to backfill or clear backlogs of work (page 3) and new department structure (page 3)				
11.3 Inability to recruit suitable employees	HR	HR Director	Low	Medium
Mitigations: (Approval and Monitoring Department only) Adequate resourcing and training (page3); hire staff to backfill or clear backlogs of work (page 3) and new department structure (page 3)				

Communications Workplan 2008 – 2009

Contents

Introduction	2
This document	2
Communications department	2
Communication activities	4
Priorities and issues for 2008 – 2009..	6
Achieving the communication objectives in 2008 - 2009	8
2009 – 2010	10
Appendix 1 Communications Department Activities Table 2008 – 2009	12

Introduction

The communication workplan for 2008 - 2009 details our main areas of work and sets out how we will work towards achieving the objectives of the communications strategy.

The communications department is both proactive and reactive in its work and requirements may change, particularly in light of business needs. Significant issues may arise during the course of the year and the department will need to be flexible in the delivery of its workplan in order to respond accordingly.

This document

This document is divided into several sections. It details our resources, the communications tools we will use as well as our priorities for the year and how our activities link to the communication objectives set out in the communication strategy.

Communications Department

The communications department consists of seven employees as follows:

Jacqueline Ladds	Director of Communications
Sarah Giles	Communications Officer
Thomas Heiser	Events Manager
Victoria Smyth	Communications Manager
Tony Glazier	Web Manager
Philippa Richardson	Publications Manager
Nina Blunck	Public Affairs Manager
Mark Potter	CPD Communications Manager

The Director of Communications is responsible for the overall management of the team, the day to day running of the department, the development of the strategy and workplan and the development of new projects. It should be noted that Jacqueline Ladds is on maternity leave until mid June 2008. In her absence, the Director of Policy and Standards, Rachel Tripp, will be acting Director of Communications.

The Communications Officer provides support to the department across all its activities, particularly press, events and publications as well as responding to requests for information, the organisation of staff social events and the co-ordination of the student talks programme.

The Events Manager organises all the HPC's internal and external events, particularly the Listening Events, our attendance at exhibitions, all employee meetings and awayday and the co-ordination of the external presentation and talks programme.

The Communication Manager leads on our public facing campaigns, press and media activity and the development of the internal communications function. It should be noted that for the duration of the 2008-2009 workplan, Victoria Smyth will be on maternity leave. Her post will be covered by a one year contract position.

The Web Manager is responsible for maintaining and developing the HPC website, the HPcheck microsite as well as the Council extranet and employee intranet.

The Publications Manager leads on all aspects of the publications process, including the visual identity and house style, provides support to departments in the production of publications and produces the registrant facing HPC - In Focus newsletter.

The Public Affairs Manager is responsible for developing and co-ordinating communications with a range of stakeholder and opinion formers, in particular government and is also responsible for devising and co-ordinating communications programmes with key stakeholder audiences including employers and professional bodies.

The CPD Communications Manager is responsible for managing a range of communications initiatives designed to inform and educate registrants and employers of the HPC's CPD audit requirements. This includes a programme of talks, presentations and workshops, working with professional bodies and raising awareness of the CPD standards through the professional press and the literature we produce. This post has been created as a twelve month secondment position.

Communication Activities

There are eight main areas of work undertaken within the Communications Department. The following paragraphs summarises each.

The Health Professions Order 2001 sets out our statutory responsibility to inform and education the public and registrants of the work we do. We also have a statutory duty to consult other stakeholders, for example when setting standards or issuing guidance.

In order to fulfil our responsibility to inform the public about our work, members of the public should have access to information which promotes the importance of using a regulated health professional, and how to check as well as how to make a complaint when things do go wrong. We take a proactive approach when communicating with the public and much of this is undertaken through the public information **campaigns** we organise.

The **media** is an important tool, particularly in promoting our work through the national, regional and professional media and provides opportunities to promote the HPC and our public protection role. We have an ongoing contacts programme to build relationships with key journalists, we issue media alerts and news releases based on the Fitness to Practise hearings to promote our public protection role through the regional and national media, we have an ongoing programme of releases and articles to the professional press and we issue general organisation wide press releases on a range of issues.

The **web** is an important method of providing comprehensive information to all our audiences in a cost effective and efficient way. We have the main www.hpc-uk.org website which receives approximately 80,000 hits per month, the public facing www.hpcheck.org microsite as well as the Council extranet and the employee intranet.

The **publications** we produce provide an important source of information to all our audiences. Brochures include the Standards of Proficiency for each profession, the Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics as well as the three corporate annual reports and information and guidance on registration, fitness to practise and continuing professional development (CPD).

Events are an increasingly important opportunity for us to engage face to face with all our audiences and provide opportunities to present information about the HPC, listen and seek views. We have a programme of Listening Events across the UK which are public events but focussed at communicating with our registrants, we exhibit at a range of external conferences and have an active talks and presentation programme where HPC employees have speaking opportunities at key conferences and events.

Employees play an active role in getting messages to our audiences and should be considered as ambassadors for the HPC. Our **internal communications** programme includes the employee intranet, an annual all employee awayday, bi-monthly all employee briefings, which are led by the CEO, and team building events in the summer and winter.

In carrying out our UK-wide role we work closely with a number of other organisations, including professional bodies, government, employers and patient and consumer groups. We have already established good working relationships and our **public affairs** activities include building relationships with Parliamentarians through face to face meetings and briefings and the dissemination of information to constituency offices to ensure they are informed of our public protection role. We are also developing a co-ordinated approach to stakeholder activities, focusing on employers and professional bodies through the

development of issue specific events, targeted briefings and dedicated information on the website.

We also support organisation-wide **projects** by delivering effective communication plans and activities for projects which may be major areas of change or development for the organisation. Major projects which require communications input include Continuing Professional Development; the regulation of new professions and registration fees.

Priorities and issues for 2008 – 2009

The priorities for 2008 – 2009 have been put together in order to build on those of the previous financial year, and also to respond to the HPC's bi-annual opinion polling. 2007's opinion polling, undertaken by MORI, included seeking information from registrants, members of the public and stakeholders, and hence provides a broad range of opinions and inputs from which issues and activities have been drawn.

Registrants

Key messages to communicate to registrants this financial year include the ongoing need to communicate the CPD standards and audit requirements, and the benefits of regulation. Informing registrants about our relationship with the professional bodies was another area that came up from the opinion polling, as was the importance of ensuring registrants know about our public information campaigns. It is evident from the research that informing the public is key, not only because it helps to raise awareness, but also because being seen to do so is another way of raising our 'credibility' with registrants, and helping registrants to understand the importance of regulation, including how registration fees are spent.

Another important message for registrants is the changes to HPC arising from the White Paper, including the new structure of the Council.

Areas of the workplan below which address these issues include the work of the CPD Communications Manager, the content of Listening Events (which has been and will continue to be more specifically refined to address the areas registrants identify as particularly useful), media work with the professional journals, and public affairs work with the professional bodies.

Stakeholders

Feedback from the opinion polling was generally positive, with a good feedback from stakeholders about the organisation generally, and many stakeholders demonstrated a good understanding of our role. Many believed we were going in the right direction, and that the way forward is for HPC to expand and to regulate more professions. Our overall objectives of influencing the regulatory agenda is also important here, both in contributing to cross-regulatory work as well as sharing our expertise with others where appropriate.

Interestingly here, as with registrants, work with the public was emphasised as a key part of our future work, and a way to ensure we are seen by stakeholders to be fulfilling our role.

The workplan below addresses these areas largely through the campaigns and public affairs areas of work. In particular, the stakeholder work outlined for the coming year with professional bodies, employers, and other stakeholder groups, will be an important way of responding to the feedback obtained.

Members of the public

A small increase was noted in the percentage of members of the public who have heard of HPC, from 13% two years ago to 15%. There remains the need to do more to raise awareness with this group.

The majority of the public expressed a preference for information to be provided to them in GPs' surgeries, or on the internet. The former preference was further reinforced by the information that the majority of members of the public stated that they would see a health professional through referral from their GP.

The workplan addresses these areas largely through the Campaigns areas of work, particularly the ongoing dissemination of public-facing literature (including the second-wave information to GPs' surgeries), the internet campaign and the campaign targeted at older people. This latter campaign is particularly important in communicating with a hard-to-reach group that are likely to be users of registrants, and part of HPC's commitment to being accessible.

Issues and priorities conclusion

Overall, drawing from the findings of the Ipsos MORI polling, our focus for the 2008 - 2009 workplan will continue to be our public information campaigns and the work we are undertaking to raise awareness amongst the public of the HPC and its role and the importance of using a registered health professional. We will also continue to focus on our communications with registrants, in particular promoting the benefits of registration, explaining the requirements of the CPD audits. A further key area of work for 2008 – 2009 will be developing our presence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A more detailed approach to achieving the communication objectives is set out below.

Achieving the communication objectives in 2008 - 2009

The Communications Strategy identifies five overall objectives in our communications work. In 2008 – 2009 we will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

Communication Objective 1:

To raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences, we will:

- maximise the opportunities to increase coverage about the HPC in the national, regional, professional and consumer press;
- continue to promote the Fitness to Practise hearings to the regional media;
- continue to ensure the consistent application of the house style and visual identity across all literature and media;
- play a key role in the production of all brochures and literature, including the corporate annual reports ;
- co-ordinate HPC's external talks programme, researching and increasing opportunities;
- continue the ongoing development and improvement of our web presence; and
- continue to respond to requests for information and publications.

Communication Objective 2:

To extend our reach to the public enabling them to easily access information about the HPC, we will:

- ensure the continued dissemination of public information literature;
- undertake 2 public information campaigns which promote HPC's public protection role, particularly an internet campaign and a campaign focusing on older people ;
- continue ongoing advertising through existing channels, eg Yellow Pages, Yell.com; and
- continue our involvement in the joint UK health regulator's PPI group and map consumer associations and patient groups and develop organisation-wide channels of communication.

Communication Objective 3

To influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders, we will:

- develop our presence and profile in the home countries and devise channels of communication with key stakeholder groups;
- continue the programme of work designed to keep Parliamentarians informed and fully aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation; and
- continue the programme of work designed to keep key stakeholder audiences informed and engaged with the HPC across all activities and on specific issues.

Communication Objective 4

To engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them, we will:

- continue to communicate HPC's work and activities in the professional press;
- continue the production and distribution of HPC - *In Focus*;
- develop an information programme for students on HPC approved courses;

- develop a welcome pack for new HPC registrants;
- research and develop a “registered with the HPC” concept and promote it to registrants;
- support the regulation of new professions to the HPC Register;
- support the communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrants and employers;
- organise Listening Events across the UK giving registrants the opportunity to hear about the HPC’s activities and provide feedback;
- support the communication of renewals requirements to registrants and employers; and
- support the communication requirements of IT development, for example online applications, online renewals and online authentication.

Communication Objective 5

To further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation, we will:

- continue to maintain the intranet ensuring it is up to date and an accessible information tool for all staff;
- continue to organise strategic all employee briefings, Chief Executive led strategic briefings, ad hoc briefings on specific issues;
- develop a consistent team briefing model for the organisation;
- continue to organise all employee events; and
- continue to develop the extranet for Council members, and investigate the potential for an extranet for Partners.

2009 - 2010

Beyond the financial year 2008 – 2009, there are further objectives for our communications work, and these are set out below:

- A third round of opinion polling, further to our commitment to undertake this exercise every two years.
- Further campaigns with hard-to-reach groups, building on the coming campaign focussed on older people. This could include work looking at communicating with people from ethnic minority backgrounds, and disabled people.
- The on-boarding of new professions continues to be important, particularly in the light of the government's intentions as stated in the White Paper of February 2007. Communications activities will continue to play a vital role in the successful onboarding of new professions, communicating not only with aspirant professional associations, but also with future registrants, and with members of the public.
- Raising HPC's profile in the home countries will continue to be an important focus for our work, including revisiting the question of whether we should have some kind of physical presence outside England, and if so what form this should take.
- Continuing to raise HPC's profile outside the UK, particularly with key audiences in the European Union, will also be a key future objective. Building on the various pieces of work already undertaken across the organisation, including by the Chief Executive, the Policy & Standards department, and the Registration department, it will be important to be involved in future pieces of European legislation at an early stage, in order to influence how they progress. Continued membership of the Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe provides a solid foundation for this work.

Risk

The key risks for HPC which relate to the Communications department are failure to inform public, loss of support from the professional bodies, and inability to inform stakeholders following crisis.

The management of these risks is inherent through the whole of the Communications workplan , but particularly through:

Campaigns and the Website

These activities help to inform the public and also help to raise our profile with the professional bodies. Likewise, the effective maintenance of the website, including the ability to update it remotely, helps to mitigate the risk of not being able to communicate with stakeholders after a crisis.

Public Affairs

This area of activity is important in indirectly raising our profile with the public (for example with members of the public who attend their MPs surgeries and may seek information on how to complain about the care they have received), but particularly important in developing our relationships with professional bodies.

Disaster Recovery

Although not situated in Communications, the HPC's approach to disaster recovery is an ongoing piece of work, and the disaster recovery plan is regularly reviewed and updated. Through the Executive Management Team, the Director of Communications contributes to its ongoing currency, and this provides an important safeguard against the risks posed to the organisation by any disaster occurring.

Appendix 1: Communications Department Activities Table 2008- 2009

The table below sets out the communications department's day to day activities in the delivery of the communication strategy and its objectives.

It is split into eight sections, in order to mirror the eight main different types of communications activities undertaken by the department, as outlined on page 4 of this workplan. For each activity, the workplan details:

- **Main activity:** the activity headline
- **Key deliverables**
- **Description** of activities that will be undertaken, including for example research, designs, roll-out of technology, etc.
- **Timeline**
- **Lead:** the employee in Communications who will be responsible for the work. Initials are given for brevity. Please see employee details on page 2 for full names.

1 Campaigns

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Ensure the continued dissemination of public information literature	Promotion of public protection role -- focussed, cost effective way of reaching the public	Further test public literature through Connect focus groups Identify further outlets, namely CHCs in Wales, Citizens Advice Bureaux and second wave GPs Link with public affairs activities	April 2008 October 2008	VS/SG
Run 2 public information campaigns which promote HPC's public protection role, in particular an internet campaign and a campaign focusing on older people	Promotion of public protection role Reinforce messages, focused, cost effective way of reaching the public	Research, write briefs, set objectives, identify and secure partner(s), agree visuals/literature and methods, project manage, evaluate Link with public affairs activities Ensure media to support campaigns	Older people campaign: September 2008 Internet campaign: January 2009	VS
Research and develop a "registered with the HPC" concept, promote it to registrants and ensure continued access and usage	Engaging with registrants and working with them to promote public awareness	Undertake registrant/public research, appoint agency to develop ideas, test on registrants/public through focus groups, roll out concepts through all media	December 2008	VS/PR
Continue ongoing advertising through existing channels, eg Yell.com	Continued reinforcement of public protection role	Maintain a presence on Yellow Pages, Yell.com and Google adwords	Ongoing	VS

2 Media

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Continue to promote the Fitness to Practise hearings to the regional media	Increased level of coverage in regional media and increased promotion of public protection role	Weekly alerts Issue releases Number of articles	Ongoing	VS/SG
Maximise the opportunities to increase coverage about the HPC in the national, regional, professional and consumer press	Coverage reflects better understanding of issues by journalists and supports our leading regulator role	Work with departments, identify news stories, issue releases, write articles, issue releases	Ongoing	VS
Continue to communicate HPC's work and activities in the professional press	Improved understanding of what we require of registrants and increased level of coverage	With departments identify news/stories, issue releases, write articles	Ongoing	VS
Ensure senior management and Council members are equipped to deal with media interviews through training and briefing	Provide relevant media training as appropriate	Identify need Source appropriate training Provide briefing materials for media interviews	Annually	VS
Continue to provide the infrastructure to manage the media ensuring an accurate and consistent approach	Consistency of messages Strong infrastructure to support all our media work	Subscribe to press cuttings, media disk Log press calls Maintain accurate contacts database	Ongoing	VS/SG

3 Web

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Continue to maintain the intranet (in line with the internal communications workplan) ensuring it is up to date and an accessible information tool for all staff	Improved internal communication Provide information which enables employees to deal efficiently and effectively with enquiries	Feedback on Phase 1 from employees, develop ideas, proposals and determine elements of next phase	Ongoing	TG
Proactively develop the website and its content by working with departments to support their requirements and identify opportunities for development	Increased understanding of the HPC and transparency	Develop website by in particular improving the navigability, and search function. Add sections for specific audiences, eg: new registrants, and students. Develop ideas, proposals Cost and prioritise	October 2008	TG
Maintain and develop the Council extranet and increase its usage	Improved internal communication with Council Increased ability to share information with Partners	Work with Secretariat and departments Develop ideas, proposals Cost and prioritise	January 2009	TG
Develop the extranet for Partners	Improved internal communication with Partners Increased ability to share information with Partners	Work with Partner Manager and departments Develop ideas, proposals Cost and prioritise	March 2009	TG
Write guidance/process for content management and approval process for website and intranet	Improved accuracy	Work with other departments, including EMT Develop guidance Develop sign-off process Explore technology solution to implement process	May 2008	TG
Provide statistics and reports which will inform activities and strategies for development	Value for money	Agree requirements Produce regular reports for planning and reporting	Ongoing	TG

4 Publications

Main activity	Key Deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Ensure the consistent application of the house style and visual identity across all literature and media	Promote a professional and positive image of the HPC	Ensure all publications are produced in visual identity, develop policy on third party usage of logo. Update employees and communications committee on roll-out of visual identity.	Ongoing	PR
Manage the publications process and support departments in the production of publications and literature, including the corporate annual reports and other literature	Present a positive image of the HPC and understanding of its role Increased transparency and accountability and improved profile with stakeholders	Liaise with departments including FTP and Education on annual reports. Liaise with HR regarding possibility of Partner newsletter Manage process, advise on content, edit, proof, gain feedback from public/patients/stakeholders where relevant, ensure effective dissemination.	Ongoing	PR/SGdepts
Communicate with registrants through HPC - <i>In focus</i> , developing its content and circulation	Increased distribution Better informed registrants	Work with depts on content, continue to identify opportunities to increase distribution through for example adverts in professional journals, A5 flyer with certificates, sign up sheets at talks etc.	Six times a year	PR/SG
Develop an information programme for students on HPC approved courses	Improved understanding of HPC requirements of registrants	Work with Registrations, Approval and Monitoring Identify needs of audience Develop ideas including cd rom, literature, presentations, web, information pack	September 2008	PR/depts/comms
Develop a welcome pack for new registrants	Improved understanding of HPC requirements of registrants	Work with Registrations, Approval and Monitoring Identify needs of audience Develop ideas including cd rom, literature, presentations, web, information pack	November 2008	PR/depts/comms
Continue to distribute publications and brochures on request and ensure availability of publications in large print, Braille, Welsh etc	Improved understanding of HPC requirements Increased accessibility	Respond to requests within reasonable timescale, log requests, maintain stock levels	Ongoing	SG/PR

5 Events

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Continue participation in external exhibitions by taking stands, research new opportunities and ways of encouraging visitors	Communication of messages Opportunity to listen to feedback and raise HPC profile and present positive image	Ensure balance across all audiences, particularly public (focus on campaigns), registrants (cpd and renewals) and stakeholder specific (eg employers)	10 per year	TH/SG
Organise Listening Events across the country for registrants	Opportunity to listen to feedback Improved understanding of the HPC's role and activities	Review presentation, develop interactive format, ensure cross country presence, source and brief panel, book venues, issue invitations and produce evaluation reports	8 UK wide 4 London specific	TH/SG
Co-ordinate HPC's external talks programme, researching and increasing opportunities	Increased profile Improved understanding of the HPC's role and activities	Map current activity, research new opportunities, source and implement, devise tracking and feedback mechanism, provide support and materials to presenters	Ongoing	TH/SG/depts
Continue to support to departments on corporate events where appropriate, including planning for stakeholder events	Increased accountability and transparency Opportunity to communicate key issues to stakeholder audiences	Meet departments to determine requirements	Ongoing	TH/depts
Organise all employee events (in line with the internal communications workplan)	Improved internal communications and understanding of the HPC's aims and direction	Set dates, book venues Agree format, speakers, issue invitations Evaluate	4-6 All Staff Summer bbq Christmas dinner All employee (in May 2007)	TH/SG

6 Internal Communications

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Develop a programme of communications which ensures Partners are up to date and informed	Improved understanding of HPC's ongoing work and activities a	Extranet, bi-annual newsletter, sign up to HPC In Focus and series of training and events (in conjunction with Partner Manager/departments).	December 2008	JAL
Continue to organise and develop all employee briefings and ad hoc briefings on specific issues	Improved understanding of HPC's ongoing work and activities and the Council's direction	Agree purpose/format Set dates Evaluate	6 All Staff Ad hoc briefings as required	TH
Develop a consistent team briefing model for the organisation	Improved internal communication	Research models, map existing activity (all employee, emt update) develop proposals, consult EMT/MMG, pilot and roll out	November 2008	JAL
Maintain the intranet (in line with the web workplan) ensuring it is up to date, business led and an accessible information tool for all staff	Provide information which enables employees to deal efficiently and effectively with enquiries	Liaise with departments re: currency of information, and updating information. Gain feedback from employees on content. Develop processes and content in response.	Ongoing	TG
Organise all employee events (in line with the events workplan) including social events	Improved internal communications	Set dates, book venues Agree format, speakers, issues invitations Evaluate	Summer bbq Christmas dinner	SG
Organise the annual all employee awayday	Improved understanding of the HPC's strategic aims and direction	Set dates, book venue Agree format, speakers, issues invitations Evaluate	May 2008	TH

7 Public Affairs

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Develop HPC's presence and profile in the home countries and devise channels of communication which ensure stakeholders are informed and fully aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation	Improved understanding of the HPC's role in healthcare regulation	Work with Policy, continue to research contacts and ideas Develop contact programme, physical presence and encompass public affairs work across all stakeholder audiences, including Parliamentarians, employers, professional bodies (see points below)	From May 2007	NB
Continue the programme of work designed to keep Parliamentarians informed and fully aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation	Raised awareness and improved signposting of our public protection role	Contact programme, attendance at all Party Conferences (including Health Hotel), written briefings, Parliamentary Roadshows, attendance at conferences, speaking engagements, exhibitions, development of e-politix and advertising/editorial opportunities in relevant magazines and publications	Ongoing	NB/TH
Continue the programme of work designed to keep key stakeholder audiences (eg employers, professional bodies) informed and engaged with the HPC across all activities and on specific issues	Promote the HPC's key messages to defined audiences Improved understanding of HPC's role eg learning from Fitness to Practise	Contact programme, stakeholder events, rolling programme of news items in bulletins, information on website, attendance at conferences, speaking engagement, exhibitions and advertising/editorial opportunities in relevant magazines and publications	Ongoing	NB/TH
Develop new programmes of work to ensure key stakeholder audiences (eg local authorities, consumer associations and patient representative groups) are informed and engaged with the HPC	Improved understanding of HPC's role	Contact programme, stakeholder events, rolling programme of news items in bulletins, information on website, attendance at conferences, speaking engagement, exhibitions and advertising/editorial opportunities in relevant magazines and publications	Ongoing	NB

8 Projects/Business Needs

Main activity	Key deliverables	Description	Timescale	Lead
Continuing Professional Development	Communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrant and employers	Manage communications element of project plan, participate in project meeting, co-ordinate comms activity across team and ensure usage across full range of functions, media, newsletter, web etc. Manage and undertake programme of presentations. Evaluate	Ongoing	MP
New Professions	Communication of registration requirements	Write plan, timetable, production of publications, use of web, newsletters, events	Dependant on White Paper timetable	NB
Renewals	Communication of requirements, support lower lapse rates	Liaise with registration regarding the ongoing renewal of professions' registration. Feed information into ongoing communications with employers and professional bodies. Ensure clear information provided online.	Ongoing as professions renew	NB/TG
Revalidation	Communication of government proposals to registrants. Gaining feedback from registrants to feed into HPC's work.	Liaise with Policy & Standards department regarding Professional Liaison Group on Ongoing Fitness to Practise. Feed theme of revalidation into other communications activities as appropriate, for example stakeholder contact, Listening Events, etc. Gather information and feed back to Policy.	Ongoing	NB/TH
Fee Rise 2009	Clear communication to registrants of future changes in fees. Clear communication to registrants regarding what fees pay for, and why independent regulation is important.	Participate in project group, ensuring that communications, particularly with registrants, are appropriately built-in to the work of the group. Liaise with Policy & Standards re consultation document and decisions. Co-ordinate publication of decisions via website, and other channels as appropriate.	March 2009	VS
Safeguarding vulnerable groups	Communication to registrants about requirements of SVG and	Participate in project group, ensuring that communications, particularly with registrants, are appropriately built-in to the work of the group.	August 2008	MP

	PVG legislation. Communication to stakeholders on what HPC is required to do and why.	Liaise with FTP and Policy regarding requirements. Co-ordinate publication of information via website and other channels as appropriate.		
Equality and diversity data collection	Communication to registrants about our equality and diversity work, why we are doing it, and what we have achieved.	Manage communications element of project plan, participating in project group.	Ongoing	VS
Online applications and online renewals	Communication to applicants and registrants about online facility.	Manage communications element of project plan, participating in project group.	Ongoing	TG

Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Finance and Facilities Management departments.....	3
Priorities 2008–09.....	5
Resources.....	5
HPC Strategy : Improve.....	6
Introduction.....	6
Aim.....	6
Finance and FM Projects completed in 2007-08.....	6
Finance & FM Major Projects for 2008–09.....	6
Core Activities in 2008-09.....	7
Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment Statement.....	11
Year Two projects (2009 – 10).....	11
Year Three projects (2010-11).....	12

Introduction

The Finance & Facilities Management departments

The Finance department's core responsibilities are:

- To monitor the financial well-being of the HPC and advise the Council and Committees of the need for adjustments to the Business Plan and/or Strategy in a timely manner,
- To produce the statutory financial statements and the financial sections of the HPC Annual Report,
- To produce the monthly management accounts,
- To provide financial forecasting and analysis to support the Council and Committees in developing strategy and policy,
- To maintain good internal financial control and risk management including compliance with the Financial Regulations,
- To manage the payroll/pensions process and arrange supplier payments,
- To collect fee income and ensure LISA Registration System records are accurately updated for financial transactions,
- To manage the relationship with key external suppliers; the HPC's bankers, internal and external auditors, financial software providers, HMRC, investment fund and pension managers.

The Facilities Management department's core responsibilities are:

- To provide Office Services to internal clients in the areas of; catering, reception, stationery ordering and post room;
- To provide Facilities Management services relating to building refurbishment, maintenance, space planning & moves, insurance, health & safety compliance.

The Procurement function is now centralised in the form of a Procurement Officer and acts in a support role to supplier relationship managers across all areas of the HPC.

Procurement objectives include; encouraging greater use of preferred suppliers (to obtain bulk purchase discounts and reduce supplier management time), updating supplier service level and data protection agreements. The role is also available to assist budget holders with supplier tendering, use of OCG buying group (government buying group) and travel bookings.

This document

This work plan is underpinned by the HPC strategic intent document. It outlines how the Finance, Procurement and Facilities areas will grow, support other parts of the HPC and meet the needs of the HPC for efficient, timely and relevant service provision.

The work undertaken comprises; core operations, planned projects and work which arises as a result of changes in the external environment. For example, changes in government legislation, changes to the professions or other developments, the timing of which is difficult to predictable.

Priorities 2008-09

The priorities identified in the HPC strategy (HPC – The Next Three Years, published in March 2006) are to *Improve* and to *Influence and Promote*.

Improvement opportunities for the Finance and Facilities Management departments include; making processes and service provision faster, cheaper and/or better.

As registration transaction volumes increase, existing processes are regularly reviewed for opportunities to shorten the process time, automate more of the process, reduce re-work, empower employees to make decisions, direct more employees to handle the increased demand and/or train employees to complete process steps more efficiently.

Process costs can be reduced when service requirements are well documented, when re-work is eliminated, when better value for money suppliers are used and when process time is reduced.

Processes can be done better when the process is made more robust (more reliable and less risky¹), when the output quality is improved (for the same inputs), when greater transparency is achieved (in the financial numbers especially). Continuing to build close working relationships with other departments and suppliers will also streamline some processes and aid timely reporting. Improving the timeliness, transparency and accuracy of financial reporting and forecasting will aid decision-making about managing the increasing demand for the HPC's services.

Finally, implementing phase two of the project to refurbish 22-26 Stannary Street premises will enable additional demand for the HPC's onsite accommodation to be met.

Resources

The 2008/09 Finance dept budget and work plan involve a team of eight Finance employees, including the Procurement Officer and Director of Finance. The work plan assumes a Finance Operating budget of £570k, and Fee Rise budget of £15K.

The 2008/09 Facilities Management dept budget and work plan involve a team of six employees, including the Facilities Manager. The work plan assumes an Operating budget of £932 and Capital budget (22/26 Stannary Street project, phase two) of £423k.

¹ Examples of reducing process risk are to ensure cross-training of dept employees to reduce person-cover risk, invest in employee training and ensure adequate process documentation is available in case temporary employees need to be brought in to cover for employees on sick leave.

HPC Strategy: Improve

Introduction

The HPC operates within a changing environment, including changes to government legislation (European Union directives, employment law, tax law, data protection and other UK legislation), to the professions, and to good practice. Changes in the operating environment also impact the types and levels of risk that are faced by the organisation.

Environmental change creates opportunities to better deploy resources, become more flexible, more innovative and improve service quality. Some changes can be best effected via “leap-forward” projects, while others involve continuous incremental improvement.

In order to improve, there needs to be a sound understanding of the current position, the skills and competencies of existing resources, the organisational priorities and some cohesive planning on how to improve. Financial and non-financial indicators are useful tools in monitoring progress and planning. Improvements to financial policies, procedures and the HPC Risk Register are similarly useful in assisting risk and change management.

Any improvements that can be made to the accuracy, timeliness and transparency of the reporting will likely assist decision makers in making operational improvements, to better meet the HPC’s objectives.

Aim

The Council aims to review its standards, guidance and policies, to consult with stakeholders, to gain feedback, and to make improvements to ensure that these continue to reflect the Council’s purpose and principles.

The following part of the work plan details the projects that will be resourced over the coming financial year towards meeting this aim.

Finance & FM Projects completed in 2007-08

- Finance System Upgrade project
- LISA Access Rights project
- Intermediate Lapsing project
- Fee Rise 2007 project
- Stannary Street project (phase one)

Finance & FM Major Projects for 2008-09

1. 22-26 Stannary Street Building Project - Phase Two

Following successful completion of phase one in March 2008, phase two of the project is timed for commencement in the 2008

calendar year. The benefits of the project include providing additional meeting room space and workstation capacity.

This project links to Risk 15.3 “Large Capital Project Cost Overruns” in the Risk Register which is rated medium significance and low probability.

2. Fee Change 2009 Project

HPC is reliant on funding from Registrant and applicant fees to meet its objectives. HPC’s fees increased in June 2007, following a lengthy and comprehensive consultation process. The intention is to revise fee levels every couple of years and propose suitable adjustments, after considering stakeholder feedback and forecast changes in the HPC cost structure. Changes in the cost structure are influenced heavily by Fitness to Practise costs and changes in registrant and applicant volumes. As additional services are progressively provided, e.g. Continuing Professional Development and revalidations, these incur costs, both start up and ongoing, which need to be funded from HPC income.

The fee change project involves input from a number of departments including Finance, Communications, Registrations, Operations Office, IT, Policy & Standards and the Secretariat.

This project links to Risk 8.2 “Fee change processes not operational by June 2009” in the Risk Register, which is rated high significance and low probability.

3. View processed DDI’s project (small project)

Move the processed Direct Debit Interface (DDI) from the DDI process screen in the “financials” of LISA to provide an HPC audit trail to match to the bank’s audit trail in order to action direct debit problems. Benefits to the HPC will include Finance dept time savings and improved internal control.

Core Activities in 2008-09

These are highlighted under the four following functional areas; Accounting, Transactional, Facilities and Procurement.

1. Accounting

Year End Statutory Reporting and Annual Report Process

Production of year end financial statements is performed during the period April to July inclusive, in accordance with UK GAAP and the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). The management commentary, audit reports, financial statements and notes to the accounts are included in the final sections of the Annual Report.

The Annual Report is produced jointly by the Communications dept, Secretariat and Finance dept with input from a number of contributors. After the Annual Report has been audited by HPC's external auditors and the National Audit Office, it is submitted for approval by the Finance & Resources Committee, Audit Committee and Council and then tabled in Parliament. Once approved by Parliament, the Annual Report is published and made generally accessible.

This process links to the following risks; Risk 15.14, 15.15 and 15.16 which are all rated low significance and probability.

Month End Management Reporting Process

The year to date Management Accounts and Variance Commentary are produced by the Finance dept, reviewed by budget holders and EMT and sent to the Finance & Resources Committee to note. The Management Accounts report departmental and project spending (opex and capex) against budget to highlight significant deviations from budget.

This process links to the following risks; Risk 15.2 and 15.3 which are rated medium significance and low probability.

Payroll and Pensions Process

Employee payroll and pension payments are processed on a monthly basis by the Finance and HR depts. Category one² Council and Committee members payroll processing is also performed once a month and is processed separately from the employee payroll.

This process links to the following risk; Risk 15.11 and 15.19 which are rated low and medium significance respectively and low probability.

Supplier Payment Process

Supplier pay runs for approved suppliers are performed every two weeks by the Finance dept. There are four types of suppliers; trade suppliers, employees, category two³ council & committee members and partners. One off supplier payments are actioned on an ongoing basis.

This process links to the following risk; Risk 15.10 which is rated low significance and probability.

² Council and Committee members who declare themselves to be HPC office holders and are not self-employed.

³ Council and Committee Members who are declare themselves to be principally employed by another employer and are not self-employed.

Five Year Plan Update

The Five Year Plan links to the Strategic Intent document in quantifying key assumptions, financial projections of income & cost by department, the Capital Expenditure plan and Cash Flow projections. It includes headcount projections by department, registrant & applicant volumes by profession including new professions. It also includes registrant and applicant volumes by type (International, UK Graduate Registrants etc).

Year One of the Five Year Plan essentially becomes the basis of the forthcoming Annual Budget and relates to project and departmental work plans over the forthcoming financial year. A further benefit in updating the Five Year Plan is in providing input into future fee-setting.

A key component of the Five Year Plan is the Income Model. This model identifies accrued income in the forthcoming financial year by profession, by fee type, by fee level (before and after any fee rise occurring in the financial year). A key component of the Income Model is registrant and applicant volume-forecasting. Volume forecasting (existing and new professions) is a service provided by the Policy and Standards dept.

This process links to Risks 15.1, 15.2 and 15.9 in the Risk Register which are rated low, medium, low significance and low, low, low probability respectively.

Annual Budget Process

The Annual Budget process exists to encourage budgetary control at the HPC. It involves all departmental budget holders and input from the Operations Office in compiling the agreed project plan. Compilation of the Budget by the Finance dept runs over the period September to March and involves several review steps. The final step is to gain approval from Council in March 2008, pre-dating the start of the actual Budget year. During the year, a six and nine month forecast is also performed, to forecast the likely year end result.

This process links to Risks 15.1, 15.2 and 15.9 in the Risk Register which are rated low, medium, low significance respectively and low probability.

2. Transactional

A key aspect of the LISA Register is maintaining the accuracy of the Sales and Debtor's Ledgers by Registrant. The Finance dept extracts and summarises the detail from LISA for financial reporting purposes.

At renewal, fee charges are automatically put on Registrant records, with the Registrations and Finance depts jointly collecting the income (DD, cheque and credit card payment) and updating the billing records in LISA. Unpaid registrations are lapsed.

Refunds of fee overpayments and collection of outstanding debtor balances (failed direct debit arrangements) is an ongoing process, performed by the Finance dept.

This process links to Risks 15.6, 15.7 and 15.8 which are rated low, medium and low significance respectively and low probability.

3. Facilities Management

Following Phase One of the 22/26 Stannary Street refurbishment project, various areas of Park House will be redecorated and the building “restacked” to meet the needs of the departments for future office and meeting space.

This activity links to the following risk; Risk 2.6 which is rated low significance and probability.

Health and Safety (H&S) training

Following approval of the comprehensive Health & Safety policy in 2007, training of the relevant parties will commence in 2008.

A firm of H&S consultants, Lawrence Webster Forrest (LWF) has been retained to advise HPC of legislative changes requiring compliance in this area, including disability access to premises.

Health and Safety issues were identified in four parts of the Risk Register, namely;

- H&S of Council members,
- H&S of Partners,
- H&S of Employees,
- Employee/Partner physical assault by Hearing attendees

The risk mitigations are a continuing action in 2008-09 for the respective Risk owners. This activity links to Risks 4.9, 6.3, 11.5 and 13.6 in the Risk Register which are rated low, low, low, and medium significance respectively and low probability.

4. Procurement

Procurement has traditionally been decentralised at the HPC. The appointment of a Procurement Officer in Dec 2007 will enable a review of HPC’s existing procurement procedures, supplier documentation (Service Level Agreements and Data Controller/Processor agreements) and review of opportunities to rationalise the number of suppliers used at the HPC.

The Procurement Officer will act in a procurement support role to budget holders (the supplier relationship managers) and be the relationship manager for travel.

This activity links to Risk 17.3 in the Risk Register which is rated medium significance and probability.

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment Statement

Aspects of the work highlighted above will have an impact of equality and diversity at the HPC. To elaborate,

- Phase Two of the 22/26 Stannary Street refurbishment project will install additional meeting room and office space on the roof of the existing premises. The intention is to ensure lift (elevator) access to this area, to ensure easy access for mobility-impaired users of the space. Induction loops will also be installed in the Park House reception and Council Chamber to assist hearing-impaired visitors.
- During the consultation phase of the Fees Project 2009, we will consider the equality and diversity implications of existing fees and any proposed new fee, drawing on the existing data we hold.
- In producing the Annual Report for the year ending March 2008, we will adopt the new HPC house style of publication to ensure easy presentation for visually-impaired readers.
- In the Annual Budget process, we will allocate funding for ongoing equality and diversity work within the departments, as well as funding further progression of the equality and diversity project.
- In the procurement area, we will explore the possibility of making equality and diversity requirements of suppliers during the tender process.

Year Two projects (2009–10)

The following are a list of Finance-initiated projects. In addition, Finance resources may be involved in aspects of project design and testing for other department's projects e.g. the Worldpay aspect of Online Applications project. Some/all of the following to be incorporated into the suite of Annual Lisa improvements.

New Finance System project – Phase Two

Activate the Fixed Assets & Forecasting modules. Automate the Income Transfer monthly reporting from LISA to SAGE 200. Potentially migrate the Lotus Notes Supplier functionality/Procurement into the SAGE system. Enable automated one off supplier cheque runs.

Fee Change Project 2009

Complete the final stages of the Fee Change project in accordance with the project timetable.

Email access/Comms Log project

Email directly from LISA and store a communications log. This will allow information on registrant account statuses to be held in one central place and enable faster emailing directly from LISA.

LISA mispostings project

Reverse a transaction payment without creating an REJ status transaction. This will improve the accuracy of the Rejection Control account.

Automated refunds project (small project)

Automate the current process for generating Registrant refunds. Likely to result in cheque generation, requiring signing only.

LISA Billing Transactions project (small project)

Redesign the way fee charges and payments are applied to Registrant accounts so easier for LISA users to understand.

LISA Rejections project (small project)

Change the date notation in LISA to the date the DD/CH/CC is rejected, not the date when the payment or charge was applied.

LISA Multiple Batches project (small project)

Modify LISA to allow multiple batches (from multiple Registrant Advisors) to be matched to a single Pay In slip to streamline cashbook reporting.

Year Three projects (2010-11)

- New building acquisition (or leasing) project
- Fee Rise 2011 project

Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008 - 2009

Contents

Introduction	- 2 -
This document	- 2 -
Resources	- 3 -
Responsibilities.....	- 5 -
Fitness to Practise Activities 2008-2009	- 6 -
Other Activities	- 8 -
Achieving the Fitness to Practise Department Objectives 2008-2009.....	- 10 -
Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.....	- 12 -

Introduction

This document

This document sets out the priorities for the financial year April - March 2008-2009 and addresses how the Fitness to Practise department will grow, develop, improve and progress. It provides a basis against which the work of the Fitness to Practise department can be planned and measured.

As in 2007-2008, the Fitness to Practise department, due to the nature of its work, will also have to manage high profile cases which attract media interest and allegations which may require an immediate interim order. It is important that departmental planning allows for timely responses to unpredictable situations when they arise. Unpredictable situations include CHRE referrals to the High Court and appeals against both registration appeals and fitness to practise decisions.

The Fitness to Practise department work plan reflects both the work of the three practice committees and the operational requirements and improvements necessary to run the fitness to practise process and also those processes which lie outside the work of the practice committees.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Anaru Smiler
Brendon Edmonds
Rachel Bull
Ola Odusanya

Hearings Officer
Hearings Officer
Scheduling Officer
Scheduling Officer

Administrators

Jameel Anwar
Corrado Palmas

Team Administrator
Team Administrator.

The Lead Case Managers and Administrators report to the Fitness to Practise Manager, each case team reports to a lead case manager. The Hearings Manager, Fitness to Practise Manager and PA to the Director of Fitness to Practise report to the Director of Fitness to Practise.

Recruitment in 2008 - 2009

Three new positions will be created in 2008-2009

- 2 Hearings Officers (including one scheduler)
- 1 Case Officer (Grant Edgeworth with effect from 1st April 2008)

Financial

There will be a fitness to practise budget of approximately £4.5 million in 2008-2009 This is an increase of approximately 25% from 2007-2008.

This is approximately 34% of HPC's operating budget.

This budget is based on an estimated 480 new allegations being received in 2008-2009 and a handover of 55 Psychology cases which are at the investigating panel stage.

It is anticipated that there will be approximately 600 days of hearing in 2008-2009 (comprising of full hearings, consent applications, interim orders, review hearings, investigating panels and registration appeal panels)

It is anticipated that the rate of health and character declarations and protection of title cases will remain steady.

The budget estimate also includes CHRE and registrant appeals to the High Court. This includes the financial costs of appeals that were made in 2007-2008 but not concluded until 2008-2009.

The budget is also predicated on fitness to practise case managers presenting interim orders, Article 30 review hearings, consent applications and some conviction FTP cases. Case Managers/Officers present all investigating panel and health and character cases to the investigating/registration panel.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Responsibilities

The Director of Fitness to Practise is responsible for the overall management of the team, the development and implementation of the strategy and work plan and the development and management of new projects. The Director of Fitness to Practise also has specific responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

Case Management

The Head of Case Management is responsible for HPC's Case Management function across the directorate's range of responsibilities. This includes the management, presentation and investigation of fitness to practise case, the investigation and management of protection of title offences and the management of registration appeals and health and character declarations. She manages the lead case managers in the department and the team administrators.

Case Teams

There are three case teams within the directorate each managed by a lead case manager. Each lead case manager has a case load and management and auditing responsibilities.

Case teams 1 and 2 will comprise of case managers who are responsible for the management and investigation of allegations and the presentation of fitness to practise cases. Cases will be presented by the team who do not manage the cases.

Case team 3 has responsibility for registration appeals, prosecution of offences, incorrect entry cases, conviction FTP cases and health and character cases. They do not present Article 30 review cases, consent applications or interim orders.

Adjudication – Hearings Team

The Hearings Manager manages the hearings team and she is responsible for the management of this team. She is also responsible for partner liaison and for some elements of budget management and forecasting.

Hearings Officers are responsible for arranging all fitness to practise hearings including review of orders and interim orders. They also act as clerk to the tribunal. They undertake follow-up work after a hearing and some elements of HPC's witness support provisions.

In 2008-2009 there will be two full time schedulers to ensure a steady progress in the fixing of cases. The other hearings officers will continue to clerk and then fix cases on the days where they are not clerking.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Administrators

The Team Administrators provides support to the department across all of its activities. This includes hearing preparation, some elements of the witness support provisions and maintenance of the fitness to practise alerts system

The PA to the Director of Fitness to Practise undertakes all diary management and secretarial duties for the Director. She is also responsible for the logging and tracking of all invoices to ensure that costs billed were incurred.

Fitness to Practise Activities 2008-2009

There are four main processes which generate the majority of the department's work. This is outlined in the paragraphs below. There is also a number of supporting activities to ensure this work is done. In each area of work, we will continue to review, refine and improve existing processes

Fitness to Practise department activity for 2008-2009 is also summarised here.

1. *Fitness to Practise Allegations and Hearings Management*

Management of fitness to practise allegations and hearings will continue to be the biggest area of the departments work. Key areas of work in this area remain the improvement and refinement of existing processes and procedures, trends analysis, the fitness to practise annual report and risk management. We will also continue to work to ensure the processes and procedures are accessible and that all stakeholders are communicated with. We will also continue to review equality and diversity requirements as they relate to the work of the fitness to practise department. We will also work on implementing the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups and Protecting Vulnerable Groups Act and respond to consultations where appropriate.

We will also review our processes for hearing fixing so as to ensure resources are managed to their best effect. This includes questionnaires for panels, the production of a brochure specifically for witnesses and further refinement of our witness support material.

It is also important to manage resources effectively so as to ensure the increased demands on the department match capacity.

2. *Health and Character Declarations*

We will continue to work to improve and refine the processes by which HPC manages health and character declarations on admission, readmission and renewal to the register and self-referrals by registrants. We will work with the policy and standards department on the review of the health and character process which is on going from 2007-2008.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

3. *Prosecution of Offences*

- Article 39 of the Health Professions Order 2001 sets out offences that can be prosecuted under that order

We will continue to refine and review the process and procedure operated by the HPC.

4. *Registration Appeals*

The management of the registration appeals case load is the other key area of work in the fitness to practise department area. It is important to continue to ensure that this process is efficient and effective, ensuring documents are properly managed and where appropriate, cases are presented by case managers.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmtc	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Other Activities

There are a number of other activities which support the processes operated by the Fitness to Practise department. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

Publications

A number of publications are produced by the fitness to practise team – ranging from the fitness to practise annual report and brochures explaining the processes, through to practice notes on sanctions, interim orders and allegations, and other documents such as those explaining the registration appeals process. These documents are updated and reviewed regularly.

Website

The department is responsible for information provided on the HPC website regarding fitness to practise hearings as well as the information online about the fitness to practise and protection of title processes. In 2008-2009 we will review policies around information that is available on line.

Panel recruitment, selection and training

In 2008-2009 the department will work with the Partner Manager to appoint and train new panel members, legal assessors and panel chairs.

Two review days will take place for Legal Assessors and Panel chairs. These review days are used to update legal assessors and panel chairs on regulatory law updates, provide feedback on CHRE learning points and look at ways to improve decision making. The department will lead in the training of all new panel members, including two day training sessions for all new panel members, and refresher training for 50% of our panel members. We will continue to send regular updates to all partners in the form of a newsletter on the work of the department and other relevant updates.

Information Technology

We will continue to review the information technology we have in place to support the work of the department. We will also be involved in testing of new systems and LISA enhancements. This includes the FTP Net regulate statuses project (More information about this project can be found in the project management workplan).

Committee Work

The fitness to practise department works with a number of committees – including the three fitness to practice committees on fitness to practise issues and the Education and Training Committee with regards to the health and character process.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Liaison with stakeholders

We will continue to work with all stakeholders (including employers of registrants) to improve understanding and accessibility and feedback trends that have arisen out of fitness to practise cases.

Transfer of new professions

We will work to ensure the effective and efficient handover of fitness to practise cases from the applied psychologists and ensure readiness for the planned transfer by the Department of Health and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) of the Hearing Aid Council to the remit of the HPC.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmt	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Achieving the Fitness to Practise Department Objectives 2008-2009

We have identified a number of objectives that will require action and completion in 2008-2009.

Fitness to Practise Objective - Improved accessibility, communication and information provision

A key area of work for the fitness to practise department is ensuring that its policies, procedures and decisions are communicated in a clear, open and transparent fashion. To this end we will:

1. produce the Fitness to Practise annual report – including analysis of statistics, decision making and case studies;
2. complete our equality and diversity action points;
3. refine and further develop the process for taking complaints over the telephone;
4. review and develop the witness support process;
5. provide feedback and learning points from fitness to practise cases (linked to the trends analysis);
6. continue to review all documentation produced by the fitness to practise department;
7. work with the communications department to provide key messages from the work of the fitness to practise department (including employer events and a greater contribution to the HPC newsletter) and;
8. work with professionals (including Council members) to improve FTP department understanding of the professions regulated by the HPC.

Fitness to Practise Objective –Consistent and effective decision making

In order to ensure that decision making is consistent and effective we will undertake the following activities:

1. feedback learning points from CHRE learning points meetings to those involved in the fitness to practise process;
2. review and develop the indicative sanctions note;
3. closely monitor updates in regulatory law;
4. review days for legal assessors and panel chairs; and
5. train new panel members, panel chairs and legal assessors.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Fitness to Practise Objective – Ensure processes and procedures are working to their best effect

In order to ensure that the processes in place are working to their best effect we will:

1. continually review and refine all of our processes;
2. review the implementation of disposal of cases by consent and case directions
3. further develop how a case load is managed and implement risk assessment;
4. be involved in the transfer of new professions;
5. complete the review of the health and character process;
6. review our data protection and retention policies; and
7. undertake a review of our processes for organising hearings including hearings risk assessment.

Fitness to Practise Objective Effective management of resources

To ensure that resources are used to their best effect we will:

1. ensure appropriate training and guidance material is provided to the fitness to practise team;
2. refine and further develop service level standards;
3. work with statisticians to refine the forecasting model (of cases, hearings and partners required)
4. continue to undertake risk assessment for fitness to practise cases;
5. review the reporting and usage capabilities of databases and systems used by the fitness to practise department;
6. work with the partners team on the process to appoint, reappoint and train panel members;
7. review how hearings are arranged and fixed (including the use of external venues);
8. ensure budgetary controls are in place to ensure the proper management of the fitness to practise budget;
9. further refine the model of investigation (including the further development of particulars) and implement risk assessment for fitness to practise cases; and
10. further develop systems for operational forecasting.

Fitness to Practise Objective Ensure effective management of risk

The Fitness to Practise department manages a number of risks in relation to its functions. The key areas of risk in the fitness to practise area are as follows:

1. legal cost over-runs;
2. legal challenge to HPC operations;
3. exceptional tribunal costs;
4. witness non-attendance;

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

5. physical assault by hearing attendees; and
6. registration appeals.

We will ensure appropriate measures are in place to mitigate against these risks.

2009 – 2010

In 2009-2010 we will continue to build on and improve the work and processes that have begun previously and embed best practice within the department. This will also include reviewing the information technology that is in place to support the work of the department and on-boarding of new professions. We anticipate that as registrant numbers increase, we will need to create new case teams.

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

We will complete the action points from the Equality and Diversity scheme relevant to the Fitness to Practise department. The Equality and Diversity action points relevant to the Fitness to Practise department are as follows:

1. Review practice notes in light of the changes to equality legislation. This includes revising the practice note on equal treatment;
2. Produce a practice note on disability to ensure that panels are informed about the law and requirements about reasonable adjustments;
3. Train our fitness to practise partners in issues pertinent to ensuring a faire hearing, including equality and diversity issues and evaluate the effectiveness of this;
4. Analyse demographic data and present the findings to the fitness to practise forum;
5. Review the way in which we schedule hearings so as to ensure that we identify and accommodate any additional needs at an early stage;
6. Establish a policy around the handling and purchasing of religious books

We will ensure that as we complete our work plan and review the policies and procedures that are in place, we will ensure we will take into account any issues that could have an adverse impact and mitigate against this.

We will continue to aim to improve accessibility to the fitness to practise process. This can be particularly seen by the process by which we can take statements of complaint over the telephone.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Appendix 1:

Fitness to Practise Activities Table 2008-2009

The table below sets out the fitness to practise department's timetable in achieving the tasks set out in the work plan above.

Also provided is the fitness to practise forecast for 2008-2009

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmtc	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Accessibility, Communication and Information Provision

Key: KJ=Kelly Johnson ES=Eve Seall, AA=Alison Abodarham YH=Yasmin Hussain

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	FTP Employee involvement
Fitness to Practise Annual Report	Requirement of the Order	Employee Time Communications	Improve Influence Promote	January 2009	April 2009 – FTP Committees to approve	KJ/ES/AA Lead Case Managers
Collect, collate and review demographic data Equality and diversity	To effectively monitor and audit processes	Day-to-day operations IT (to make necessary changes to systems) Response from complainants and registrants	Improve	April 2007 (ongoing area of work)	Ongoing	KJ/ES/Lead Case Managers, Team Administrators
Witness Support review and refinement Production of Brochure	Best practice Fairness	Day-to-day operations Communications	Improve Promote	Collation of questionnaires began in October 2006	Ongoing	
Trends Analysis and Feedback from Messages Statistical Analysis	Consistency Reduce number of cases	Day-to-day operations Communications Department	Improve Influence Promote	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Communication with Employers	Stakeholder engagement	Day-to-day operations Communications Department	Improve Influence Promote	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ Communications

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Implement the requirements of SVG and PVG	Legislative requirement	Legislative timetable All Departments Day to day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ/ES/Lead Case managers/AA
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Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Decision Making

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
CHRE learning points	Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Trends Analysis in Fitness to Practise and Health and Character processes, and in equality and diversity as it relates to FTP	Improved consistency Feedback to stakeholders Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Review Indicative Sanctions Note Updates in regulatory law	Regulatory Law updates frequent Best practice	CHRE	Improve Influence	May 2007	September 2007	KJ
Review days for legal assessors and panel chairs Newsletter for partners	Dissemination of information Improved decision Making Best Practice	HR (Partners)	Improve Influence Promote	Review day for 2008 scheduled for June	Ongoing	KJ ES AA Yasmin Hussain

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Processes and Procedures

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Implement recommendations of the H&C review, provide guidance for education providers	Process in place for two years Recommendations of Bichard	Day-to-day operations Policy and Standards White Paper	Improve Influence Promote	March 2008 (paper to ETC)	Consultation and key decisions by 2009	KJ ES Michael Guthrie
Continual Review Prosecution of Offences	Ensure processes are effective and efficient	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ ES Lead Case Managers
Review of FTP Processes - including implementation of consent and case directions.	Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ ES

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Resources

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Training FTP Team	Effective management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Risk Assessment	Effective management of cases		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	Case Managers ES
Information Technology	Essential for management of process		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	ES
LISA Statuses Project LISA Testing Finance System Upgrade	Effective management of resources	IT Projects	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	ALL
Partner Training, reappointment and appointment Partner Newsletter	Essential to the process	Human Resources (Partners)	Improve	April 2007	July 2007	KJ YH AA ES
Arrangements for hearing fixing	Effective management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	AA
Operational Forecasting	All rationale set out above		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

5 Risk Management

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Risk Management	Risk Management	All	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	All

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-12-12	b	F2P	STRAT	Fitness to Practise Workplan 2008-2009	Draft DD: None	Internal RD: None

Human Resources Department 2008 – 2009 Workplan

Contents

Introduction.....	2
This document	2
Resources.....	2
Human Resources activities in 2008 - 2009.....	3
Employees	3
Recruitment, selection and induction	3
Human resources database	4
Support and training.....	4
Partners.....	5
Partner recruitment and contract management.....	5
Partner training and inducting.....	5
Employees and partners	5
Budget.....	5
Achieving the Human Resources objectives in 2008 - 2009	6
2009 - 2010.....	9
Human Resources activities in the past year 2007 - 2008.....	9
Risk management.....	12

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Introduction

As the HPC continued to expand its employee numbers, the focus of the Human Resources Department in 2007-2008 was the consolidation and improvement of its service to the employees through policy development and enhancing the functions of data management through an HR intranet system for employees. The Department also responded to unexpected events such as a change in pension scheme provider and worked to ensure that employee relations issues were managed appropriately during such changes.

The work of the Human Resources Department expanded significantly during 2007-2008 with the addition of the partner management function to the department. Whilst the focus last year was ensuring standard policies were introduced and adhered to and the administering of contracts, in 2008-2009 the partner role will be far more active in the recruitment and training areas.

The ability of the Human Resources Department to respond to events which could not be anticipated was an important attribute in delivering the services required last year. This will also be a key feature of the 2008-2009 workplan as there must be the ability to adjust work where needed to meet any unexpected demands that arise.

This document

This document explains the work priorities for the financial year April 2008 – March 2009. It addresses how the Human Resources Department will progress over the next year to meet new legal obligations and progress improvements for employee management at the HPC. The organisation is a rapidly growing one and as with previous years, there will be a continued focus in the workplan on recruiting employees and partners with the appropriate competencies to fulfil all roles. This will be of particular importance in 2008 with the need to fill the new partner role of CPD Assessors and for the partner functions that will be required when the Applied Psychologists are regulated by the HPC.

It should be noted that the Human Resources Department does not manage any of the human resources related functions which apply to Council (such as recruitment of Council members) and that this work is delivered by the Secretariat Department.

Resources

The Human Resources Department consists of five employees as follows:

Larissa Foster	Director of Human Resources
Kelly Webster	Human Resources Manager
Sam Ha	Human Resources Team Administrator
Yasmin Hussain	Partner Manager
Kam Thandi	Partner Administrator

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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There are currently no plans to increase the Department with any additional permanent team members.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the overall management of the team, the day-to-day running of the department, the development of the strategy and the workplan and the development and management of new projects. The Director is a member of the Executive Management team and is involved in most capability or disciplinary hearings and the provision of human resources related advice to managers.

The Team Administrator provides administrative support in relation to the employee management functions (not the partner functions). This primarily involves co-ordinating the paperwork associated with recruitment and training and maintaining databases and filing systems.

The Human Resources Manager is responsible for the whole range of generalist human resources tasks. These include interviewing, management of sick leave across the organisation, and advising managers and employees. The Manager liaises regularly with contacts such as the Work Foundation.

The Partner Manager provides a service to the partners of HPC and the department heads who manage the various partners. Her activities incorporate the day to day management of partner issues such as recruitment, induction and training of partners and implementing partner policies. In addition, the Partner Manager is a key member of the equality and diversity project team and chairs this employee working group.

The Partner Administrator was employed recently to assist with the paperwork around all partner matters including performance management, contract administration and training.

Human Resources activities in 2008 - 2009

There are seven main areas of work undertaken within the Human Resources area. The following paragraphs summarise the headline employee and partner activity for the year.

Employees

Recruitment, selection and induction will form a significant part of the department's workload in 2008. Employee numbers now total 103 and along with filling any ad hoc vacancies which arise as a result of resignations, 15 newly approved permanent posts in the budget this year require advertising.

The newly approved posts for 2008 are;

Education - Approvals and Monitoring Department

- Education Manager 1
- Education Officer 1
- Education Administrator 1

3 of 14

DateVer.Dept/CmteDoc TypeTitleStatusInt. Aud.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Communications Department	
• Communications CPD Manager	1
Registration Department	
• Registration Advisor	6
IT Department	
• Network and Support Administrator	1
• Contractor	1
Fitness to Practise Department	
• Hearings Officer	2
• Case Officer	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>15</u>

Maintenance of the **human resources database (Professional Personnel), in particular the intranet component (HRinfo)** will continue to be a priority over the next year. In 2007-2008 the intranet function of Professional Personnel was developed to increase transparency and efficiency by allowing employees to access their details and records electronically and apply for leave online. As this function has only recently gone live, maintenance, monitoring and adjustments require time spent.

The **Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004** will become applicable to the HPC in 2008 as the permanent employee numbers are predicted to average over 100 throughout the year for the first time. This will necessitate research by the Human Resources Department, initiating the appropriate documents and policies and forming an employee representative group.

Support and training for managers and employees will continue to take time for the department in the coming year. Whilst the equality and diversity training has now been conducted organisation wide, there is a rolling programme of training for new employees and managers on this and various other areas.

There are a number of ongoing activities that are part of the human resources plan every year including annual position description updates, co-ordinating the annual pay review with the external salary evaluation company and managing the annual performance review process in the first quarter of each year.

Last year also saw a number of challenging employee relations issues. Individual or organisational human resources issues can arise which are impossible to anticipate or predict. It is crucial that the Department be able to redirect its activities to address such situations as necessary and provide the support to Managers early on in the process so that if any matter results in a tribunal hearing, the HPC is well able to defend its position.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Partners

Partner recruitment and contract management will form the main area of work for the partner management function this year. The partners department will face a large administrative task once again in 2008 due to the fact that all partner agreements (other than those newly appointed to partner vacancies in 2007) expire in July 2008. All expiring partner agreements will be rolled over for a further two year period, and for partners who may not wish to continue their work with the HPC, any replacement ad-hoc recruitment will need to be undertaken.

Recruitment is currently underway for CPD Assessors from our internal existing pool of partners. A need may then arise for external advertising for any remaining vacancies should the required number of posts not be filled through internal candidates. Recruitment will also take place in order to fulfil the requirements created by taking on the new profession of Applied Psychologists and this will form the main part of the workload for the year.

The above will then necessitate time spent on **training and inducting** new partners, as well as ensuring that existing partners receive regular refresher training.

Employees and partners

We will continue to support organisation-wide **projects** by providing human resources support and advice for projects which may be major areas of development for the organisation. This includes training. The primary project in 2008-2009 which will require human resources input are the organisation wide **Equality and Diversity Project**. The human resources role includes advising managers and employees, organising training, developing policies and chairing the employee working group.

Budget Management

This year will see the department manage both the human resources general budget and the partner budget. The general human resources budget totals £423,500. Headline areas of the budget consist of £31,000 for organisation wide training, £30,000 allocated to legal expenses associated with employment related matters and £135,000 budgeted for organisational recruitment.

The partner budget of £279,000 largely consists of provisions for partner recruitment and training. Two significant sums forming part of this figure are £70,000 which has been allocated for partner recruitment, and £130,000 for training.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Achieving the Human Resources Objectives in 2008 - 2009

We have identified nine objectives in the strategy. In 2008-2009 we will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

Human Resources (Employees) Objective 1:

To maintain our increase in the level of customer service from human resources to employees and managers through the HR intranet function we will:

- monitor the newly developed intranet function of the human resources database (Professional Personnel) and address any “teething” difficulties which have arisen since the system went live.
- investigate various improvements to the system such as options of attaching different documents to employee’s electronic records, reviewing how sickness review reports are run to improve efficiency and adding improvements to the leave functionalities.
- cross-train the team on running reports and using Professional Personnel.

The timescale for this objective is December 2008.

Human Resources (Employees) Objective 2:

To develop our existing employees, ensure that current practices are adopted in all areas and encourage retention of employees we will:

- train new managers in the HPC performance management system, competency based interview techniques and diversity.
- conduct a training needs analysis following the annual performance development reviews and organise any group training for common training needs.
- conduct internal training for managers on the management of probationary employees.

The timescale for this objective is August 2008.

Human Resources (Employees) Objective 3:

To meet our legal obligations in a proactive way and develop best practice processes we will:

- research our obligations under the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations when the HPC employee numbers reach the appropriate level (100 permanent employees averaged over a 12 month period).
- commence the process of negotiating an information and consultation agreement.

The timescale for this is anticipated to be February 2009 but will depend on employee numbers.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Human Resources (Employees) Objective 4:

To ensure that we continue to provide a high standard of service to employees and to maintain positive employee relations we will:

- continue to liaise with all parties concerned including Barnett Waddingham and Friends Provident to ensure that the pension scheme transfer remains smooth, any new matters are dealt with and that all pensions matters are dealt with effectively and efficiently.
- investigate and trial options for adding a 360 degree feedback mechanism within the organisation to improve communication and feedback channels on performance.
- conduct an employee attitude survey.

The timescale for these objectives are ongoing throughout 2008 – 2009, however all are to be achieved by March 2009.

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 5:

To address the 600 partner agreements expiring in July 2008 and ensure that we have enough partners to fulfil our obligations at any one time we will:

- write to all partners holding partner agreements which expire in July 2008 to extend their agreements to June 2010.
- advertise any vacancies for roles which result from partners not wishing to renew their agreements; utilising the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments as previously.

The timescale for this is July 2008 for the first point and November 2008 for the second.

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 6:

To recruit, select and train the numbers and types of partners required for HPC to perform its CPD functions we will:

- continue to liaise with the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments and department heads on recruiting vacancies from our existing partner pool for CPD Assessors. These numbers are currently anticipated as 12 ODP Assessors and 15 Chiropodist Assessors required for 1 July 2008.
- recruit any vacancies which are not filled from our existing partners by advertising externally.
- provide training to existing and new partners on this new partner role. recruit towards the latter part of 2008-2009 for the other professions that we will need to audit.

The timescale for this is July 2008 for initial recruitment and throughout 2008 for the remaining professions.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Human Resources (Partners) Objective 7:

To recruit, select and train the numbers and types of partners required for HPC to perform its functions in relation to taking on the Applied Psychologists we will:

- continue to liaise with the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments, the project team and relevant department heads in recruiting for these partners. At this time it is anticipated that 71 partners will be required across all partner roles.
- organise training for the new partners in conjunction with the department heads.
- monitor and anticipate partner needs based on the current information available and continue to recruit for new roles where necessary.

The timescale for this is June 2008

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 8:

To ensure that our partners are adequately equipped to fulfil their roles effectively we will continue to train them and improve our service to them by:

- providing training for all new partners and for all existing partners taking on new partner roles as well as refresher training for all partners generally.
- continuing our rolling programme of training all partners in equality and diversity.
- investigating options for a future partner extranet and a newsletter in conjunction with the Communications Department.

The timescale for this is March 2009.

Human Resources (Partners and Employees) Objective 9:

To ensure that we fulfil our departmental obligations under the overall Equality and Diversity scheme we will:

- analyse partner and employee diversity statistics and present these to the Finance and Resources Committee.
- continue our rolling programme of diversity training for all new employees
- continue our training of all new and existing partners through an equality and diversity session at each refresher training day or days for any new partner training, including for all new partners when the Applied Psychologists come onto the register.
- introduce new methods of measuring data so that statistics are available in the future to analyse for possible improvements. This will be achieved by additional questions within the employee exit questionnaire about equality and diversity and implementing any measures recommended by the consultant and agreed by the EMT after training has been conducted.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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- continue to chair the new internal Equality and Diversity Working Group and monitor its progress (Partner Manager).

2009 - 2010

2009 – 2010 will be a year in which we continue to undertake our established activities and improve our processes and service provision to partners and employees. It is an opportunity to roll out practices which are new for the HPC and to improve on our current services to employees and partners (develop improved methods of communication such as an extranet and newsletter for partners and through the employee information and consulting group). Taking on new professions that are anticipated up to 2011 such as the practitioner psychologists, hearing aid dispensers, practitioners of complementary and alternative medicines and counsellors and psychotherapists will have a significant impact on the workload in relation to partner management in particular.

Much of our work will continue to be reactive (recruitment through employee and partner turnover, employee relations issues and responding to employment tribunal claims) however we will be better organised with this than external events have allowed us to be previously. Areas such as training will not only cover minimum requirements but will encompass more additional benefits such as those relating to equality and diversity or improved succession planning.

Human Resources Activities in the Past Year 2007 - 2008

It would be useful to review the activities contained in the workplan which was submitted one year ago as part of the background which has formed the basis of this new workplan. Five major projects for 2007- 2008 were proposed at the time and were completed as follows:

1. Development of Intranet Function of Human Resources Database (Professional Personnel) for employees.

This objective was achieved, however, due to unexpected time being spent on setting up the new pension scheme in 2007, the objective was achieved in December 2007 rather than the originally planned date of September 2007. The intranet function (HRinfo) is now live and is actively being used by employees and managers to book and approve leave respectively.

2. Review and Update of the Employee Handbook.

This objective has been met with the Employee Handbook updated, employee's consulted and approval gained from the Finance and Resources Committee. Following a notice period for the changes to come into place, the revised handbook will be effective on 20 February 2008. This objective was set for July – September 2007 originally, however, again due to time spent on the pension scheme, the objective was delivered throughout November 2007 – January 2008 instead.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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3. Auditing HR Practices as Part of the Equality and Diversity Scheme and Trialling Skills Testing of Registration Advisors.

This objective was partially met. An audit was successfully taken of existing practices and procedures as part of the overall Equality and Diversity Scheme and any relevant human resources policies updated in this area. All new job candidates are now entered on the recruitment section of Professional Personnel. Statistics can now be generated on successful methods of recruitment and equality and diversity. These objectives were met within the required timeframe.

The area of this goal which addressed trialling the testing of numerical and written skills testing for Registration Advisors was not met. This was due to the significant time impact this would have taken for both the Human Resources Department and Registration Department, which after investigating the various options available, was found to be more time consuming than anticipated. Further investigations are required into both the time commitment involved and the cost to the organisation and will be progressed when both departments have the capacity.

4. Training, Investigation of 360 Degree Feedback Options and Support for Employees During Pension Changes.

This objective, set for January 2008, was met. The range of organisational training was expanded with middle managers receiving "Finance for Non-finance Managers" training, presentations training held for senior managers who required this and all employees trained on equality and diversity issues.

The options around 360 degree feedback were investigated by the department and time was spent discussing these at an EMT away day. This was further progressed by a trial period being undertaken by EMT and the effectiveness of this and any subsequent further progression of this will be examined in February 2008.

5. Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004.

Employee numbers were monitored, however they did not reach a level where the above regulations would apply. This timescale was marked ongoing and dependent on employee numbers in 2007 and has been transferred into the 2008 objectives accordingly.

6. Pension Scheme, Pay Policy and Registrations Restructures

Whilst there were no set timescales for these objectives in 2007, as they depended on various Committee, Council and departmental decisions, these objectives were all successfully achieved. We worked successfully with the Finance Department to manage the pension scheme transfer (particularly in relation to employee relations aspects) and ensured that the Human Resources Department adhered to legal obligations and worked in a timely manner. We also presented the organisational pay policy to the Finance and Resources Committee and amended it following their suggestions. We also advised not only the Registration Department on their

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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reorganisation but also the Education – Approvals and Monitoring Department and the Fitness to Practise Department on their respective reorganisations.

7. Reappointments Process for Partners

The reappointments process for partners whose agreements expired in 2007 was successfully undertaken, with the utilisation of a representative from the Office for the Commission of Public Appointments to advise on the selection process. A total of 290 partners were reappointed. This was conducted by the anticipated timescale of July 2007.

8. Recruitment of CPD Assessors and General Training

Work on the recruitment of CPD Assessors was achieved as planned by March 2008. Recruitment from the internal pool of candidates has been completed and external advertising is starting to fill the outstanding vacancies in March 2008. The recruitment process is still ongoing and will be completed according to the various timescales in 2008 outlined earlier. Training dates for the CPD Assessors have also been scheduled.

All training objectives were also met, with training for all new partners conducted throughout 2007, along with refresher training for existing Registration Assessors and Panel members. All training for partners included a session covering equality and diversity.

9. Development of a Partner Handbook and Progression of the Performance Review System

This objective was achieved, with a comprehensive Partner Handbook developed and approved by the Finance and Resources Committee prior to March 2008. The Partner Performance Review system was also progressed, with Visitors and Registration Assessors now being regularly appraised. Work is currently being undertaken on a system for Panel members.

Risk Management

The Human Resources Department manage risks within the HR department and throughout the HPC in relation to overall employee management.

Key areas are recruitment and health and safety for both employees and partners. Within the employee risk management area are issues such as turnover, skills development, managing employee performance matters and ensuring compliance with employment legislation including managing any litigation.

Please see the appendix below for details.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	2007-12-04	a	HRD
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Appendix: Risks Managed by the Human Resources Department (Employees)

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2008	Probability Feb 2008
11.1	Loss of key HPC employees (person cover risk)	President, Chief Executive and EMT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Committee Chairmen cover for President loss, President and EMT cover for CE loss until interim appointment made, cross training (partial or full) and process documentation.				
11.2	High turnover of employees	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations Remuneration and HR Strategy, regular performance reviews, exit interviews analysis.				
11.3	Inability to recruit suitable employees	Director of HR	Low	Medium
Mitigations HR Strategy and adequate resourcing of the department, careful specification of recruitment adverts and interview panel selection, hiring of skilled temporary staff in the interim.				
11.4	Lack of technical and managerial skills to deliver the strategy	Chief Executive	Low	Medium
Mitigations HR strategy and goals and objectives, buy in the skills or staff up-skilling, on the job coaching or training, training needs analysis and training delivery, some projects or work initiatives delayed or outsourced.				
11.5	Health and Safety of Employees	HR Director and Facilities Manager	Low	Low

Mitigations Health and Safety Training, policies and procedures, Health and Safety assessments (Lawrence, Webster Forest). Restricted access to the building site 22/26 Stannary Street, Personal Injury and travel insurance.				
11.6	High sick leave levels	EMT	Low	Medium
Mitigations Adequate staff (volume and type), return to work interviews and sick leave monitoring, regular progress reviews.				
11.7	Employee and ex-employee litigation	Director of HR	Low	High
Mitigations Regular one to one sessions between managers and employees and regular performance reviews, HR legislation and disciplinary policies, compromise agreements if necessary				
11.8	Employer/employee inappropriate behaviour	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations Whistle blowing policy, other HR policies and procedures, employee assistance programme				
11.9	Non compliance with employment legislation	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations HR Strategy, obtain legislation updates and legal advice, HR policies and manager training				

Appendix: Risks managed by the Human Resources department (Partners)

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2007	Probability Feb 2007
6.1	Inability to recruit and/or retain suitable Partners	Partner Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations Sound recruitment strategy, training, HR Strategy – appropriate compensation strategy in place				
6.2	Incorrect interpretation of law resulting in CHRE review	Director FTP and Director of Operations (Visitors)	Low	Low
Mitigations Training, legal assessors advice availability				
6.3	Health and Safety of Partners	Partner Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations Personal injury and travel insurance, liability insurance, road safety policy for vehicle drivers, restricted access to the building site 22/26 Stannery Street				

HPC's Human Resources Strategy

Finance and Resources Committee

Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London

19 March 2008

Larissa Foster, Director of Human Resources



Contents

I. Employees

II. Legislation

HPC's Human Resources strategy is to ensure we have the appropriate employees to deliver our objectives

- **Open, Transparent and Effective Recruitment Processes**
 - Grow our own talent
 - Recruit specialist skills where needed to achieve the quality of people we need
- **Promotes Training of Employees**
 - Use internal and external training resources to improve quality and competence of our employees
- **Foster a Modern Working Culture**
 - Non-hierarchical
 - Flat structure
 - Inclusive decision making
 - Hard working with social activities
 - Work/home life balance
- **Customer Service Focus**
 - Recognition of the importance of customer service internally and externally
- **Supportive Work Environment**
 - Flexible hours offered to employees with family responsibilities
 - Home Working
 - Supportive of further study
 - Graduated return to work/part time work offered to parents
- **Innovation and Creativity**
 - Open-door policy by senior management leading to opportunities for employees to propose ideas and solutions
 - Forums (middle management group) for people to express opinions/opportunities for improvement on processes

HPC's Human Resources strategy is to ensure that we comply enthusiastically with all Human Resources legislation

- **All Human Resources legislation is complied with, the most**

All legislation complied with, most significantly:

- Employment Act July 2002
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equal Opportunities Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Flexible Working (Eligibility, Complaints and Remedies (Amendment) Regulations
- Information and Consultation Regulations

Information Technology Work plan 2008 – 2009

Contents

Glossary	2
Introduction	2
This document	3
Resources	3
Human resources	3
Financial resources.....	4
Information Technology Activities in 2008 - 2009	5
Services	5
Existing services	5
New Services for 2008/2009	6
Development.....	7
Major Projects	7
Small Projects	7
Achieving the IT Objectives in 2008 - 2009	7
Information Technology Objective 1:	7
Information Technology Objective 2:	8
Information Technology Objective 3:	8
Information Technology Objective 4:	8
Information Technology activities for 2009 - 2010	10
Information Technology activities for 2007 - 2008	10
1. Business as usual objectives	10
2. On boarding of New Professions	10
3. Continued Professional Development (CPD) technology built	10
4. Professional Qualifications Directive.....	11
Risk Management	11
Appendix: Risks Managed by the Information Technology department.....	12

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Glossary

BAU.....	Business As Usual
Blackberry.....	Remote diary and calendar management technology
CRM.....	Customer Relationship Management
Crystal Reports.....	Report writing software package
FTE.....	Full Time Equivalent
FTP.....	Fitness To Practice
HR Info.....	Software package that provides Human Resources management functionality
IT.....	Information Technology
ISA.....	Independent Safeguarding Authority
LAN.....	Local Area Network
Lotus Notes.....	Software package that provides application and mail functionality
MS-Word.....	Microsoft Word
POE.....	Power Over Ethernet

Introduction

The Health Professions Council (HPC) is entering a period of fundamental change as it transforms from a small to a medium sized organisation. This change will have significant impacts on the internal supporting service providers required to create an infrastructure that will enable the continued development of HPC.

The current HPC strategy identifies the three central priorities for the organisation: *to Improve; to Influence* and *to Promote*. The core function of the Information Technology (IT) department is to support and enable the business to realise these priorities through the achievement of the business objectives.

As an internal supporting service provider, the IT function operates proactively managed services to enable current business processes to function. A large element of the service is reactive to incidents in the infrastructure and changes to business priorities and objectives as HPC adapts to the changing external environment.

The challenge facing the IT department is to manage the conflicting demands of both reactively and proactively provided services without hindering business momentum. HPC has begun to address this need by recruiting a new Director of Information Technology to lead the transformation of the IT function.

The IT function needs to build on previous successes to create solid foundations that enable business growth. Additionally, the overall aim of the IT function is to improve efficiency and effectiveness whilst delivering value for money. These aims will be achieved through a process of evolution rather than revolution.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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This document

This work plan is underpinned by the HPC Strategy and defines the current Information Technology services provided as well as the work priorities and objectives for the financial year 2008-2009. The document provides a basis against which the work of the IT department can be planned and measured.

Resources

Human resources

Following a reorganisation of the Information Technology Department the team consists of five employees.

Guy Gaskins	Director of Information Technology
James McMahon	IT Support Co-ordinator
Rick Welsby	Back Office Systems Administrator
Richard Watling	Systems Support Analyst
Tyrone Goulbourne	Network and Desktop Support

An additional permanent employee will be recruited in 2008/2009 to support the continued growth of HPC.

Role descriptions

The Director of Information Technology has overall accountability for the IT provision at HPC. The position is responsible for the security and integrity of the IT infrastructure and systems, as well as providing support to and developing the core applications of the organisation.

The IT support co-ordinator role has joint responsibility with the Systems Support Analyst for the identification and resolution of incidents within the IT infrastructure. Additionally the role supports the desktop and server hardware infrastructure support and development.

The Back Office Systems Administrator is primarily responsible for maintaining and developing our bespoke database applications environment providing email and specialist application services.

The Systems Support Analyst is responsible for the identification, recording and resolution of incidents in the IT infrastructure. They are the primary point of contact between the business users and the IT department.

The Network and Desktop Support role is primarily responsible for the desktop and server hardware infrastructure support and development including backup and recovery, and capacity management.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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The IT organisation and the specific responsibilities of each of the roles will be reviewed during 2008/2009.

Resource allocation

For the 2008/2009 financial year the IT resource has been allocated against three categories of work: Business As Usual (BAU), Major project delivery and Small project delivery.

BAU effort has been estimated through a process of identifying recurrent tasks and approximating the effort required to fulfil them over a twelve month period. This includes activities such as incident and problem management, third party supplier management, capacity planning, and penetration testing etc.

Major project delivery effort has been estimated using the available high level project plans.

Small project delivery effort has been estimated following short interviews with key stakeholders.

Category	HPC IT FTE
Business-as-usual	2.8
Major projects	0.6
Small projects	0.6

We are assuming that an additional 0.4 FTE is supplied by a third party Support Company to support Major projects

Financial resources

The 2008/2009 Work Plan assumes an operating budget of £1,130,000 and a capital budget of £83,000. This represents a 34% increase on operating expenditure and a 60% increase in capital expenditure on the 2007/2008 budget. This reflects the reorganisation of the IT department, an increased commitment for third party support and the additional head count to accommodate the growth of HPC and the transformation of the IT service.

Budget	2007/2008	2008/2009
Operating expenditure	£844,000	£1,130,000
Capital expenditure	£52,000	£83,000

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Information Technology Activities in 2008 - 2009

The activities of the IT department can be categorised as either:

- Services which support the current operations
- Development which will alter an existing service or introduce a new one.

Services

The IT function provides a number of end-to-end services comprising several technologies and sub-services that are transparent to the Customer or User. The delivery of each service encompasses all of the enabling functions e.g. the delivery of the Registration service also encompasses the availability of the Network to connect to the Registration system.

Existing services

1. Personal computing (including printing and network storage)
Supply, installation and management of personal computers and all associated software and peripheral devices e.g. scanners
2. Registration
Availability, capacity and performance management of the Registration system
3. Application development
Project management, development and implementation of small scale application development
4. Application support
Availability, capacity and performance management of the many separate internally developed applications:
 - i. Freedom of Information system
 - ii. Fitness to Practice system
 - iii. HR Starters and Leavers system
 - iv. Intranet information service
 - v. Employee database system
 - vi. Suppliers database
 - vii. Pass list database
 - viii. World wide regulators website
 - ix. IT training book library
 - x. Private Papers Document Store
 - xi. Partners Database
 - xii. Meeting room/ resource database
 - xiii. Batch processor schedule
 - xiv. Form request (request application pack on internet)
 - xv. Registration - Temporary Registration Database
 - xvi. Secretariat – Document management system

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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5. Education and Monitoring
Availability, capacity and performance management of the Education and Monitoring database system
6. Email and web browsing
Availability, capacity and performance management of the email function and ability for HPC employees to browse the internet
7. Desktop telephony
Availability, capacity and performance management of the desktop telephony function including call recording and queue management
8. Customer Relationship Management system (CRM)
Availability, capacity and performance management of the Customer Relationship Management system iExtensions.
9. Financial ledger
Availability, capacity and performance management of the SAGE 200 Financial general ledger system
10. Financial Payroll
Availability, capacity and performance management of the SAGE 50 Payroll 2008 system
11. Human Resources Information
Availability, capacity and performance management of the 'HR Info' system for managing the HR requirements HPC
12. Web site hosting (Internet, intranet, extranet)
Availability, capacity and performance management of the hosting only for the HPC websites both internal and external
13. Reports generation and data extract/upload
Provision of Crystal Reports development service and data extraction from key systems to aid external mailings etc
14. Productivity training
Coordination and provision of external professional training for desktop personal productivity tools e.g. MS-Word

New Services for 2008/2009

1. Video Conferencing
Availability, capacity and performance management of the video conference function (excluding the video equipment which is supported by Facilities)
2. Mobile personal mailing service
Availability, capacity and performance of the Blackberry function enabling remote and personal diary and mail synchronisation.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Development

In 2008/2009 the following Major and Small projects will be supported and/or delivered by the IT department.

Major Projects

- Fees 2009
- FTP Registration system statuses rationalisation
- ISA and Equality and Diversity
- Online Application and Renewal
- Practitioner Psychologists

Small Projects

- Network Switch upgrades
- Data line installation to increase telephone capacity
- User Acceptance Test application provision
- 'HR Info' enhancement and 'Time off in lieu' development
- FTP application development
- Mobile personal mailing service implementation
- CRM iExtensions upgrade for support
- Lotus Notes upgrade for support
- New Starters Leavers application development
- Remove processed Direct Debit Instruction, application development for the Registration system
- Recording Cohort data for Approvals and Monitoring system
- Software package and deploy service
- PC hardware technology refresh
- Communication Enhancement Project

Achieving the IT Objectives in 2008 - 2009

There are a number of objectives that the Information Technology department will need to achieve in 2008/2009.

Information Technology Objective 1:

To improve the capability of the current services delivered and ensure the IT function supports HPC growth, we will:

- Systematically review the foundation processes, procedures and technology utilised by the IT department. Identify, Analyse, Improve and Implement changes as necessary.
- Conduct a Customer satisfaction survey to benchmark service quality and customer satisfaction

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Timescale March 2009

Information Technology Objective 2:

To comply with our legal obligations and promote best practice we will:

- Review and improve our software deployment and tracking processes
- Review our software deployment mechanism
- Conduct a quarterly audit of our license compliance by a third party organisation

Timescale Quarterly

Information Technology Objective 3:

To support the Major projects change programme of HPC we will:

- Review the engagement model with key third parties to improve the efficiency and quality of the deliveries.
- Improve the resource planning of internal IT resource to better support project schedules
- Assign specific IT resource to lead and own the IT deliverable from an HPC perspective
- Directly support the following Major projects:
 - Fees 2009
 - FTP Registration system statuses rationalisation
 - ISA and Equality and Diversity
 - Online Application and Renewal
 - Practitioner Psychologists

Timescale to individual Project plan

Information Technology Objective 4:

To support the Small projects change programme of HPC we will:

- Assign specific IT resource to lead and own the product delivery
- Plan, develop, report and implement the agreed changes to budget
- Directly support the following Small projects:
 - Network Switch upgrades
*Review the existing architecture for the Local Area Network (LAN).
Improve the reliability, resilience, capacity of the Network infrastructure enabling Power over Ethernet (POE) functionality*
 - Data line installation
Increase the capacity of the telephone system to meet peak usage
 - User Acceptance Test application provision
Improve the quality of the User Acceptance Test cycles for application development cycles by employing a specialist tool for controlling,

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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monitoring and reporting against test scripts

- 'HR Info' enhancement and 'Time off in lieu' development
Support the development of the 'HR Info' system to meet the new requirements as defined by the Human resources department
- FTP application development
Analyse, develop and implement new requirements to the Fitness To Practice Lotus Notes system supporting the FTP Work Plan
- Mobile personal mailing service implementation
Implement the Blackberry service to support mobile mailing and diary management
- CRM iExtensions upgrade
Upgrade the Customer Relationship Management system iExtensions to retain support and resolve existing known Errors
- Lotus Notes upgrade
Upgrade the Lotus Notes environment to retain support and maintenance
- New Starters Leavers application development
Analyse, develop and implement new requirements for the New Starters and Leavers application to support the Human Resources Work Plan
- Remove processed Direct Debit Instructions, application development for the Registration system
Support the analysis, development, testing and implementation of changes to the Registration system to improve Financial processing
- Recording Cohort data for Approvals and Monitoring system
Analyse, develop and implement new requirements for the Approvals and Monitoring database to support the Approvals and Monitoring Work Plan
- Software package and deploy service
Analyse requirement for and implement an application to control, manage, deploy and report against software deployed against the IT infrastructure
- PC hardware technology refresh
Plan and implement the replacement of obsolete desktop personal computers at HPC. Define and implement a standard build
- Communication Enhancement Project
Analyse, develop and implement new requirements for the Approvals and Monitoring database to support the Approvals and Monitoring Work Plan

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Information Technology activities for 2009 - 2010

We plan to continue to improve our processes and procedures through the implementation of best practice and further develop our infrastructure to gain efficiencies whilst improving value for money.

We will support the Major projects which are expected to include the take on of new professions to regulate as well as a significant project to analyse the benefits of and implement a more rigorous Document and Records Management system.

We will deliver the agreed Small project list to support the achievement of the directorate Work Plans.

Information Technology activities for 2007 - 2008

Progress of the objectives for 2007/2008 can be summarised as follows:

1. Business as usual objectives

- **Operate within the IT budget**
- **Develop a work plan outlining key activities in the year**
- **Update the Disaster Recovery plan format**

The BAU objective is represents our substantive goal for the year and it has been achieved; evidenced by the Service Level statistics and the availability of the core services. Specifically the IT budget is forecast to be marginally overspent; the Work Plan was completed and the Disaster Recovery plan format update was postponed due to the delay in the release of the new standard BS: 25999:2007

2. On boarding of New Professions

Significant work has been performed to define the data requirements and transfer requirements for the on boarding of new professions. A third party company has been commissioned to build the import mechanism to transfer the Register for the Practitioner Psychologists. However, due to the timetable for the consultation and the laying of the legislation in Parliament the on boarding will now not occur until the 2008/2009 financial year.

3. Continued Professional Development (CPD) technology built within allocated budget

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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The testing of the CPD function was successfully completed in February 2008; performance requirements are now being addressed and the technology is expected to be deployed on time for the first CPD cycle.

4. Professional Qualifications Directive.

The delivery of a Lotus Notes solution has been implemented successfully.

Risk Management

The Information Technology department manages those organisation risks that are primarily concerned with:

- Information security - the authentication and authorisation of individuals to gain access to defined services and data
- Information Technology Continuity – the ability to recover from a disaster scenario
- Perimeter protection – the ability to manage the threat of external intrusion through hacking and virus propagation
- Obsolescence – management of the supportability and maintainability of the IT infrastructure

Please see the appendix below for details.

AOD	2008 workplan	Final DD: None	Internal RD: None	22/05/2008	a	ITD
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Appendix: Risks Managed by the Information Technology department

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2008	Probability Feb 2008
2.1	Inability to occupy premises or use interior equipment	Facilities Mger & Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Invoke Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity plan; Commercial Combined insurance cover (fire, contents, terrorism etc)				
5.1	Software Virus damage	Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Firewalls and anti-virus SW checks run; Adherence to IT policy, procedures and training; Regular externally run security tests and probes				
5.2	Technology obsolescence, (HW or SW)	Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Accurate asset records and technology refresh strategy; Employ mainstream technology with recognised support and maintenance agreements; Annually review IT technology strategy				
5.3	IT fraud or error	Director of IT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Adequate access control procedures maintained. System audit trails; Regular, automatic password changes. External reviews. Daily backups; Regular externally run security tests and probes				
10.2	LISA Registration system failure	Director of Operations and Director of IT	Low	Low

Mitigations Effective backup and Recovery procedures; Third party maintenance and support contract; Disaster recovery tests				
11.1	Loss of key HPC employees (person cover risk)	President, Chief Executive and EMT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Committee chairmen cover for President loss, President and EMT cover for CE loss until interim appointment made; Cross training (partial or full) and process documentation; CE Succession plan held by HR Director. Succession planning generally.				
11.6	High sick leave levels	EMT	Low	Medium
Mitigations Adequate staff (volume and type) including hiring temporary staff; Return to work interviews and sick leave monitoring; Regular progress reviews				
15.2	Unexpected rise in operating expenses	EMT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Finance & Resources Committee review of the Monthly variances to date; Budgetary control clarity around permanent and timing differences.; Regular Budget-holder reviews				
15.3	Large Capital Project Cost Over-runs	EMT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Finance & Resources Committee review of the monthly variances to date; Effective project specification, management and project progress reporting (financial and non financial); Detailed cost estimations eg Quantity Surveyor estimates for the 22/26 SS project				

15.12	Unauthorised removal of assets (custody issue)	Director of IT & Facilities Mger	Low	Low
Mitigations IT asset labelling & asset logging (issuance to employees); Fixed Asset register itemising assets. Job exit procedures (to recover HPC laptops etc); Computer insurance				
17.1	Electronic record Data Security	Director of IT and Director of HR	Medium	Low
Mitigations Employment contract includes Data Protection Agreement; Adequate access control procedures maintained. System audit trails; Laptop security encryption and VPN access.				
17.3	Data held by Third Parties	Director of Ops and Director of IT	Medium	Medium
Mitigations Data Protection/Controller agreements signed by the relevant suppliers. Use of electronic firewalls by suppliers; Use of locked Tape Archive boxes and sign out procedures; DSL access LISA via secure VPN and password security. Only sample set of data held by DSL. Print UK have adequate password control and utilise data encryption. Peladon access using remote access tool. Electral Reform Society data is password protected and encrypted.				
17.4	Data received from Third Parties	Director of Ops, Director of IT and FTP Director	Medium	Low
Mitigations Read only, password protected access by a restricted no of FTP employees to KN data. Transcript hearings produced in a redacted form before being posted on the HPC website; Registrant payments taken in compliance with Payment Card Industry (PCI) Security standards ie with quarterly PCI testing; Ensure third party data providers				

eg professional bodies provide the data password protected/encrypted/door to door courier/registered mail/sign in sign out as appropriate.

Contents

Introduction.....	2
This document	2
The Policy & Standards department	2
Resourcing	2
Aims.....	4
Improve:	4
Influence and promote:.....	4
Trust, assurance and safety: the regulation of health professionals in the 21st century	5
Introduction	5
1. Revalidation.....	5
2. Post-registration qualifications.....	5
3. Changes to the fitness to practise process.....	6
4. Health and character	6
5. Registration of students.....	7
6. The regulation of support workers	7
7. Other White Paper work	8
HPC strategy: Improve.....	9
Introduction	9
Projects for 2008 – 2009.....	9
1. Standards.....	9
2. Welsh language scheme	12
3. Environmental policy	12
4. Registration Advisors’ training	13
5. Curriculum guidance	13
6. Age discrimination	14
7. Consumer complaints.....	14
8. CHRE performance review.....	15
9. Consultation	15
10. Complaints process for approved courses	15
HPC strategy: Influence and promote	17
Introduction	17
Projects for 2008 - 2009.....	17
1. New professions.....	17
2. Government, including four UK departments of health.....	20
3. European Union	20
4. Consultation responses.....	21
5. Reviewing stakeholder contact and influence.....	22
Completed projects	23
HPC-wide Projects.....	25
2009 – 2011	27
Equality and Diversity	29
Risk management.....	30

Introduction

This document

This document has been drafted to set out work priorities for the financial year 2008 - 2009, and to provide a basis against which the work of the Policy & Standards department can be planned, resourced and measured. This document is underpinned by the Council's strategy, and details how the Policy & Standards department will continue to develop, to build on its work in embedding itself within the Health Professions Council (HPC) and in the wider policy arena, and assist the Council in preparing for the changes ahead in the regulation of healthcare professionals.

The nature of the issues that Policy & Standards deal with are such that work undertaken will comprise both planned projects, and also work which arises as a result of external factors, such as changes in legislation, changes to the professions, and other developments that are often unpredictable. Hence, in allocating resources, maintaining the ability to respond to the external environment is an important factor. To this end, the following projects are highlighted as those which could potentially be moved into next financial year, depending on external pressures, and particularly on the priorities identified by the White Paper implementation plan:

- Curriculum guidance;
- Environmental policy;
- New professions event;
- Registration Advisors' training;
- New professions research.

The Policy & Standards department

This represents the department's third full financial year of activity, and sees the department moving forward, particularly in the light of the numerous developments in the regulatory arena.

The Policy & Standards department's main responsibilities are:

- assisting the Council in developing strategy and policy;
- assisting the Council in setting and reviewing standards;
- assisting the Council in drafting guidance;
- supporting Professional Liaison Groups;
- running consultations;
- managing the new professions, or 'aspirant groups' process;
- liaising with the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence on their annual performance review, and other cross-regulatory projects; and
- ensuring consistency of approach across all HPC departments.

Resourcing

The Policy & Standards department currently consists of four employees:

Rachel Tripp, Director of Policy & Standards

Michael Guthrie, Policy Manager
Sam Mars, Policy Officer
Charlotte Urwin, Policy Officer

The Director of Policy & Standards is responsible for devising and writing the Policy workplan, and overseeing its resourcing and implementation, the day-to-day running of the department, managing and developing the Policy team, and the development of new projects.

The Policy Manager takes particular responsibility for the area of professional standards and ethics, writing and managing the Standards workplan which sits underneath the Policy workplan, managing and overseeing pieces of work relating to standards, and developing relationships with stakeholders who are particularly interested in our standards function.

The Policy Officers each take on a variety of different projects to enable them to gain a breadth of experience, including education, standards, Europe, and other areas of the department's work.

It should be noted that Rachel Tripp will be on maternity leave for twelve months from July 2008. The recruitment process for her maternity cover is to begin in March 2008.

Aims

The HPC, through the work of its Policy & Standards department, aims:

Improve:

- To respond to the recommendations of the White Paper *Trust, assurance and safety: the regulation of health professionals in the 21st century*, published in February 2007, including, where appropriate, sharing information about best practice and participating in working groups, and also engaging with the issues raised in order to implement improvements to regulation.
- To review its standards, guidance and policies, including engaging with and consulting stakeholders, to gain feedback, and to make improvements to ensure that these continue to reflect the Council's purpose and principles.
- To collect information gathered and to analyse this information, and act upon it appropriately. This could include, for example, making the information available publicly, including to other potentially interested stakeholders, feeding this information into the Communications strategy, and / or making changes to processes where appropriate.
- To engage with and consult with stakeholders, and take account of their input in its work, to ensure that HPC's work is informed by the wider healthcare and regulatory landscape, and that our knowledge of multi-professional regulation can be shared.
- To continue to improve the way that healthcare professionals are regulated, by developing new guidance, new processes, or new requirements where appropriate.

Influence and promote:

- To build on its growing reputation as a respected voice within the policy arena of the regulation of healthcare professionals and other healthcare workers, and to use this reputation to pro-actively influence the external agenda, in the interests of protecting the public.

The projects below detail how the work of the Policy & Standards department will help HPC to meet these aims.

Trust, assurance and safety: the regulation of health professionals in the 21st century

Introduction

Although now published over a year ago, this year's Policy workplan still retains a separate section for the work arising out of the White Paper because this continues to be an important driver for the department's work.

The government published the above White Paper in February 2007. The White Paper was published as a result of the Chief Medical Officer's review of medical regulation, the parallel review of non-medical regulation (sometimes also called the 'Foster review') and the resulting consultation. The paper sets out the government's vision and priorities for how the regulation of health care professionals should work in the future, in order to respond to increasing expectations of the public and other stakeholders.

In order to facilitate discussion, the immediate issues raised in the White Paper are here placed in an approximate order of priority. (The topics below are those which have been initially identified as those likely to require some kind of work during this coming financial year.)

1. Revalidation

The White Paper proposes that in the future, all health professionals should be subject to some form of revalidation. The Council has set up a Professional Liaison Group, chaired by the President, to consider the broader issue of ongoing fitness to practise. This group's work is to consider further the issues raised in the White Paper, the questions and points raised in the Council's response to the Foster review, and also to link these issues to the broader environment including international systems for revalidation where these exist.

Timetable

The PLG met three times in the financial year 2007 – 2008. Three further meetings are planned for 2008 – 2009. When the PLG has completed its work, the results will be brought to the Council for discussion and agreement of a way forward at its meeting in October 2008.

2. Post-registration qualifications

The Council currently approves post-registration qualifications in local analgesia and prescription-only medicine for chiropodists and podiatrists, and also approves courses in supplementary prescribing for chiropodists and podiatrists, physiotherapists and radiographers.

The Education and Training Committee is considering how to approach other post-registration qualifications, particularly since the White Paper recommends that regulators should mark the Register to show specialisms where appropriate. (Article 19 (6) of the Health Professions Order already allows the Council to annotate additional qualifications.)

This piece of work will be closely linked with any work the Council undertakes around revalidation, and any decisions to annotate the Register any further will directly impact this work. Work on post-registration qualifications is also related to the Council's thoughts about the future shape of the work-force, with increased numbers of associate level, and advanced level practitioners, and how regulation may need to change to take account of this.

Timetable

The Education and Training Committee (ETC) held a discussion meeting in February 2008 on this topic with professional bodies, Visitors, and others. Results of this meeting are being considered and formalised at the time of writing, but early indications are that the area is, in line with the Council's initial analysis, considerably more complex than either the Foster review or the White Paper suggest.

As a result of this meeting, a further paper will be brought back to ETC in June 2008. Further to this, one option open to ETC would be to hold a consultation on possible ways forward.

3. Changes to the fitness to practise process

The White Paper separates adjudication from the General Medical Council, and in addition says that in the future, panel members for other regulators will be recruited and trained by a separate organisation.

During the financial year 2008 – 2009, the Policy & Standards department will liaise with the Fitness to Practise department to monitor the development of the Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator (OHPA), and to find out more about how it will fulfil its duties.

4. Health and character

The White Paper discusses the need for regulators to look at the good character of applicants, and suggests work to be carried out by CHRE on a common definition of good character.

In order to feed useful information into this project, and also in order to improve our processes, the Policy & Standards department will work with Fitness to Practise (FTP) on the results of their review of operating the health and character declarations process.

The results of FTP's review will be considered by ETC in March 2008. Depending on the outcome of the Committee's discussions, it is planned that the Policy & Standards department could then work with FTP on producing guidance for interested stakeholders in this area, which could include education providers, who often contact HPC with queries, for example, about students with convictions.

In addition, as a result of the Disability Rights Commission's inquiry into fitness standards in the regulation of teaching, social work and nursing, it is

anticipated that the results of FTP's review will be used as the basis for a formal response to this inquiry from the Council.

Timetable

This project was originally planned for the financial year 2007 – 2008, but has been pushed back into this financial year because of operational pressures on the Fitness to Practise department.

A paper from the Policy & Standards department on information for education providers and applicants on criminal convictions will be brought to the Education and Training Committee in September 2008.

At this meeting, a paper from the Policy & Standards department on a response to the DRC investigation will also be considered by ETC.

5. Registration of students

The White Paper says, 'The Government believes that each regulator should consider this issue on the basis of the risk presented to patients by trainees and students in particular professions.'

The Education and Training Committee has discussed a paper on the registration of students, and held a discussion meeting in November 2007 looking at the topic of student fitness to practise. The Council's submission to the Department of Health (DH), which stated that registration of students was not necessary because it would not be a proportionate reaction to the risk posed, was agreed and sent to DH in December 2007.

To read the Council's full response, see this page of the website:

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/external/index.asp?id=58>

As a result of this work, the Education and Training Committee has further considered publishing specific information targeted at students on approved programmes, and is due to consider this topic at its meeting in March 2008.

The Policy & Standards department will also continue to work with CHRE who have been asked by the Department of Health to look at student engagement and student registration across all of the nine regulators.

Timetable

Work with CHRE on this topic will be ongoing throughout the year.

After the outcome of the discussion at ETC in March 2008, the Policy & Standards department will work to implement the Committee's recommendations. This may include either planning a piece of work for the financial year 2009 – 2010, or alternatively moving / reprioritising some work from the financial year 2008 - 2009.

6. The regulation of support workers

The White Paper discusses the regulation of healthcare support workers, and in particular the Scottish pilot project to implement employer-led regulation. The HPC Director of Operations is part of the Steering Group on this project,

and Audrey Cowie is due to attend the Education and Training Committee in March 2008 to update the committee on their ongoing work.

The White Paper also says that the government, 'will consider whether there is sufficient demand for the introduction of statutory regulation for any assistant practitioner roles at levels 3 and 4 on the Skills for Health Career Framework.'

This is in accordance with the Council's view that some form of statutory regulation is necessary for these groups, in the interests of public safety.

A position paper on this subject will be drafted and brought to the Council at its meeting in July 2008.

7. Other White Paper work

HPC will continue to be part of the various UK-wide working groups established by the Department of Health, and also to be part of those parallel groups established by the Scottish government.

This will include membership of the group where we have been invited to participate, feeding in relevant information otherwise, and responding appropriately to recommendations.

Other topics which form part of the White Paper include Equality and Diversity (dealt with separately following the publication of the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme) and the regulation of acupuncture, herbal medicine, and traditional chinese medicine (dealt with under the 'new professions' section of this workplan).

HPC strategy: Improve

Introduction

The HPC operates within a steadily evolving environment. How we register health professionals continues to develop as a result of external factors (including changes to the Health Professions Order, or to other legislation, changes to the professions, to best practice, or to stakeholders' evolving needs and expectations) or internal factors (including internal reviews, audits and other quality improvement measures).

An important part of the Council's work in this area is therefore to keep its standards, guidance and policies under regular review, ensuring that we react proportionately and appropriately to feedback, and take account of the views of those who are using the standards. In addition to this area of review and improvement, the Council will also wish to consider entirely new pieces of work, where these may contribute to effective regulation, in line with its guiding principles.

Projects for 2008 – 2009

1. Standards

The Council's standards workplan sets out the standards that the Council determines, the legal background for each, and the Council's aim in setting standards. It then goes on to detail a timetable for standards review, and scope for further work and development of the standards function.

The full standards workplan can be found on the Council website here:

www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/100017D6council_meeting_20061214_enclosure06.pdf

This workplan is being updated to take account of work undertaken, and will be presented to the Council in September 2008.

The main items of work which come under the area of standards are detailed below:

1. a Standards of education and training

The standards of education and training were reviewed from September 2007 by a Professional Liaison Group. In this financial year, a consultation will be held on the revised standards and guidance.

Timetable

The Council will be asked to approve a draft of the standards and guidance for consultation at its meeting in July 2008. A consultation on draft standards and guidance will take place between September and December 2008.

The responses from the consultation, and a revised draft of the standards and guidance, will be presented to the Education and Training Committee and Council in March 2009. The standards will then be republished and will become effective from the 2009/2010 academic year.

1.b Standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners

The Council consulted on revised standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners between December 2007 and March 2008.

The outcomes of the consultation are due to be considered by the Education and Training Committee and Council in March 2008.

Timetable

If the Council approves the standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners, they will be republished in line with the revised generic standards of proficiency and revised visual identity. The new standards would become effective in June 2008.

1.c Standards of conduct, performance and ethics supplementary information

In January 2007, the Conduct and Competence committee agreed that further information might be published on the HPC website which covered the following areas:

- Conflicts of interest
- Medicines and prescribing
- Reporting concerns
- Child protection
- Consent

The information would build upon the standards of conduct, performance and ethics to provide some brief, easy to understand information, followed by links to sources of information and guidance produced by other organisations.

Timetable

Medicines and prescribing information has been produced and published on the HPC website. The department will review the medicines and prescribing page, and publish information in the remaining areas, by the end of April 2008.

1.d Amendments to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists and podiatrists

The Council consulted between December 2007 and March 2008 on amendments to the standards of proficiency for chiropodists and podiatrists. The suggested amendments were to make the standards relating to the local anaesthetics and prescription only medicines entitlements compulsory.

Timetable

The Education and Training Committee and the Council will be asked to consider the outcomes of the consultation at their meetings in June and July 2008. If the amendments to the standards are agreed at those meetings, the Education and Training Committee and the Council will also be invited to consider an appropriate timescale for the change to become effective. This would ensure that there is sufficient time to effectively communicate the change and its consequences to key stakeholders.

Subject to the approval of the Education and Training Committee and the Council, it is anticipated that the standards might then become compulsory from the 2009/2010 academic year.

1.e Generic standards of proficiency

Revised standards of proficiency for the first 12 profession regulated by the Council, including generic standards, became effective on 1 November 2007.

During the course of the work to draft standards of proficiency for the registered psychologists part of the Register, it was suggested that we might review the generic standards of proficiency in order to ensure that they were widely applicable, as far as possible, to all the professions, including those likely to become regulated by the HPC in the future.

Timetable

At its meeting in June 2008, the Education and Training Committee will consider a paper looking at how the generic standards of proficiency might be reviewed. It is anticipated that, as such a review could build upon comments on the generic standards of proficiency already received and recorded by the Executive, it would not be necessary to establish a Professional Liaison Group.

If a review is agreed by the Education and Training Committee in June 2008, the Council would be invited to ratify their recommendation in July 2008. A consultation could then be held on revised generic standards of proficiency in early 2009.

1.f Standards of conduct, performance and ethics and confidentiality guidance

The Council consulted between June and September 2007 on revised standards of conduct, performance and ethics and draft guidance on confidentiality.

The Council is due to consider the outcomes of the consultations at its meeting in March 2008.

Timetable

If the standards and guidance are approved, they will be published in summer 2008.

1.g Standards of proficiency and threshold level of qualification for entry to the registered psychologists part of the Register

The Council consulted between November 2007 and February 2008 on draft standards of proficiency and the threshold level of qualification for entry to the registered psychologists part of the Register (standard one of the standards of education and training).

In the coming financial year, the standards of proficiency for the registered psychologists part of the registered will be published. The standards of education and training will also be amended to reflect the threshold level of qualification for entry to the registered psychologists part of the Register.

Timetable

The timetable for publishing the standards is dependent upon the outcomes of the Department of Health (UK) consultation on the draft legislation following the debate in the House of Lords which is anticipated to occur before the Christmas 2008 recess.

Therefore, it is presently anticipated that the outcomes of the consultations will be brought to the Education and Training Committee and to the Council at their meetings in September and October 2008. If approved, the standards will then be revised and published in time for the anticipated opening of the registered psychologists part of the Register in early 2009.

For more information about the Policy & Standards department's planning for further new professions' standards, please see page 19 of this workplan.

2. Welsh language scheme

Following initial research by HPC and contact with the Welsh Language Board, HPC has always provided information in Welsh on request, and has published translations online after they have been completed. In addition, the Communications team has published public information literature in Welsh, and has produced a display backboard in Welsh for use at appropriate events.

Building on this work, 2008 – 2009 is an appropriate year to bring together this work into a formal Welsh Language Scheme. This piece of work also forms part of the department's action points under the Equality and Diversity Scheme.

Timetable

A paper on a Welsh Language Scheme will be brought to Council in September 2008.

3. Environmental policy

The Middle Management Group (a group of employees at HPC who are not members of the Executive Management Team, who meet to share information, and to develop ideas for improved ways of working) has done

some work on a Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) Statement of Intent.

In order to progress this further, the Policy & Standards department will work with the Middle Management Group to take forward the action points identified to improve HPC's environmental responsibility. This is an area of particular interest to employees, who have already identified, and continue to identify, ideas for ways forward. It is anticipated that some work on an organisational environmental policy would at once ensure that we don't lose the momentum created by the CSR work already undertaken, but also provide a sensible framework for considering ideas for improvement, perhaps identify some aims and priorities, and ensure a co-ordinated approach.

Timetable

A paper considering an environmental policy for HPC will be brought to Council in March 2009.

4. Registration Advisors' training

As part of the ongoing development of the Registration team, the Policy & Standards department will work with the Registration Manager, the Customer Services Managers and team leaders to develop an ongoing programme of regulation training for Registration Advisors. This will complement existing training provided by the Registration department, and should provide an opportunity for information sharing, increased knowledge of regulation (and of the work of the Policy & Standards team), increased knowledge in order to answer registrants' queries, and therefore increased levels of customer service.

The precise format and content of the training will be developed in conjunction with Registration, but could include a series of 'stand-alone' sessions on, for example:

- regulating new professions;
- the role of professional bodies and the role of a statutory regulator; and
- standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Once developed, if successful, these could be run on a rolling basis to capture new starters and those who would like a 'refresher' session.

Timetable

This year, the Policy & Standards department will work with Registration to scope out and plan training sessions, with a view to trialling two sessions before April 2009, to enable some feedback.

5. Curriculum guidance

At its awayday in October 2007, one area highlighted by the group considering Education was the role of curriculum guidance (also referred to as 'curriculum frameworks'). Currently, these documents are often produced by professional bodies, and may be used by education providers in developing

programmes, and finding ways to meet our Standards of Education and Training.

The Council discussed how some professional bodies develop these documents, and others do not, and also discussed whether some form of HPC approval or further involvement might be appropriate in the future.

As a way of beginning to consider this topic, the Policy & Standards department will undertake a piece of work to look firstly at how curriculum guidance is currently used: by education providers, by Visitors, and others. This piece of work will also look at the outcomes of Approvals visits to date, and pull out any information, particularly conditions, relating to curriculum guidance.

This piece of scoping work will allow the Education and Training Committee to consider the information necessary in order to reach a decision on possible ways forward in this area.

Timetable

A paper drawing together information around curriculum guidance documents will be brought to the Education and Training Committee in December 2008.

6. Age discrimination

Age discrimination is another issue which has been raised by the Education and Training Committee as needing consideration, and has also been the subject of some queries from education providers.

The questions that have arisen are not about HPC's obligations, but instead about approved programmes, and what the implications are for education providers of the legislation in this area.

The Policy & Standards department will work with the Education team to assess the questions that have come up, to look at other regulators' work in this area, seek legal advice, and bring a paper to Education and Training Committee clarifying information for education providers.

Timetable

A paper will be brought to the Education and Training Committee in September 2008.

7. Consumer complaints

The likely regulation of the Hearing Aid Dispensers by HPC in Spring 2009 means that consumers are likely in the future to contact us in reference to complaints which are related to the consumer aspects of the service they have received (price, payment terms, quality of products, etc.) as well as those complaints which concern an individual's fitness to practise.

This is also likely to be an area of increasing importance to other professions regulated by us, as more registrants are self-employed or in private practice.

The General Dental Council established a 'Dental Complaints Service': a complaints resolution service that is a department of the GDC, but run at arms length from it.

The Policy & Standards department will research this area, including working with the Hearing Aid Council to look at their current consumer complaints and systems. This financial year will provide an opportunity to scope this area, and to do some initial analysis of potential ways forward for HPC.

Timetable

A scoping paper on consumer complaints will be considered by the Practice Committees in January 2009, with potential for recommendations from the Practice Committees being considered by the Council in March 2009.

8. CHRE performance review

Every year, the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE) reviews the performance of all nine health regulators. Assembling the HPC's submission to the performance review is co-ordinated by the Policy & Standards department. This process involves submitting a report to CHRE, attending initial meetings, and follow-up meetings, providing additional information as required, and approving the final report(s).

Timetable

The performance review for the financial year 2008 – 2009, if similar to that of last year, will involve submitting the initial report to CHRE in January 2009, with the results of the review being published in April 2009.

9. Consultation

This project reviews the current process that we use to consult with our stakeholders, including reviewing our consultation list, the use of consultation events, responses received, and whether there is best practice in this area that we could learn from.

Timetable

Preparation and research on this issue has been undertaken from December 2007– March 2008. A paper with an initial review of the consultation process will be considered by the Council in May 2008. If agreed by the Council, the Policy & Standards department will work to implement the action points identified in the review.

10. Complaints process for approved courses

The Policy & Standards team has worked with the Education department to establish a process to assist the Education and Training committee in dealing with complaints about approved courses.

Timetable

An initial process for dealing with complaints was considered by ETC at its meeting on December 2007. At this meeting ETC agreed the overall process and approach, and also agreed that the Policy & Standards and Education

departments should undertake further work to put together more detailed information for complainants and others. This information is being brought back to ETC for discussion in May 2008.

HPC strategy: Influence and promote

Introduction

In July 2008, the Council will have been operating under its new legislation for five years, in addition to its experience in operating in shadow form during 2002.

The Council wishes to continue to use this experience of regulation in order to positively influence the policy agenda in the regulation of healthcare professionals, in line with its objective of protecting the public, and its guiding principles.

This part of the document details the specific work that will be done over the coming financial year towards meeting this aim, and shows how this work will be built upon thereafter.

Projects for 2008 - 2009

1. New professions

The regulation of aspirant groups by the Council is an important area of work, particularly given the clear message given by the White Paper that there will be no additional regulators created, and that HPC is likely to be the regulator for future groups coming into regulation.

The White Paper identifies psychotherapists, counsellors and healthcare scientists as the next professions that are the highest priority for regulation. In addition, the Hearing Aid Council (HAC) is due to be abolished by the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR), and it is probable that the hearing aid dispensers they regulate would then become regulated by the HPC. The White Paper also mentions the Steering Group which is looking at the statutory regulation of acupuncture, herbal medicine, and traditional Chinese medicine. The Director of Policy & Standards is a member of this working group, which is expected to publish its report in Spring 2008.

The work that Policy and Standards will do in this area will be divided into two areas:

- The provision of information to groups seeking to apply to the Council, and liaising with those who have already applied to the Council but who are not mentioned by the White Paper as a priority for regulation.
- Preparing for the regulation of groups who are mentioned in the White Paper, including the process of preparing standards and being part of any cross-departmental operational projects to open a new part of the Register.

The timing of work around drafting standards is heavily dependent upon the priorities of the UK departments of Health, and the timetable for legislation, which is subject to change. Hence, the work below has been planned as flexibly as possible, in order to make pragmatic decisions about allocating resources.

Because of its unique role as a multi-professional regulator, with the ability to regulate new professions, regulating new groups is a key way in which HPC can influence the work of other organisations.

1.a New professions event

The Policy and Standards department will work towards a new professions / aspirant groups event, to be held in March 2009. It is hoped that speakers could include individuals from HPC, but also representatives from the Departments of Health, from professional bodies that have applied to the Council, and from groups that have sought regulation and become statutorily regulated (for example, the arts therapists, and the operating department practitioners).

HPC is often approached for advice by groups seeking regulation, and this event would seek to bring together the expertise both within and also outside HPC, particularly from those groups who have successfully sought regulation.

After the event, depending on its success, the Council may decide to ask the Policy & Standards department to write up information from it as guidance to aspirant professional bodies. This guidance could provisionally be called, 'Becoming statutorily regulated' and could cover preparing a profession, joint working, applying to the Council, dealing with legislation, and continuing as a professional body after regulation.

Timetable

A new professions event will be planned by the Policy & Standards department, and delivered in collaboration with the Communications department, in March 2009.

1.b Project groups participation

The White Paper also created a UK-wide working group looking at the regulation of new groups, and the Scottish government has established its own group working in parallel to this, in order to feed in concerns and issues from Scotland. Marc Seale, Chief Executive of HPC, is part of both of these groups, and the Policy & Standards department will continue to receive feedback from the groups' work, and to provide him with relevant information to ensure that HPC contributes effectively to this strand of work.

Timetable

Ongoing 2008 – 2009.

1.c Aspirant groups liaison work

Throughout this financial year, as others, the Policy & Standards department will continue to liaise appropriately with aspirant groups. This includes responding to requests for meetings, identifying groups to meet with, drafting information for publication on the HPC website or on other groups' websites. This liaison work applies to groups who have applied to the Council, and also those groups that have not and are considering doing so.

In addition, the Policy & Standards department will liaise with any group wishing to make an application to the Council this year, and will score the application against the 10 new professions criteria to aid Council's consideration.

Timetable

Ongoing 2008 - 2009

1.d Standards of proficiency for new professions.

If further professions are brought onto the Register, then the HPC will need to establish standards of proficiency, and consult on them. As detailed above, the timetable for establishing standards is heavily dependent on the timetable for legislation, which can be subject to change or to delay.

We need to establish standards of proficiency by drawing on appropriate expertise and experience, ensuring that there is strong professional, lay and four home country input where possible. Normally, standards of proficiency would be drafted by establishing a PLG, but where substantial work has been done by other groups to draft standards (for example the work that has been done by the Hearing Aid Council), it may be possible for the Council to agree another approach building on the work that has already been undertaken.

The Council has already agreed to establish a Professional Liaison Group for psychotherapists and counsellors.

Timetable

A detailed workplan for the psychotherapists and counsellors PLG will be brought to the Education and Training Committee in June 2008.

The timetable for this PLG could be reviewed depending on the likely timetable of legislation to regulate, for example, hearing aid dispensers, or other groups highlighted by the White Paper. With current levels of resourcing, the Policy & Standards department can work on one set of Standards of Proficiency at any one time. It is therefore assumed that work will continue on the psychotherapists and counsellors' PLG, unless legislation dictates otherwise, in which case a proposed revised timetable paper would be brought back to ETC and to Council.

1.e Other new professions work

An issue commonly raised by registrants is that of individuals who work in a similar area to registered health professionals, but use an alternative title. The

most prevalent example appears to be foot health professionals, since there are dedicated schools to train people to use this title and to practise foot care.

The Council has often raised questions about the benefits and drawbacks of protecting title rather than function, and has put resources into communicating with the public via campaigns to encourage people to check that their health professional is registered.

This year, the Policy & Standards department will undertake work to look at the practice of foot health professionals, and to allow the Council to make an informed recommendation as to whether foot health professionals should be regulated, and if so what form this regulation should take.

This work will involve liaison with the professional bodies for chiropody and podiatry, as well as liaison with the training organisations for foot health professionals. It could include independent research into the scope of practice of foot health professionals, and will also need to refer to parallel work being undertaken regarding the regulation of support workers.

Timetable

A paper will be brought to the Council outlining a way forward in July 2008. Depending on the Council's decision, results could be considered, and a recommendation made at the Council meeting in December 2008.

2. Government, including four UK departments of health

The Policy & Standards department will continue to work with the Chief Executive, and the Communications department (and particularly the Public Affairs Manager) to ensure a consistent, and strategic approach to stakeholder relationships.

In particular, a joint approach by Policy & Standards and Communications in making dedicated trips to a home country over several days has been very successful in building and developing new and existing relationships respectively. Further to these meetings, contacts have been followed up, areas of common interest identified, and working relationships improved.

Following trips to Scotland and Northern Ireland, this financial year the Policy & Standards department will work with the Public Affairs Manager to organise a similar trip to Wales. These contacts are complementary to the regular meetings with government representatives from all four home countries undertaken by the Chief Executive and President, which draw on Council members' contacts and expertise.

3. European Union

In 2007 the Professional Qualifications Directive passed into UK law. This provided a new legal framework for how HPC assesses EEA applicants to the Register, and also provides for temporary registration, and the possibility of the establishment of 'Common Platforms'.

The Policy & Standards department worked with Registration and with legal advice to set up systems to deal with temporary registration in particular.

In 2008 it was originally envisaged that a directive on the provision of healthcare services would be produced, but it now appears likely that a statement will be published in 2008, and the directive itself will be pushed back into 2009. There is also the possibility of a directive in 2008 on patient rights.

This means that the financial year 2008 – 2009 provides an opportunity for review and consolidation in the area of Europe, and the opportunity to influence new developments. In order to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by European developments, the Policy & Standards team will:

- continue to monitor the temporary registration process, particularly working with Registration to ensure the process meets our obligations under the Directive, and with Communications, to ensure we give consistent, reliable external information about what temporary registration is, and what it means;
- continue membership of the Alliance of UK Health Regulators in Europe (AURE), as an effective way of making shared UK regulatory issues heard in Europe, particularly pursuing any opportunities for proactively influencing the directive to come out in 2009;
- continue to implement and review the recommendations from the European conference on Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders, October 2005. This includes working with colleagues in European competent authorities around implementing the next steps of the consensus, particularly around sharing information in Europe;
- continue ongoing updating and development of www.healthregulation.org as a worldwide resource for all regulators to enable effective sharing of information, particularly around fitness to practise;
- undertake a trip to the European Parliament in order to build on contacts, and increase internal knowledge of processes and opportunities for future work. It is likely that this trip would be undertaken by a Policy Officer, perhaps in conjunction with the Public Affairs Manager from Communications, if workload allows.

4. Consultation responses

The Policy & Standards department will continue to build on its work in responding to other organisation's consultation responses, including ensuring that HPC is on more consultation lists, and widening its scope in responding not only to consultations that are directly concerned with health professionals'

regulation, but also bringing this expertise to consultations on issues related to health, consumer issues, and regulation more broadly.

5. Reviewing stakeholder contact and influence

As outlined in the previous workplan, 2006 - 2007 was primarily a year of ground-work: making contacts - particularly within the wider policy arena, building knowledge, continuing to gain input and ideas from stakeholders and feeding these into the appropriate parts of the organisation. In 2006 the Council identified that the financial year 2008 – 2009 would be a good year to review its work in this area.

The Policy & Standards department will work with the Communications department, particularly the Public Affairs Manager, to map external contacts across the organisation, including capturing where joint work has been undertaken, or where particular views of the Council have been pursued. This will include capturing information from employees and from Council members, and will allow the two departments to identify where the Council's external work has been successful, but also to identify gaps where additional contacts could be better used, or relationships developed.

Timetable

Mapping work ongoing throughout 2008 – 2009. A paper summarising this work will be brought to the Communications Committee in February 2009.

Completed projects

In the interests of completeness, a list of those projects from the previous two financial years which have now been completed is below.

1. The Council's requirement for external examiners

In 2006, the Council consulted on a change to its requirement for external examiners. Following the analysis of responses, the Council agreed that the new standard 6.7.5 should require assessment regulations to 'clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.'

This means our requirements are now more flexible and take account of feedback received from providers that our old standard was not allowing them to appoint external examiners with appropriate expertise.

2. Drawing on good practice from education providers

The Policy & Standards department has worked with the Education department in order to consider how best to draw out elements of good practice from pre-registration education. A paper analysing the commendations awarded by Visitors as part of their Visitors' report will be considered by the Education and Training Committee in March 2008.

This paper discusses the purpose of commendations, recommends more information for Visitors in order to aid consistency, and recommends that considering commendations should in future be part of the Education annual report. If the paper is agreed by ETC, then this project will be finished.

3. Registrant numbers and forecasting

Forecasting how future registrant numbers may change has historically been undertaken by the finance department, as part of the budget planning process. In order to recognise the increasing complexity of assumptions effecting future registrant numbers, the Policy & Standards worked with colleagues in Registration, Finance, Fitness to Practise and other departments to produce a piece of work which pulls together information about all the areas that affect the number of registrants.

This was presented to the Finance and Resources Committee in November 2007, and the numbers in it are now used to inform HPC's planning process. This document will be reviewed and updated this financial year.

4. Partners' Code of Conduct

The Policy & Standards department has worked with the Human Resources department to establish a code of conduct for partners.

This was agreed by the Finance and Resources Committee in September 2007 and has now been rolled out to all Partners.

5. Grandparenting review

The review of the grandparenting process was researched and written by the Policy & Standards department, agreed by the Council in May 2007, and has been published online and in hard copy.

6. Health, disability and registration

The Council has published two documents which deal with the subject of health, disability and registration:

- a disabled person's guide to becoming a health professional; and
- information about the health reference.

These documents have been published online and in hard copy (and are available, as are all HPC publications, in alternative formats on request).

In addition, the Policy & Standards department worked with the Events Manager to hold a stakeholder event in November 2007 to discuss health, disability and registration, to raise awareness of the Council's guidance, and to discuss potential future areas of work.

7. Review of the Standards of Proficiency

The Council has completed its review of the Standards of Proficiency for the original 12 professions. The results of this review were agreed for consultation at the Council meeting of 6th July 2006.

Suggested changes to the generic and profession-specific standards went out for consultation from October 2006 until early February 2007. An analysis of the results of the consultation, and final recommendations for necessary amendments or changes, were agreed by the Council in May 2007.

The revised standards have now been published in hard copy and online, and the launch of the revised standards was publicised by the Communications department. The revised standards became effective from September 2007.

HPC-wide Projects

The Policy & Standards department will also contribute, where appropriate, a policy perspective to the various cross-departmental projects that are co-ordinated by the Projects team. The main projects which Policy will be involved in, and which do not appear elsewhere in this workplan, are detailed below.

1. Safeguarding vulnerable groups

Legislation is being introduced to implement the recommendations of the Bichard report around the protection of children and of vulnerable adults. This is being implemented via the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups legislation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups legislation in Scotland.

This legislation will create two barring systems, which are intended to prevent individuals from working with children and / or vulnerable adults if they are considered not safe to do so. It is important that HPC works with these new barring arrangements to fully understand the impact that these will have on our processes, particularly for registration, and the interaction with our fitness to practise process.

Policy & Standards has worked with the Fitness to Practise to respond to initial consultations on the setting up of barring arrangements. Policy will continue to be part of the cross-departmental project group for implementation, providing research and recommendations on ways forward.

Timetable

Ongoing 2008 – 2009.

2. Fees 2009

The Council has agreed to review its fees every two years, in order to make future fee rises incremental and financially manageable for registrants. The Policy & Standards department has therefore been working with the project group to implement the Fees 2009 project. For the Policy & Standards department, the main involvement is around the consultation process: liaising with other departments in order to put together the consultation document, receive, sort and analyse responses, and drafting the Key Decisions document to aid Council's final decision on fees.

Timetable

The fees consultation is due to take place from April – July 2008. Responses will be analysed during August, and a document considered by the Education and Training Committee, and by Council, in September 2008.

3. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CPD audits are due to begin in July 2008 for chiropodists and podiatrists, and for operating department practitioners.

The Policy & Standards department will continue to work with the project team to ensure the smooth implementation of the audit process, including training CPD Assessors, and doing work to undertake analysis of the first set of audit results. The Policy team will also work with colleagues to assist with preparing for the production of the first CPD annual report.

In addition, the Policy & Standards department will continue to work with the professional bodies regarding their sample profiles for each of the professions. In 2007/2008, profiles were published on the HPC website for chiropodists and podiatrists, biomedical scientists and prosthetists and orthotists. This year, the department will focus on those professions where a profile has not yet been published. The department is currently working with the professional bodies to produce sample profiles in the following professions:

- Art therapists
- Chiropodists and Podiatrists
- Dietitians
- Music therapists
- Radiographers

Timetable

The Policy and Standards department will aim to ensure that at least one profile is published for each part or sub-section of the Register, by December 2008.

2009 – 2011

The Policy & Standards department will continue to work flexibly, adapting plans for delivering work in response to changes in the external environment. It is anticipated that future important areas of work will include the following:

Revalidation

Overall, it is expected that the work of Policy & Standards from 2009 – 2010 will continue to be heavily influenced by the implementation of recommendations from the White Paper. In particular, the outcomes of the Council's work on continuing fitness to practise will be important in influencing the debate around revalidation.

CPD

After the first stage of carrying out audits for chiropodists and podiatrists, and operating department practitioners, further work will be needed in this area. This will include operational improvements to how the audits are carried out, as well as analysing the results of further audits, sharing this information externally, and considering how the results of audits could feed into the issue of revalidation, and other regulatory issues.

New professions

As outlined in the new professions section, given the timetable for the regulation of new groups anticipated, it is highly likely that working on new professions will continue to form a significant part of the work of Policy & Standards.

European directives on healthcare services

As outlined in the Europe section of this workplan, directives are anticipated in the provision of healthcare services, and patient rights. Depending on the content of these directives, there may be some implications for the registration of EEA health professionals, or on arrangements for cross-border healthcare.

In 2009 – 2011, Policy & Standards will continue to work with the Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe to monitor these directives, to influence their content where appropriate, to respond to consultations, and to implement their requirements.

Preparation for the review of regulation

In addition, the White Paper 2007 said that in 2011 a further review of regulation would be undertaken, to look again at some of the questions that were originally considered by the Foster review. Although at this stage little is known about what form this review could take, it is therefore sensible to assume that in 2010 – 2011 some resources will be dedicated to providing information to, or participating in, this review.

The changing workforce

Another important factor that will have a bearing on the Council's future work is the changing nature of the workforce. As changes are made to workforce

numbers, roles, and how healthcare is delivered, the Council will need to consider how regulation can adapt to ensure that the public is protected, and that regulation continues to be sufficiently flexible so as not to impede local developments in service delivery. In particular, planned increases to the number of associate level practitioners, to the number of advanced level practitioners, and the increase in team-based healthcare delivery could affect how healthcare professionals are regulated in the future.

Equality and Diversity

The Council has now agreed its Equality and Diversity Scheme, which details, amongst other areas:

- action points for each department;
- the employee diversity group; and
- collecting demographic data.

The Policy & Standards department continues to provide the project lead for this important part of the Council's work. This now involves overseeing the completion of action points, in conjunction with the Head of Business Process Improvement.

During this financial year, the Policy & Standards department will work with the Project Manager to implement the data collection part of this project, in line with the Council's agreement to proceed incrementally, analysing the data collected at each stage, and carefully assessing the need to collect further information.

During this financial year, the Policy & Standards projects which also go towards meeting our Equality and Diversity action points include:

- Reviewing the consultation process;
- Age discrimination; and
- Welsh Language Scheme.

In addition, the following are highlighted as projects for 2009 – 2010:

- Health, disability and registration additional work; and
- Review of the return to practice requirements.

Risk management

Managing risks is also a vital part of the Policy & Standards work over the coming year. The main risks that are owned by the department are:

12.1 Incorrect process followed to establish standards/guidance/policy (ie: no relevant Council decision)

12.2 Inappropriate standards/guidance published eg: standards are set at inappropriate level, are too confusing or are conflicting

12.3 Changing/evolving legal advice rendering previous work inappropriate

12.4 Inadequate preparation for a change in legislation (Health Professions Order, or other legislation affecting HPC)

In summary, however, it should be noted that although it's separately dealt with here, risk management is in fact embedded into much of the workplan for this coming year. For example:

Resourcing

Increasing the number of employees, particularly those with good previous experience, increases the capacity of the department, and also helps to manage all the relevant risks in Policy & Standards, but particularly risks 12.3 and 12.4.

Networking and engagement

Making good contacts with external organisations feeds into the Council's overall aim to influence and promote, and also helps to manage risk 12.4.

Quality management

Working with the Head of Business Process Improvement, particularly around internal audits, not only links with the Council's aim to improve, by keeping ISO registration, but also helps to manage risk 12.1.