

Council, 25 September 2014

The HPC's Registration Department's service standards

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The Registration Department ensures it provides the customer service that registrants and applicants want by listening to their expectations through direct feedback from emails, letters and telephone calls, from listening to them at external events, by analysing customer service complaints and by conducting customer satisfaction surveys. This feedback is then reflected in how Registration delivers its service and in Registration's customer service standards.

Over the last three years there has been a shift in service delivery expectations and it is time for the services standard to be updated to reflect these changes in expectations.

The attached report outlines the feedback that been received from applicants and registrants, how some other regulators report on customer service and outlines the changes that are proposed to the current Registration service standards.

Decision

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

Background information

None

Resource implications

The proposed changed to Registration service standard will not require an increase in resources

Financial implications

The proposed changed to Registration service standard will not have a financial impact.

Appendices

Proposed changes to Registration's service standards

Date of paper

25 September 2014

Proposed changes to Registration’s service standards

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1. Introduction

The Registration Department is always listening to registrants and applicants and improving the way services are delivered. Applicant and registrant feedback is obtained from a variety of sources. Emails, telephone calls and letters provide an immediate feedback opportunity, as does “meet the HCPC” events and meeting registrants at external conferences. This type of informal feedback allows action to be taken immediately an issue is known.

Written service complaints about Registration are logged centrally with the HCPC’s customer service and complaints manager. A detailed analysis and diagnosis of issues is carried out both by the Registration Department and independently by the Customer Services and Complaints Manager. This approach allows for deeper analysis of the root cause of complaints and provides objective data for the need to improve the way services are delivered.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of registrant and applicant feedback about Registration is conducted by an organisation independent of HCPC. For the last 4 years the Registration Department have engaged a customer services company to gather feedback through detailed surveys, listening to and analysing Registration Department telephone calls and carrying out telephone interviews with registrants.

Many changes have been made to the way the Registration Department delivers services to registrants and applicants as a direct result of these different feedback loops. . For example, registrants said that the series of options provided when calling was confusing and too long. As a result the initial call routing functionality of the registration phone system has overhauled and simplified.

Applicants have directed the Registration Department to sections of the application forms and guidance notes that could be interpreted in more than one way or that could be made clearer. The application and forms and guidance are regularly tweaks to make them clearer and less ambiguous.

Registrants have said that the process to get back onto the Register when they have not carried out the renewal process correctly is stressful, is laborious and time-consuming. As a result, this process has been streamlined, making it quicker and more efficient.

Registrants have said that the clarity of information provided by the Registration Department is important so investment has been made in the training, the knowledge and professionalism of those employees providing information.

A major project has started to change the way the Registration Department communicate and provide services to not just applicants and registrants but also looking at the services provided to employers, registration assessors and CPD assessors.

As part of the Operations Directorate’s annual workload forecasting, workforce planning and work plan development, feedback received over the previous 12 months is reviewed and as a result, the Registration Department’s forecast of registrants and applicants’ service delivery expectations are re-calibrated. Consideration of how best to deliver services to the forecasted workload and the revised service delivery expectations is taken with particular attention given to:

- Timeliness of service delivery
- Accuracy of service delivery
- Appropriateness of service delivery

A proposed resource forecast and work plan is developed to deliver the forecasted workload to the registrants and applicants' service delivery expectations, within current budgeted headcount.

Finally, the Registration Department resource forecast and work plan is reviewed against their external service standards ensuring they are met.

Over the last 3 years through customer satisfaction surveying of registrants and applicants there has been a shift in service delivery expectations. For example, in 2011, registrants and applicants made it clear they wanted emails to be responded to quicker so we change the service standard for responses to email from five days to 48 hours.

It is now time to review the rest of service standards against the changing service delivery expectation of registrants and applicants.

1. External service standards

1.1. UK applications for registration

A UK application refers to an application that applies to be registered via the UK approved programme and is for applicants who hold an HCPC-approved qualification. Registration received around 17,500 UK applications year, the vast majority over the summer and autumn months.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to process all UK applications within ten working days.

Other regulators

Other regulators report their application and registration service standards in different ways to their respective councils or boards. The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) do not differentiate between different application types. They aim to complete 90% of all types of registration applications within 90 days.¹ The General Dental Council (GDC) aim to process all UK dentist applications and UK dental care professional applications in 14 calendar days.² The General Medical Council (GMC) aim to respond to 95% of registration applications within five working days. They aim to complete 95% of CESR (Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration) and CEGPR (Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration) applications within 3 months.³ The Australian Health Professions Regulatory Agency (AHPRA) state they aim to assess and process applications for registration as quickly as possible and aim to process complete, straightforward applications within four to six weeks and complex applications may

¹ NMC Council paper, 26 March 2014, Item 7, NMC/14/27, Annexe 1

² Q1 GDC Council paper, 20 May 2014, item 6, Council performance report

³ GMC Council paper, 25 February 2014, Chief Executive's report

take more time.⁴ The Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) aim to deliver first driving licenses within 8 working days, deliver bus or lorry driving licences within 8 working days and deliver ordinary driving licences within 10 working days, except where medical investigations are required.⁵

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed to keep this service standard essentially the same.

The new service standard is proposed to be:

*The Registration Department aims to respond to all UK application requests within ten working days of receipt. We aim to process all **complete** UK applications within ten working days of receipt, or inform the applicant within ten working days if their application is **incomplete**.*

Explanation

Over the months of December to July, Registration normally process complete UK applications within five to seven working days however, over the time in which Registration receive the bulk of UK applications, telephone calls reach their peak and the Registration team are at capacity. Registration receives approximately 17,500 UK applications a year, 13,000 are received in the six month period between June and November. At its peak, Registration receives about 3,300 UK applications in August. Over the same period from June to November, Registration receives about 93,000 of its 160,000 telephone calls. At its peak, Registration received 17,700 calls in August. Sustaining a processing time of below ten working days over this time would be difficult.

In the recent qualitative and quantitative surveys, registrants have consistently ranked speed of the registration process (and speed of the renewal process) as the most important aspect to them, and in the same surveys, the majority of registrants said that ten working days is reasonable to process their UK application.⁶ The survey data suggests that registrants are satisfied with a ten working day processing time for UK applications.

The additional of the word, complete, to the service standard is to make clear that incomplete applications may take longer than ten working days.

1.2. International / EEA applications for registration

An International application is for those applicants who have undergone their professional training outside the United Kingdom.

An EEA application is for those applicants who have EEA mutual recognition rights under the EU Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36) on the recognition of professional qualifications.

International / EEA application refers to the time taken to process the application.

Registration receives around 3,000 international and EEA applications a year.

⁴ AHPRA service charter, August 2013

⁵ DVLA Customer Service Standards and Performance, Appendix B, 2010, INF150, 12/10

⁶ Registrant Survey results 2013 – 2014: Period 4 – 3rd April 2014

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

*The Registration Department aims to process all **complete** International and EEA applications within 65 working days of receipt.*

Other regulators

The NMC do not differentiate between different application types. They aim to complete 90% of all types of registration applications within 90 days.⁷ The GDC aim to process European dentists in 60 calendar days, European DCPs in 90 days, International dentists in 60 calendar days and International DCPs in 80 days.⁸ The GMC aim to respond to 95% of registration applications within five working days. They aim to complete 95% of CESR (Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration) and CEGPR (Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration) applications within 3 months (90 days)⁹. The AHPRA aim to assess and process applications for registration as quickly as possible and warn international applicants their application will take may take longer than four to six weeks.¹⁰ The DVLA do not report on the processing of International driving license applications.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to verify completeness of all International and EEA applications and acknowledge receiving the application within 5 working days of receipt.

*The Registration Department aims to process **complete** applications within 60 working days of receipt.*

Explanation

Unlike a UK application, processing an International application is a labour and time-intensive task ensuring the applicant is fit to be put on the Register. Registration relies on real-time and up-to-date independent confirmation and verification of the applicants' identification, education, training and experience. Confirmation and verification relies on other parties, sometimes in other jurisdictions and time zones. Although all of these tasks are started at the same time, not all are completed within 30 days. For example, the authenticity of education certificates or professional qualifications is verified by directly contacting the awarding body that issued the qualification. This can take as long as 40 working days. If an applicant has worked in different jurisdictions, Registration will independently verify the registration status and history with the regulatory bodies in those jurisdictions. This normally takes over 20 working days if necessary, Professional references are independently verified. This normally takes 30 working days.

⁷ NMC Council paper, 26 March 2014, Item 7, NMC/14/27, Annexe 1

⁸ Q1 GDC Council paper, 20 May 2014, item 6, Council performance report

⁹ GMC Council paper, 25 February 2014, Chief Executive's report.

¹⁰ AHPRA service charter, August 2013.

In the recent qualitative and quantitative surveys most registrants said that one month was a reasonable time to process an International (or a Grandparenting) application. The next most popular response was 2 months.

Some emails and telephone calls received are from International and EEA applicants who would like confirmation that Registration has received their application. By confirming this within five working days it is expected to reduce both emails and telephone calls.

This service standard may need to be revised after January 2016, the deadline for transposing the amended EU Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36) into domestic law. Further, the standard will also need to be revised if the provisions of that Directive relating to the European Professional Card are brought into effect.

1.3. Grandparenting application for registration

Grandparenting is a temporary and time limited application route for those applicants who would not otherwise be eligible for registration. This 'transitional' period of registration is necessary when introducing statutory (compulsory) registration for the first time. After the "transitional" period the only way for a UK individual to become registered is via completing an approved programme. The length of the grandparenting period is specified in legislation and has normally open for two years after a profession joins the register, but for practitioner psychologists was open for three.

There are currently no professions eligible to gain entry to the Register via the Grandparenting route. The "transitional" period for grandparenting applications for arts therapists, biomedical scientists, chiropodists / podiatrists, clinical scientists, dietitians, orthoptists, occupational therapists, paramedics, physiotherapists, prosthetists / orthotists, radiographers, speech and language therapists closed in July 2005, for operating department practitioners October 2006 and for practitioner psychologists was July 2012.

There was no grandparenting period for hearing aid dispensers or social workers in England because they were already statutory regulated by the Hearing Aid Council and the General Social Care Council respectively before being regulated by the HCPC.

The next profession eligible to gain entry to the Register via the Grandparenting route is likely to be when HCPC takes on the statutory regulation of Public Health Specialists from 'non-medical' backgrounds. This is anticipated to be at the end of 2015.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to process all grandparenting applications within 65 working days of receipt of all documents.

Other regulators

None of the other regulators sampled - NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA or DVLA - report on a service standard for the time taken to process grandparenting applications.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to verify completeness of all Grandparenting applications and acknowledge receipt of the application within 5 working days.

*The Registration Department aims to process **complete** applications within 60 working days of receipt.*

Explanation

Similarly to an international or EEA application, a grandparenting application can be a labour and time-intensive task ensuring the applicant is fit to be put on the Register. Registration relies on real-time and up-to-date independent confirmation and verification of the applicants' identification, education, training and experience from other parties. Moreover, unlike a UK, International and EEA applicant, a Grandparenting applicant can continue to practise whilst their application is being assessed.

There is currently no grandparenting route onto the Register.

1.4. Renewal of registration

All HCPC registered professions have to renew their registration every two years. "Renewal of registration" refers to the time taken to process a registrant's on-going registration fee and check they have completed their professional declaration. Once Registration has processed the renewal form and payment, the online Register is immediately updated to show the registrant's new registration dates. The Register is in real-time and is the best way to verify a registrant's registration status.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to process a renewal form within 10 working days.

Other regulators

None of the other regulators sampled - NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA or DVLA - report on a service standard for the time taken to process renewals. The GDC say they send a registrant their annual certificate approximately fifteen working days after their payment has been processed.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to renew the registration of a Registrant with an active direct debit set up, within ten minutes of the Registrant completing their renewal online account.

*The Registration Department aims to process a **complete** paper renewal form within 10 working days of receipt.*

Explanation

In the recent qualitative and quantitative surveys, registrants have consistently ranked speed of the renewal process (and speed of the registration process) as the most important aspect to them, and in the same surveys the majority of registrants said that ten working days is reasonable to process their renewal.¹¹ The survey data suggests that registrants are satisfied with a ten working day processing time for renewals.

The addition of the reference to the online account is proposed so that a clear expectation is set registrants that the quicker way to renew is by using their online account. Registration is trying to change registrants' behaviour by obliging them to renew electronically.

The addition of the word **complete** to the service standard is to make clear that incomplete applications may take longer than then ten working days.

1.5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) audits

A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) audit is the term used to describe the time taken to process a registrant's submitted CPD profile against each of the CPD standards.

Current service standard

The current standard is:

The Registration Department aims to process all CPD audit reports within 65 working days of receipt of all documents.

Other regulators

The NMC says it audits its registrants' compliance with the Post-Registration Education and Practice (CPD) standard but it does not report on a service standard for the time taken to carry out these audits. The GDC says that usually at the end of each five-year cycle they will carry out a CPD audit and they may require their registrants to send in a full CPD record but it does not report on a service standard for the time taken to carry out these audits. The GMC aim to process 95% of revalidation recommendations¹² within 5 working days. All AHPRA registered health practitioners must undertake CPD but AHPRA does not report on a service standard for the time taken to audit these CPD requirements. The DVLA does not report on a service standard for CPD of driving license holders.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to acknowledge receiving the CPD profile application within 5 working days of receipt.

¹¹ Registrant Survey results 2013 – 2014: Period 4 – 3rd April 2014

¹² A revalidation recommendation is used to describe one of the three statements selected by a Responsible Officer (RO) about a doctor. The RO may make (a) a positive recommendation that a doctor is up to date and fit to practise, (b) a request to defer the date of an RO's recommendation (c) a notification of the doctor's non-engagement in revalidation.

*The Registration Department aims to process a **complete** CPD profile within 60 working days of receipt.*

Explanation

The CPD audit process is a labour and time-intensive task to ensure that registrant meets the CPD standards. CPD assessors assess the CPD profile and decide in their professional opinion, whether the registrant has met the CPD standards. The CPD assessor will decide whether:

1. the registrant meets the CPD standards and stays on the Register,
2. the registrant does not meet the standards and whether the registrant should be offered more time to meet the standards or recommend that their registration should end or,
3. More information is needed.

If more information is required then Registration will write to the registrant and let them know what information the assessors need to decide whether they meet the standards of CPD. Once the additional information is received the CPD profile is assessed again along with the additional information. If a CPD assessor can still not decide then more information may be requested from the registrant. This **assessing – requesting information – re-assessing** cycle can take up to 60 months to complete.

One of the objectives of the registration system and process review project is to look at ways of accelerating the requesting and submission of additional information required to complete a CPD profile assessment.

1.6. Readmission to the Register

A readmission is the route onto the Register for those applicants who were registered in the past, and now wish to be re-registered. They need to apply for 'readmission' to the Register.

“Readmission to the Register” refers to the time taken to process a registrant’s readmission application.

The Registration Department receive around 3,600 readmission applications a year. The vast majority of readmission applications are as a result of a registrant not renewing correctly at the end of their professional cycle. This ranges from around 0.5% to 3% for professions that have been on the Register for some time such as physiotherapists and around 6% to 9% for new professions such as social workers. For example, out of 49,000 physiotherapists’ renewing around 300 (0.6%) did not complete renewal correctly and applied to be re-admitted to the Register. When social workers’ renewal cycle completes in December, it is expected that around 5,000 of the 90,000 will need to readmit to the Register.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to process complete readmissions within ten working days.

Other regulators

GMC say they aim to assess an readmission within five days of receipt¹³. GDC say a complete readmission will take up to 10 working days¹⁴. None of the other regulators sampled - the NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA and DVLA - report on a service standard for the time taken to readmit a registrant to the Register.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed to keep this service standard essentially the same.

The new service standard is proposed to be:

*The Registration Department aims to process all **complete** readmission applications within ten working days.*

Explanation

Although other regulators do not report on readmission processing, and many do not have any service standard, it is felt that it is important for HCPC to set a readmission service standard. An application for readmission back onto the Register is a stressful and nerve-racking time for the registrant concerned. Keeping a service standard makes clear to the registrant that HCPC take their readmission seriously and would allow Registration to manage the expectation of the registrant through this difficult time.

In recent qualitative and quantitative surveys, the majority of registrants said that ten working days is reasonable to process an application for readmission.¹⁵

1.7. Written complaints

A written complaint refers to an email or letter sent to HCPC that provides feedback about the customer service provided by Registration. Historically, the Registration Department has had its own service standards in relation to handling customer service complaints. Now, customer service complaints about all departments - including complaints about Registration – are handled by the Service and Complaints Manager in the Secretariat Department.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to respond to written complaints within 15 working days.

The HCPC-wide service standard is:

Our aims

- *To deal with all complaints in an effective, fair and confidential manner.*

¹³ www.gmc-uk.org

¹⁴ www.gdc-uk.org

¹⁵ Registrant Survey results 2013 – 2014: Period 4 – 3rd April 2014

- To acknowledge receipt of feedback within three working days.
- To respond to complaints within 15 working days¹⁶.

Other regulators

The NMC say they acknowledge complaints within two days and aim to provide a full response within 20 working days and will let the person know if it will take longer. The GDC say they acknowledge complaints as soon as possible and ask for any extra information they may need to help us resolve the complaint in a timely manner. The GMC say they acknowledge complaints and answer any concerns as quickly as we can, and within 10 working days, wherever possible. They will let the person know if it will take longer. AHPRA say they acknowledge complaints in writing within 14 days. AHPRA say complaints are assessed, investigated, and in all but exceptional circumstances a response will be provided within 45 days. More complicated complaints may require more time to investigate. AHPRA say they communicate its expectations where a longer period is required. The DVLA say they acknowledge a complaint within 1 working day and send a substantive response within 10 working days.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standard and the Registration Department adopts the organisation-wide customer service standards.

Explanation

It is proposed that this service standard is removed because a detailed HCPC-wide service standard is in effect for all written complaints and feedback across the organisation. All customer service feedback is handled by the Service and Complaints Manager in Secretariat. The Service and Complaints Manager is responsible for ensuring that HCPC deals with all complaints in an effective, fair and confidential manner, acknowledges receipt of feedback within three working days and ensures HCPC responds to complaints within 15 working days or keeps people who provided feedback updated as to the progress of their enquiry if the issue has not been resolved within agreed times.

The Service and Complaints Manager is also responsible for coordinating regular reviews and updates to internal processes in light of complaints that have been received.

Furthermore, the Service and Complaints Manager is responsible for providing a yearly review of feedback and complaints to Council.

1.8. Emails

Emails refer to the time taken for Registration to respond to emails sent to the addresses, ukregistration@hcpc-uk.org and internationalregistration@hcpc-uk.org.

¹⁶ Customer service section of HCPC website, <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/customerservice/>

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to respond to emails within two working days.

Other regulators

The NMC, AHPRA and GDC do not report on the time taken to respond to emails. The GMC aim to answer 95% of emails within five working days, and the AHPRA say they aim to acknowledge online enquiries within two working days. The DVLA aim to answer an email within 3 working days.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to respond to 80% of all emails within one working day and all emails responded to within two working days.

Explanation

More and more organisations and businesses are providing email as a more convenient mode of communication to traditional forms such as post or telephone. Although we have found that different registrants and applicants are happy to wait varying lengths of time for a response to their email request depending on the complexity and severity of their request, waiting up to two working days for a simple request is no longer accepted by our applicants and registrants. Moreover, the Registration Department prefers applicants and registrants to use emails over the telephone or post because it allows greater flexibility. It provides an opportunity to more efficiently match supply to demand, it also allows time to better understand the request, and put it into proper context and perspective and provide a much fuller, frank and complete response. From the applicant or registrant's perspective it provides a level of formality and confirmation in writing that does not occur over the telephone.

1.9. Answering telephone calls

Registration telephone call answering refers to the time taken to answer telephone calls made to the Registration Department.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to answer 80% of calls within 30 seconds.

Other regulators

The NMC report on whether they answer 65% of calls within 40 seconds¹⁷. The GDC do not report on registration telephone call answering. The GMC report on whether they answer 90% of calls within 15 seconds¹⁸. AHPRA do not report on registration telephone call answering, they say they aim to answer 70% of phone calls in 90 seconds¹⁹. The DVLA take a different approach, they do not have a time answer target they have a call demand target. The DVLA say they aim to answer 95% of their call demand.

Proposed new service standard

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to answer 95% of all telephone calls.

Explanation

It is proposed that the service standard around telephone calls is changed from a time answer target to a call demand target. This is because in recent surveys registrants have said that speed of answering the telephone is the least important aspect to them. The majority of those surveyed said that they waited between less than 15 seconds and 2 minutes and when asked they said that a wait time between 30 seconds and 2 minutes is reasonable.

Operationally, striving to answer telephone calls within 30 seconds in peak times, such as over the summer and autumn months or at the end of a renewal cycle, is a considerable undertaking and would take registration advisors away from focusing on the aspects that registrants have consistently said are the most important to them, the time taken to process renewals and registration applications. If Registration does not process registration application and renewal forms, then more registrants and applicants call to check the status of their submitted forms. What the survey data suggests is that registrants are willing to wait a little on the telephone but are not willing to wait for an application or renewal to be processed.

1.10. Postal correspondence

Postal correspondence refers to the time taken to process or respond to any correspondence received by Registration from time of receipt

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to respond to postal correspondence within ten working days from time of receipt.

Other regulators

¹⁷ NMC Council paper, 26 March 2014

¹⁸ GMC Council paper, 25 February 2014, Chief Executive's report

¹⁹ AHPRA service charter, August 2013.

The NMC, the GDC, AHPRA and the DVLA do not report on a service standard for the time taken to process correspondence. The GMC aim to answer 95% of letters within five working days. AHPRA say they acknowledge an enquiry or request for information in a timely way.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed to keep this service standard the same.

The new service standard is proposed to be:

The Registration Department aims to process postal correspondence within ten working days.

Explanation

Registration is trying to change applicants and registrants' behaviour by encouraging them to correspond electronically via emails. It is proposed to keep this service standard the same so that a clear expectation is set with applicants and registrants that Registration will respond to email correspondence much quicker than postal correspondence.

2. Internal service standards

There are over 170 formally agreed commitments that are in place across HCPC that define the level of performance each department's customers can expect under normal circumstances. Customers in this context refer to a variety of stakeholders such as applicant and registrants, education providers, employers, council and committee members, banks, suppliers, partners, vendors, journalists, MPs, governments, other regulators as well as other departments. They cover a range of tasks and actions from the time taken to answer emails to hours of operations of a particular department's service.

The Registration Department's internal service standards cover such areas as the time to deliver and pick up post from the Facilities Department, time to respond to emails from the Fitness To Practise and Education Departments to the time taken to send out mass communication print runs.

Some of the Registration Department's current external service standards should no longer be external service standards and will be removed from their external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.

2.1. Process equality and diversity data for new applicants to the Register

The processing of equality and diversity data for new applicants refers to the time taken to process the equality and diversity form applicants are asked to complete at time of application. The equality and diversity monitoring form is entirely voluntary and if applicants choose not to complete it, it does not affect their application for registration. Equality and diversity data is stored in such a way that is not linked to the registrant's registration information and it is not possible to link them back to any equality and diversity information they may have submitted.

Current service standard

The current service standard is

The Registration Department aims to process the equality and diversity data within 10 working days.

Other regulators

None of the other regulators sampled - the NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA and DVLA - report on a service standard for the time taken to process equality and diversity data from applicants.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.

Explanation

There is no time pressure to process an applicant's submitted equality and diversity data and so it is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards. If an applicant submits equality and diversity information then it is immediately separated and segregated from its application. Both renewal forms and equality and diversity forms are processed using the Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) scanning system. Due to the time pressure of processing renewal forms, equality and diversity forms are processed once all outstanding renewal forms are processed.

2.2. Renewal batch letters sent on time

"Renewal batch letters" is an expression used to describe the notification of renewal to registrants when they are able to renew their registration. Every two years all registrants must renew their registration. To make sure their name stays on the Register, all registrants need to pay their registration fee and complete a professional declaration. Registrants are not able to renew their registration unless they have done both things. Payment alone is not sufficient to keep their name on the Register.

A notification of renewal is either posted or emailed to the registrants approximately 3 months before they need to renew.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

Renewal notices sent on publicly published renewal dates.

Other regulators

None of the other regulators sampled - NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA or DVLA - report on a service standard to run renewal batch letters on time.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.

Explanation

The notification to registrants when to renew their registration is a crucial element to maintaining an accurate and up-to-date Register and is deeply imbedded in the operational processes of Registration. The process has been engineered such that as much as possible has been automated and those parts that are not automated are heavily managed, supervised and scrutinised. It is unlikely that renewal notices would not be sent out on-time, to publicly published renewal dates

2.3. Renewal cycle batch processing

Renewal cycle batch processing refers to the process that checks whether registrants in renewal have both paid and signed. If they have not done both things then this process changes their status from "registered" to "lapsed" and their names are removed from the Register.

Current service standard

The current service standard is:

The Registration Department aims to complete renewal (removal) process run within five working days of publicly published dates.

Other regulators

None of the other regulators sampled - NMC, GDC, GMC, AHPRA or DVLA - report on a service standard to run renewal batch letters on time.

Proposed new service standard

It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.

Explanation

Similarly to renewal batch letters, the removal of registrants who have not renewed on-time is another crucial element to maintaining an accurate and up-to-date Register. This process is also deeply imbedded in the operational processes of Registration. The process has been engineered such that as much as possible has been automated and those parts that are not are heavily managed, supervised and scrutinised. It is unlikely that the renewal cycle batch process would not be run on-time, to publicly published renewal dates.

Appendix – Summary of new service standards

	Process	Current external service standard	New external service standard
1.	UK applications for registration	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all UK applications within ten working days.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to respond to all UK application requests within ten working days of receipt. We aim to process all complete UK applications within ten working days of receipt, or inform the applicant within ten working days if their application is incomplete.</i>
2.	International / EEA applications for registration	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all complete International and EEA applications within 65 working days of receipt.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to verify completeness of all International and EEA applications and acknowledge receiving the application within 5 working days of receipt. The Registration Department aims to process complete applications within 60 working days of receipt.</i>
3.	Grandparenting application for registration	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all grandparenting applications within 65 working days of receipt of all documents.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to verify completeness of all Grandparenting applications and acknowledge receipt of the application within 5 working days. The Registration Department aims to process complete applications within 60 working days of receipt.</i>
4.	Renewal of registration	<i>The Registration Department aims to process a renewal form within 10 working days.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to renew the registration of a Registrant with active direct debit set up, within ten minutes of the Registrant completing their renewal online account. The Registration Department aims to process a complete paper renewal form within 10 working days of receipt.</i>
5.	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) audits	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all CPD audit reports within 65 working days of receipt of all documents.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to acknowledge receiving the CPD profile application within 5 working days of receipt. The Registration Department aims to process a complete CPD profile within 60</i>

			<i>working days of receipt.</i>
6.	Readmission to the Register	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all readmissions within ten working days.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to process all complete readmission applications within ten working days.</i>
7.	Written complaints	<p>The current service standard is:</p> <p><i>The Registration Department aims to respond to written complaints within 15 working days.</i></p> <p>The HCPC-wide service standard is:</p> <p><i>Our aims</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>To deal with all complaints in an effective, fair and confidential manner.</i> •<i>To acknowledge receipt of feedback within three working days.</i> •<i>To respond to complaints within 15 working days²⁰.</i> 	It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standard and the Registration Department adopts the organisation-wide customer service standards.
8.	Emails	<i>The Registration Department aims to respond to emails within two working days.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to respond to 80% of all emails within one working day and all emails responded to within two working days.</i>
9.			
10	Answering telephone calls	<i>The Registration Department aims to answer 80% of calls within 30 seconds.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to answer 95% of all telephone calls.</i>
11	Postal correspondence	<i>The Registration Department aims to respond to postal correspondence within ten working days from time of receipt.</i>	<i>The Registration Department aims to process postal correspondence within ten working days.</i>
12	Process equality and diversity data for new applicants to the Register	<i>The Registration Department aims to process the equality and diversity data within 10 working days.</i>	It is proposed that this service standard is removed from Registration's service standards.
13	Renewal batch	<i>Renewal notices sent on</i>	It is proposed that this service standard is

²⁰ Customer service section of HCPC website, <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/customerservice/>

	letters sent on time.	<i>publicly published renewal dates.</i>	removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.
14	Renewal cycle batch processing	<i>The Registration Department aims to complete renewal (removal) process run within five working days of publicly published dates.</i>	It is proposed that this service standard is removed from the Registration Department's external service standards and added to their list of internal service standards.

Appendix – Abbreviations

APHRA - Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

CEGPR - Certificate of Eligibility for GP Registration

CESR - Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

DVLA - Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

GMC – general Medical Council

GMC- General Dental Council

HCPC – Health and Care Professions Council

ICR - Intelligent Character Recognition

NMC – Nursing and Midwifery Council

RO - Responsible Officer