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THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Chief Executive and Registrar: Mr Marc Seale

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MINUTES of the seventh meeting of the Approvals Committee held on **Tuesday 17 May 2005** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU.

PRESENT: Professor J Harper (Chairman)
Professor N Brook
Professor T Hazell
Professor C Lloyd
Mrs B Stuart
Miss E Thornton
Professor D Waller
Mr D Whitmore

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Ms N Borg, Education Officer
Ms S Woolf, Education Manager

Item 1.05/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mrs S Chaudhry, Mr P Frowen, Miss G Pearson and Miss P Sabine.
- 1.2 The Committee thanked Ms F Nixon for her work as the Director of Education and Policy and wished her well for the future now that she had left the HPC. It also thanked the current staff of the Education and Policy Department for their work and for producing good quality papers for the Committee whilst under pressure.

Item 2.05/24 APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda, subject to the inclusion of the following items:-
 - (i) Arts Therapy programmes
 - (ii) Annual monitoring

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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Item 3.05/25 MINUTES

- 3.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the sixth meeting of the Approvals Committee be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4.05/26 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Item 4.1 – Matters Arising

- 4.1.1 The Committee noted that the scheme of delegation had been considered at the meeting of the Education and Training Committee on 30 March. The Committee had agreed that the paper should be amended and considered as an item for approval at the next Education and Training Committee meeting on 14 June.

4.2 Item 4.3 – Approval of Paramedic Programmes

- 4.2.1 Ms Woolf reported that she had had a discussion with the ASA with a view to holding a meeting to discuss approval of paramedic programmes. She would attempt to arrange a meeting with all the education providers running paramedic programmes, to discuss HPC's requirements.

4.3 Item 6.5 – Report from the Director of Education and Policy

- 4.3.1 The Committee noted that, due to pressure of work, the education provider roadshows were now planned for the early part of the next academic year.
- 4.3.2 The Committee noted that the draft Approvals Handbook would be incorporated into the guidance for education providers on the Standards of Education and Training. It was proposed that both documents would be provided in a loose-leaf folder to facilitate any future revisions. It was hoped that both documents would be published by the next academic year. The Visitors Guidance, once completed, would also be issued to education providers.
- 4.3.3 The Committee noted that the Executive continued to discuss the issues regarding clinical science modalities and registration.
- 4.3.4 The Committee noted that the approval of post-registration qualifications would need to be considered by the Council.
- 4.3.5 The Committee noted that Ms Nadia Lupo, Education Officer, had left the HPC and Mr Ed Crowe had been appointed to replace her. A further three education executive officer posts were being advertised.

4.4 Item 9.6 - Visitors' Paper

- 4.4.1 The Committee noted that a letter had not yet been written to all Visitors about lay visitors' attendance at Approvals visits.

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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4.4.2 The Committee noted that a form was being developed which would allow the education provider to provide feedback on their experience of a visit.

4.5 Item 11.4 – Programme Approval – Biomedical Science

4.5.1 The Committee noted that meetings had been held between the HPC and Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer, to discuss developments affecting Biomedical Science degrees. The Executive had been invited to nominate representatives for various forums. Professor Hazell had been invited to attend as a representative of employers. The Committee noted that Ms Nixon had been nominated as a representative and would need to be replaced.

4.6 Item 14.2 – Programme Approvals: Education and Training Committee Chairman’s Action

4.6.1 The Committee reaffirmed that programmes could be approved by the Chairman of the Education and Training Committee.

Item 5.05/27 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

5.1 The Chairman had no specific matters to report to the Committee.

Item 6.05/28 SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED BY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

6.1 The Committee received a report from the Education Manager.

6.2 The Committee noted a summary of major and minor amendments to approved programmes.

6.3 The Committee noted that the Physiotherapy Programme at the University of Salford proposed to allow students to have four retrievals instead of two, for each module of the programme. It also noted that concerns had been expressed that this proposal could have implications for competence and safety to practice. In discussion, the Committee did not accept this concern but felt that it required more information about the level of support offered to students taking retrievals.

6.4 The Committee agreed that further information should be sought from the University of Salford.

Action: SW

Item 7.05/29 PART-TIME PROGRAMMES

7.1 The Committee received a report from the Education Manager.

7.2 The Committee noted that there had been a number of requests from education providers who wished to provide a part-time route for an

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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established full-time programme. Providers felt that this was not a significant change to their programme and at a recent visit the HPC Visitors had been asked to consider a part-time route without having been informed of this in advance.

7.3 In discussion, it was felt that the introduction of a part-time route would not constitute a major amendment if the part-time students attended components of the full-time programme. The Committee felt that when an education provider made a request about a part-time course, it should explicitly describe how it differed from the full-time mode and any resourcing implications. HPC would then be able to decide whether approval should be done on the basis of documentation or by means of a visit. The Committee noted that there was an increase in the number of part-time programmes.

7.4 The Committee agreed that:-

(i) approval of a part-time route could be given by correspondence provided that the education providers submitted documentation detailing how all the SETs would be met for the part-time programme.

(ii) if a part-time route to a programme was tabled at an Approvals Visit, the HPC Visitors should not be expected to consider the route at the same time as considering a full-time programme.

Action: SW

Item 8.05/30 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

8.1 The Committee received a report from the Education Officer.

8.2 The Committee noted that, having appointed Visitors to 65 visits across nine professions, it had become apparent that there was a range of conflict of interest issues across all professions and particularly in relation to smaller professions. A number of difficulties had arisen in the appointment of Arts Therapy Visitors and, in particular, Dramatherapy. There were six Dramatherapy programmes in the UK for which there were only three Dramatherapy Visitors. HPC was recruiting additional Dramatherapists. However, the rate of conflict of interest would remain high as the majority of individuals with appropriate qualifications and experience were likely to be directly involved with a programme or acting as an external examiner for it.

8.3 The Committee noted that similar problems would arise in other professions, either because there were only a limited number of programmes in the UK or because the academic component of the profession remained small and the majority of HPC Visitors were acquainted with one another and often shared work histories.

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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- 8.4 Currently, a conflict of interest applied if the team delivering a programme included an immediate family member of the Visitor; the Visitor was currently on, or had in the previous years been on, the payroll of the education provider in any capacity; the Visitor currently, or within the last three years, had been a placement educator for the department offering the programme.
- 8.5 The Committee agreed the following process for dealing with a conflict of interest:-

The Education Officer (or other member of staff assigning Visitors to an approvals event) would, in the first instance, endeavour to find Visitors with no conflict of interest. If this was not possible, the Education Officer (or other member of staff) would seek to minimise the conflict of interest (this might include, for example, approaching visitors whose link with the education provider took place several years ago, rather than one whose link was recent or current).

If the only available Visitor was someone with a conflict of interest, then the Education Officer would ask the Visitor to send a description of their link with the education provider. This could be provided by e-mail.

The description of the conflict of interest would be examined and, if appropriate, approved by the Education Manager. It would then be forwarded to the education provider and the education provider would be asked if they wished the visit to proceed using the Visitor. The description of the conflict of interest (approved by the Education Manager and the education provider) would then be added to the file for the visit by the Education Officer.

In the event of a conflict of interest, a lay Visitor should also attend the visit to assess whether the programme was objectively examined.

Action: NB

Item 9.05/31 QUEEN MARGARET UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

- 9.1 The Committee received a report from the Education Officer.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that a validation event for the Postgraduate Diploma and MSc in Occupational Therapy had taken place at Queen Margaret University College (QMUC), Edinburgh on 7-8 April. Full-time courses had been approved for (i) PgDip in Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration) and (ii) MSc in Occupational Therapy (Pre-registration).
- 9.3 The Committee noted that students who successfully completed the PgDip could register with HPC and enrol part-time on the MSc programme. Once

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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the Master’s modules had been completed students would hand back their PgDip and would be awarded the MSc.

- 9.4 In discussion, the Committee noted that students taking the PgDip needed to obtain 120 credits, whilst those who continued to MSc needed to obtain another 60 credits. The Committee agreed that, in the circumstances, QMUC would need to offer two titles for the same curriculum: “MSc in Occupational Therapy (pre-registration)” and “MSc in Occupational Therapy”, depending on whether students subsequently registered with HPC or had already done so.

Action: NB

Item 10.05/32 ARTS THERAPY PROGRAMMES – PG DIP AND MA

- 10.1 The Committee received a report from the Education Manager.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that the Central School of Speech and Drama had an approved PgDip programme in Dramatherapy. The School had also been running a MA programme and an approvals visit for this programme had been held in April. Once the conditions had been met, the MA would be included on the HPC list of approved courses for 2005/06. People who had just graduated from the MA had covered all the PgDip modules in addition to completing a dissertation, so the PgDip award was encompassed in the MA award.
- 10.3 The Committee noted that the HPC had approved a PgDip Music Therapy programme at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and had now been asked to visit in July to extend the validation for one year. During 2005-06, the School intended to develop a MA in Music Therapy which was intended as the entry level to the HPC register.
- 10.4 The Committee noted that at Goldsmiths College, the PgDip was now incorporated into the MA Art Psychotherapy. Along with all other Arts Therapy training, from 2003-4 the level had been set by the professional bodies at Masters level and this was now reflected in Arts Therapies Standards of Education and Training. All Arts Therapy programmes had been approved in 1999-2000 under the old system, as a mix of post-graduate diplomas and Master’s degrees and would gradually have to be re-approved under the new system. The MA at Goldsmiths would have an Approval Visit in 2005-06. Students who were graduates of the MA programmes had been admitted to the HPC register with the PgDip award.
- 10.4 The Committee agreed that, where education providers were already running a HPC approved PgDip programme, and a MA programme which had yet to be approved, graduates from the MA programme would be eligible to apply for HPC registration, provided that the education provider submitted written

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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confirmation and provided evidence that the only difference between the PgDip and MA programmes was the addition of a dissertation. Once the MA programme had been approved by HPC, the PgDip would cease to be an entry qualification to the HPC register.

ACTION: SW

Item 11.05/33 ANNUAL MONITORING

- 11.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Chairman of the Education and Training Committee.
- 11.2 The Committee noted that the Director of Education had reported to the Education and Training Committee on 30 March and had set out a proposed approach to annual monitoring. The Education and Training Committee had asked the Approvals Committee to develop a proposal.
- 11.3 In discussion, the Committee agreed that education providers should be asked to complete a pro-forma on an annual basis, providing details of any changes to the programme. It was agreed that monitoring visits should take place biannually.
- 11.4 The Committee agreed that a paper should be prepared for discussion at its meeting on 9 September.

Action: SW/NB

Item 12.05/34 VISITORS' REPORTS

- 12.1 The Committee received a report to note, enclosing visitors' reports on four programmes and draft reports on programmes where the full approvals process had not yet been completed.
- 12.2 The Committee felt that the approach taken in the reports was very helpful and succinctly laid out the HPC's recommendations and reasoning. It was felt that the reports would help to establish an audit trail and standard nomenclature. It was noted that the reports had also been helpful in providing feedback to education providers.

Item 13.05/35 PROGRAMMES APPROVALS EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S ACTION

- 13.1 The Committee received a report to note, detailing the actions taken by the Chairman of the Education and Training Committee since the last meeting of that committee held on 16 February.
- 13.2 The Committee noted the details of the four programmes that had been

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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approved via Chairman's action.

Item 14.05/36 APPROVALS UPDATE

- 14.1 The Committee received a report to note, which set out the reasons for conditions which were regularly being set on approvals.
- 14.2 The Committee noted that most conditions were under SET 6.1 (assessment design and procedures ensured that the student could demonstrate fitness to practice).

Item 15.05/37 FORWARD PROGRAMME OF APPROVALS VISITS

- 15.1 The Committee received a report to note, which set out the visits to be held in May-July.
- 15.2 The Committee noted that requests were still being received for visits in June and July. However, given the availability of resources and the timing of requests, many of these visits would need to be scheduled later in the next academic year. A visit would be arranged where there was an urgent requirement. The Committee thanked the staff of the Department for this aspect of their work.

Item 16.05/38 VISITORS UPDATE

- 16.1 The Committee received a report to note, which set out progress on Visitor training, publication of the Visitor Guidance document, recruitment of Visitors, and allocation of work. The final draft of the guidance document was attached as an appendix to the report.
- 16.2 The Committee noted that Visitors had particularly welcomed the guidance on examples of questions which might be asked around the individual SETs. It was also noted that the abbreviation "BPQ" on the second page of the paper should read "BPA".
- 16.3 The Committee noted that Professor Hazell was producing guidance for lay visitors and that all lay visitors would be invited to a training event. The Chairman of the Education and Training Committee reported that she would continue to be involved in Visitors' training.

Item 18.05/39 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 18.1 There was no other business.

Item 19.05/40 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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19.1 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 29 September 2005 at 11 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

Approvals committee public minutes May 2005	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None	2005-05-17	a	APV	APV
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