The Health Professions Council
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Minutes of the 39th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held on **Wednesday 25 March 2009** at Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London, SE11 4BU.

Present: Ms E Thornton (Chairman)
Professor K Bryan
Ms H Davis
Mrs S Drayton
Ms C Farrell
Professor J Harper
Dr S Hutchins
Professor C Lloyd
Professor J Lucas
Mr A Mount
Ms P Sabine
Mr J Seneviratne
Mrs B Stuart
Professor D Waller
Mr N Willis

In attendance:
Mr O Ammar, Education Manager
Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Mr J Bracken, HPC's Solicitor
Mr B Edmonds, Education Officer
Mrs A Gorringe, Director of Education
Ms P Grove, University of Reading (items 1-10 inclusive)
Mr M Guthrie, Acting Director of Policy and Standards
Ms A Hargood, Education Officer
Ms C Harkin, Customer Services Manager (items 1-8 inclusive)
Mr R Houghton, Head of Registration (items 1-10 inclusive)

Mr S Mars, Policy Officer
Mr G Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations
Mrs T Samuel-Smith, Education Manager
Mr M J Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar
Ms A Shomefun, Education Officer
Ms C Urwin, Policy Officer
Dr A van der Gaag, President

Item 1.09/1 Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Donaghy and Ms G Pearson.

1.2 The Chairman welcomed Committee members, members of the public and the Executive to the meeting.

Item 2.09/2 Approval of agenda

2.1 The Committee approved the agenda, subject to the following amendments:

- considering the items on admissions forms; practitioner psychologists – process for removal of duplicates; and Continuing Professional Development sample sizes as items 8, 9 and 10 respectively; and
- considering the item on service user involvement as item 14.

Item 3.09/3 Declaration of members' interests

3.1 In connection with item 18, Mr Seneviratne declared an interest as an assessor for the Association of Clinical Scientists and as a former Secretary to the Association.

Item 4.09/4 Minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting held on 2 December 2008 (report ref: ETC 1/09)

4.1 The Committee agreed that the minutes of the 38th meeting of the Education and Training Committee should be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 5.09/5 Matters arising (report ref: ETC 2/09)

5.1 The Committee received a paper to note from the Executive.

5.2 The Committee noted the list of actions which had been agreed at the last meeting.

5.3 The Committee noted that the Executive expected that the Department of Health working group would shortly publish its report on extending professional regulation. The Committee noted that the Chief Executive and Registrar was a member of the working group.

5.4 The Committee noted that the Executive would convene a meeting to discuss the generic standards of proficiency in the early part of the 2009-10 financial year.

Item 6.09/6 Chairman's report

6.1 The Committee received a verbal report from the Chairman.

6.2 The Committee noted that the Chairman had been involved in the following meetings:

- interviews for practitioner psychologist partner roles. The Chairman thanked other members of the Committee who had also been involved in the interviews;
- meetings of the Psychotherapists and Counsellors Professional Liaison Group, chaired by Professional Waller. The Committee noted that three meetings had been held to date and the Group had discussed the structure of the Register, the standards of education and training and the standards of proficiency. An event for stakeholders was due to be held in Manchester on 31 March 2009.

6.3 The Committee noted that recruitment had been successfully completed for hearing aid dispenser Visitors. The registration assessor roles for the profession would be re-advertised, due to a low level of responses to the initial advertising.

Item 7.09/7 Director of Education's report (report ref: ETC 3/09)

7.1 The Committee received a report on the work of the Education Department.

7.2 The Committee noted that the Department was working to complete the majority of the projects included in the workplan for 2008-9.

7.3 The Committee noted that feedback on HPC's seminars for education providers had been very positive. A number of seminars were planned for 2009-10, including seminars for professions which were expected to be regulated by HPC in the future.

Item 8.09/8 Review of admission forms (report ref: ETC 15/09)

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

8.2 The Committee noted that the Executive had reviewed the registration application forms used by UK applicants and international/European Economic Area applicants. The Executive had also reviewed the application form for readmission. The reviews had taken account of feedback from applicants, registrants and employees in the Registration Department.

8.3 The Committee noted that the HPC asked applicants to provide certified copies of identity documents.

8.4 The Committee agreed to recommend the forms to the Council for approval, subject to the following amendments:

- the removal of the term 'Other' under the Clinical Scientists category; and
- correction of any typographical errors

Action: CH (by 26 March 2009)

Item 9.09/9 Practitioner psychologists: Process for removal of duplicate registrations (report ref: ETC 16/09)

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

9.2 The Committee noted that it was estimated that there were about 2000 practitioner psychologists who were on the registers of both the British Psychological Society and the Association of Educational Psychologists. This created a risk of duplicate entries on the HPC register, which would present a number of operational issues. The paper set out an approach for identifying potential duplicate records.

9.3 The Committee approved the approach for identifying duplicate records.

Action: RH (ongoing to July 2009)

Item 10.09/10 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sample sizes and CPD update (report ref: ETC 10/09)

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

10.2 The Committee noted that the first two professions subject to CPD audits had been sampled at 5%. Based on the findings of these audits and following statistical advice from the University of Reading, it was proposed to reduce the sample size to 2.5% for the remaining 11 professions to be audited.

10.3 The Committee noted that, following the consultation on CPD held in 2004, HPC had decided to reduce the sample size to 2.5% subject to a review of the initial audits. This had been communicated by the HPC to stakeholders (for example, in response to questions at listening events).

10.4 The Committee noted that requests for deferral of a CPD audit were considered by HPC and deferrals were granted if the registrant could demonstrate that there was a valid reason. The Committee noted that any registrant who had been granted a deferral would automatically be selected during the next audit of their profession.

10.5 Some members felt that a 2.5% sample of 11 professions would represent a significant number of registrants. Other members felt that a sample size of 2.5% would be too small to identify any issues related to CPD in some professions, particularly the smaller professions. It was suggested that an alternative approach would be to sample 500 registrants or 2.5% of the profession, whichever was larger. The Committee noted that, at present, there was a lack of data on whether there were particular CPD issues in certain professions or certain demographic groups. The Committee noted that the Executive intended to review the approach to sampling in the light of subsequent audits.

10.6 The Committee noted that it was possible that registrants would be required to undertake revalidation in the future. The Committee noted that a robust approach to sampling would be required for any revalidation process.

10.7 The Committee voted to reduce the sample size to 2.5% for the remaining 11 professions, as follows:
For – 8
Against - 6
Abstentions – 1

Action: RH (ongoing)

Item 11.09/11 Practitioner psychologists – Standards of proficiency (report ref: ETC 4/09)

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

11.2 The Committee noted that a consultation had been held between 9 November 2007 and 8 February 2008 on draft standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists. The Committee had not previously been asked to consider the outcome of the consultation because of a delay in the legislative process. The draft order necessary for statutory regulation of practitioner psychologists had been laid in the UK and Scottish Parliaments on 5 March 2009.

11.3 The Committee noted that the responses to the consultation had suggested that the English language requirement for practitioner psychologists should be set at an overall score in the academic test of the International English Language Testing Systems (IELTS) of at least level 8.0. The Committee noted that most professions currently regulated by HPC were required to meet an IELTS level of 7.0, with no element below 6.5. Speech and language therapists were required to reach a higher level because of the requirement to carry out tasks such as speech and phonetic analysis. The Committee agreed that there was a lack of a compelling argument within the responses to justify an IELTS level of 8.0 for practitioner psychologists.

11.4 The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council that practitioner psychologists should be required to achieve an overall score in IELTS of at least 7.0, with no element below 6.5.

Action: CU (by 26 March 2009)

11.5 In discussion, members of the Committee felt that some domain-specific standards of proficiency would be relevant to other domains. The Committee agreed that the Executive should revisit the draft standards of proficiency, with a view to minimising the standards

which were domain-specific or profession-specific and explaining why certain standards were only applicable to certain domains. The Committee agreed that members could also provide comments to the Executive by e-mail.

11.6 The Committee agreed that, for ease of reference, comments on the generic standards of proficiency should be placed in an appendix to the consultation responses document.

11.7 The Committee agreed that the final draft of the standards of proficiency should be resubmitted to the meetings of the Education and Training Committee and the Council on 20 May 2009.

Action: CU (by 20 May 2009)

Item 12.09/12 Practitioner psychologists – Threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register (report ref: ETC 5/09)

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

12.2 The Committee noted that a consultation had been held between 9 November 2007 and 8 February 2008 on an amendment to standard 1 of the standards of education and training, to set the threshold level of qualification for entry to the practitioner psychologists part of the Register. The Committee had not previously been asked to consider the outcome of the consultation because of the delay in the legislative process (described at paragraph 11.2 above).

12.3 The Committee agreed that it would not be possible to agree the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register without having first agreed the standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists. Therefore, it was agreed that this would deferred until the Committee's meeting on 20 May 2009.

Item 13.09/13 Consultation on the registration cycle and grandparenting criteria for practitioner psychologists (report ref: ETC 6/09)

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

13.2 The Committee noted that HPC needed to consult on amendments on the Registration and Fees Rules to set the registration cycle for practitioner psychologists. HPC also needed to consult on the criteria to be used in determining grandparenting applications.

13.3 The Committee noted that it was possible that the registration cycle might be specified in the legislation for regulation of practitioner psychologists, in which case that consultation would need to be disregarded.

13.4 The Committee agreed and recommended to the Council:

(1) to consult on setting the registration cycle and grandparenting criteria for practitioner psychologists;
(2) the text of the consultation documents and draft grandparenting criteria (subject to minor editing amendments).

Action: MG (by 26 March 2009)

Item 14.09/14 Service user involvement (report ref: ETC 9/09)

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

14.2 The Committee noted that the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence review for 2007-8 had identified three areas for HPC to develop, including processes for ensuring that HPC's approvals process took account of patients' views. The Committee had agreed on 25 September 2008 that the Executive should investigate this area.

14.3 The Committee noted that the Executive had sought the views of education providers and Visitors and had reviewed the approaches taken by other regulators. The paper proposed amendments to the guidance on the standards of education and training and the operational processes.

14.4 The Committee noted that a joint healthcare regulators' group was considering the wider issue of patient involvement and had received a presentation from the General Social Care Council on its approach to involving service users.

14.5 The Committee agreed:
(1) to recommend to Council the additional changes to the standards of education and training guidance as outlined in appendix 3 to the paper;

(2) to approve the following enhancements to the approval and monitoring processes:

(a) submission or validation of critical review document (as part of the approval process documentation) was optional but strongly encouraged;
(b) a student written submission (as part of the approval process documentation) was optional but strongly encouraged;
(c) no changes were made to the groups that visitors met on an approval visit;
(d) no changes were to be made to the composition of the visit panel;
(e) the submission of evidence of engagement with service users (as part of an annual monitoring audit submission) was optional but strongly encouraged;
(f) submission of evidence of engagement with service users (as part of a major change submission) was optional but strongly encouraged;

(3) that the enhancements above should be communicated to education providers ahead of the 2009-2010 academic year and that they should become effective from September 2009. The Committee agreed that HPC's publications should be updated at the next suitable opportunity.

(4) that further research should be conducted into the value and effectiveness of extending the composition of the visit panel to include service users. The findings from this research would be reported back to the Committee in March 2010.

Action: AC (ongoing to March 2010)

Item 15.09/15 Revised standards of education and training and guidance: Responses to consultation (report ref: ETC 7/09)

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

15.2 The Committee noted that a consultation on revisions to the standards of education and training (SETs) and the related guidance had taken place between 1 August 2008 and 14 November 2008. Responses to the consultation had been broadly positive. There had been additions to the SETs, requiring regular monitoring and evaluation systems for the programme; a process for dealing with student complaints; a process for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct; and a requirement for the curriculum to make sure that students understood the implications of the HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. The

Committee noted that the numbering system of the SETs had been revised to avoid sub-sections.

15.3 The Committee noted that the guidance on the SETs was now quite substantial and a view was expressed that the guidance should be made more concise during the next review. The Committee agreed that the guidance should be amended to remove occasionally any terminology (such as 'health professionals' and 'care environment') which was not appropriate for the range of professions which might be regulated by HPC in the future.

15.4 The Committee agreed and recommended to the Council:
(1) the text of the standards of education and training consultation response document, subject to ensuring where possible that the text remained as applicable as possible to all professions as possible;
(2) the text of the standards of education and training (subject to legal scrutiny);
(3) the text of the standards of education and training guidance (subject to an amendment that the additional guidance on service user involvement agreed at item 14 should also be incorporated and subject to Plain English editing and legal scrutiny);
(4) to add practitioner psychologists to SET 1 and appropriate reference documents into the 'Further information' section of the guidance (subject to practitioner psychologists becoming regulated by the HPC); and
(5) that the revised standards of education and training should be effective from September 2009.

Action: SM (ongoing to September 2009)

Item 16.09/16 Operational implementation of the new standards of education and training (report ref: ETC 8/09)

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

16.2 The Committee noted that the revised SETs were due to become effective from September 2009. The paper proposed three approaches to reviewing existing programmes' adherence to the revised SETs – either an approvals visit to all programmes, assessment as part of the annual monitoring process, or a requirement to submit an application through the major change process.

16.3 The Committee agreed that the annual monitoring process should be used to assess how currently approved programmes continued to meet the revised standards of education and training. The Committee agreed that this would minimise the burden on education providers and allow time for providers to revise their programmes as necessary.

Action: AG (ongoing to 2011)

Item 17.09/17 Education Department workplan (report ref: ETC 11/09)

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

17.2 The Committee noted that the workplan included operational work, supporting activities and projects. Operational work would be given the highest priority and was expected to require more resources due to the expected regulation of practitioner psychologists.

17.3 The Committee approved the workplan.

Action: AG (ongoing to March 2010)

Item 18.09/18 Guidance on when to not approve or withdraw approval from a programme (report ref: ETC 12/09)

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

18.2 The Committee noted that visitors had sought clarification on when it would be appropriate to recommend that a programme should not be approved, or to recommend that ongoing approval should be withdrawn. The Committee noted that the Committee and visitors had sought advice on the issue. The Committee noted that it was responsible for any decision to not approve or withdraw ongoing approval from a programme. The paper contained draft guidance on the issue.

18.3 The Committee noted that the draft guidance stated that, unless there were exceptional circumstances, a visit should proceed and be concluded, so that the visitors had an opportunity to gather all the relevant evidence about whether a programme met the standards of education and training before reaching a decision. Following the visit, the visitors' report had to be written and submitted to the Committee. The Committee noted that visitors were not required to indicate their recommendation at the end of a visit, although this was often done, but always presented as informal feedback.

18.4 The Committee noted that the draft guidance stated that where visitors' had major concerns they could make a recommendation to not approve or withdraw ongoing approval from a programme. However, this recommendation had to be reached using objective criteria, which were detailed in the guidance.

18.5 The Committee approved the draft guidance, subject to the following amendments:

- the phrase 'which have been experienced recently' should be deleted; and
- the third bullet point should read 'the education provider fails to engage fully with the visit.'

Action: TS-S (by 11 June 2009)

Item 19.09/19 Biomedical scientists – Reconfirmation of approval of routes to registration (report ref: ETC 13/09)

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

19.2 The Committee noted that it had received a paper on this issue at its previous meeting. The Executive had subsequently held a meeting with the Institute of Biomedical Scientists (IBMS) to discuss how to proceed.

19.3 The Committee noted that the model for the approval process would need to be amended to reconfirm the approval routes to registration for the IBMS. This was because a student could not be awarded the Certificate of Competence without successfully completing an IBMS accredited degree (or part thereof) and a period of work based learning in an IBMS approved laboratory, which included the completion of the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio. The approval visit would therefore need to assess the IBMS management processes across all three elements of the programme (academic, clinical and the Certificate of Competence). The Committee noted that the Executive would ensure that the approval process was robust, including action to address any conflicts of interest which visitors might have.

19.4 The Committee approved the proposed model for reconfirmation of ongoing approval and the amended timeline for activity.

Action: TS-S (ongoing to February 2010)

Item 20.09/20 Clinical scientists – Reconfirmation of approval of routes to registration (report ref: ETC 14/09)

20.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive. An addendum to the paper had been circulated to members electronically and was tabled.

20.2 The Committee noted that it had received a paper on the issue at its previous meeting. The Executive had subsequently held a meeting with the Association of Clinical Scientists (ACS) to discuss how to proceed and, as a result, the addendum to the current paper had been produced.

20.3 The Committee noted that the ACS carried out assessments of individuals' portfolios of work, rather than quality assuring education and training. Modalities within clinical science had different approaches to quality assurance of the academic and clinical environment and the ACS did not currently have an established mechanism to ensure that modality-specific professional bodies applied uniform quality assurance to the pathways leading to registration.

20.4 The Committee agreed to enact an operationally amended approval visit to the Association of Clinical Scientists that would assess all standards of proficiency and seek to ensure that all of the standards were met. In the case of the standards of education and training, the visiting panel would make an assessment of how all the standards were met but might recommend that some standards were not appropriate to the ACS qualification.

Action: OA (ongoing to January 2010)

20.5 The Committee agreed that it would be informative for the Executive to report on the complex relationship between the ACS and professional bodies within clinical science.

Action: OA (by December 2009)

The Committee noted the following papers:

Item 21.09/21 Practitioner psychologists: Continuing Professional Development (report ref: ETC 17/09)

Item 22.09/22 Consultation on proposed Education and Training Committee rules (report ref: ETC 18/09)

Item 23.09/23 Any other business

23.1 In accordance with the standing orders, the Committee agreed to continue the meeting, as the duration of the meeting had exceeded three hours.

Item 24.09/24 Date and time of next meeting

24.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held at 10.00 am on Wednesday 20 May 2009 (additional meeting – same day as Council).

24.2 Subsequent meetings would be held at 10.30 am on:

Thursday 11 June 2009
Tuesday 22 September 2009
Wednesday 25 November 2009
Wednesday 10 March 2010
Tuesday 8 June 2010

Chairman

Date