Education and Training Committee – 18 November 2010

Review of the process of HPC approval of practitioner psychologist pre-registration education and training programmes.

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction
This paper is intended to provide the Committee with an update on the on-going process of granting pre-registration practitioner psychologist education and training programmes approval or ongoing approval.

The paper is structured to:
- articulate how the initial process of data transfer from the BPS to HPC regarding education and training programmes occurred and the work which has arisen from this;
- describe the work the executive performed to undertake approval visits to these programmes;
- draw out and analyse some of the trends from the visitors' reports;
- highlight the lessons learnt by the Education Department in regards to improve this process going forward; and
- highlight what additional work will be undertaken to gather more feedback from stakeholders in the practitioner psychologist approval process.

Decision
This paper is for information only. No decision is required.

Background information
Please see paper.

Resource implications
None

Financial implications
None

Appendices
None

Date of paper
9 November 2010

Review of the process of HPC approval of practitioner psychologist pre-registration education and training.

Contents

Section one – Introduction

Brief overview of the approval process

We visit all the programmes we approve to make sure that:

- the education programme meets or continues to meet our standards of education and training (SETs);
- those who complete the programme are able to meet or continue to meet our standards of proficiency (SOPs) for their part of the Register; and
- all programmes and education providers are assessed fairly and consistently.

When we carry out an approval visit, we are represented by what we refer to as the HPC Panel. The HPC Panel is normally made up of two visitors, at least one of whom is from the same part of the Register as the profession with which the programme is concerned and an education executive. The education executive's role is to support both the visitors and the education provider. Throughout the visit, we ask questions of staff, students, senior managers and placement providers. We relate all our discussions back to our standards. At the end of the approval visit, the visitors make a judgement about whether, or to what extent, the programme meets or continues to meet our standards. Their recommended outcome is then sent to Education and Training Committee (ETC) which makes the final decision.

About this document

This report details the work conducted to review the data transfer from the British Psychological Society (BPS) to the Health Professions Council (HPC) regarding the pre-registration practitioner psychologist education and training programmes delivered by UK education providers. It also details the outcomes of the review of the approval visits to these programmes subsequent to the opening of the Register for practitioner psychologists on 1 July 2009.

The review focuses on the process of transferring the data regarding the education programmes from the BPS to the Education Department of the HPC. It also focuses on the series of approval visits undertaken by the Education Department to approved practitioner psychologist programmes in the UK. In particular the review focused on the following areas:

- how the data was transferred to the HPC;
- what work was involved in translating that data pre and post the opening of the Register;
- what work has subsequently been required to maintain the accuracy of the data regarding historical practitioner psychologist education programmes;
- the impact of the data transfer and subsequent work for the HPC;
- how the HPC made the decision to undertake a programme of visits to pre-registration practitioner psychologist programmes in the UK ;

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- how the work the HPC has performed to undertake the visit programme was formulated;
- the impact of the implementation of the approval visits on the Education Department; and
- the outcomes of the approval visits and the implications for the future.

The paper draws on:
- qualitative review of Education Department records of the process used to transfer the data regarding practitioner psychologist programmes and a semi-structured interview with the lead education executives for the project;
- quantitative data drawn from operational records held by the Education Department to describe some of the key features of the implementation of the approval process; and
- quantitative and qualitative review of the reports produced after each visit.

The history of the data transfer leading to the programme of visits
At the meeting held on 11 June 2009 the ETC agreed a list of programmes to be given open ended approval as well as a list of programmes which were approved historically for specific periods. The Committee has since received, and agreed, 6 papers on 22 September 2009, 25 November 2009, 10 March 2010, 8 June 2010, 16 September 2010 and 18 November 2010 to amend the initial lists. These minor changes have been the result of the Education Department receiving further information which has resulted in minor changes to the list of currently approved programmes and has provided greater clarification for the list of programmes which were approved historically.

At the meeting held on 11 June 2009 ETC also decided that the 71 pre–registration practitioner psychologists' programmes granted open ended approval, after the transfer from the BPS, should be visited over a three academic year period 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.

The Committee agreed that the proposed three year approval visit schedule be based on the existing BPS accreditation and internal review cycle which was considered to be robust and thorough. This has led to a current period of activity for the Education Department in which each of the 71 programmes have been contacted to identify in which of the three academic years they would be visited. Subsequently visits to the majority of programmes scheduled to be in 2010-11 and 2011 -12 have been arranged while all visits to programmes scheduled to happen in 2009 -10 have been undertaken. This has included visits to an additional 7 new programmes seeking approval for the first time.

To ensure that this programme of approval visits remained suitable, a mid-cycle review of the programmes to be visited in 2011-12 was undertaken on 25 May 2010. All education providers to be visited submitted an audit which was assessed by visitors. Of the 23 programmes, only 2 resulted in a recommendation that an approval visit needed to be undertaken sooner than

anticipated. These reports were submitted to Education and Training Panel (ETP) on 7 July 2010.

Outcomes from the programme of visits
All the visitors' reports utilised in this review have been produced and approved by an Education and Training Panel and the majority of the programmes have had ongoing approval reconfirmed. Of the 25 reports reviewed there are currently 5 programmes that are to have a decision made on the final outcome of the visit of which 3 are anticipated to have this decision made at the next meeting of Education and Training Panel in December 2010. The recommendation being made in all instances is to have approval confirmed or ongoing approval re-confirmed subject to conditions being met.

As there was now sufficient data to start describing trends from the visits, focus was then turned to the outcomes as documented in the reports, departmental records and feedback from the education executives and the BPS with this process. All visitors' reports can be found online in the ETC papers and, once a final outcome has been reached, on the Education Department webpage.

The evidence base
The evidence used to review the transfer of data was gathered via semi-structured interviews with the Acting Director of Education and Acting Education Manager who were the department leads on the project of transferring data from the BPS to the HPC. This was supplemented by a review of the data available in department records and a review of the amendments made to the lists of approved programmes and historically approved programmes.

The evidence used to review the approval visits to practitioner psychologist pre-registration education and training programmes was gathered from visitors' reports produced from the 20 visits undertaken to 25 programmes. Evidence was also gathered through semi-structured interviews with the education executives responsible for co-ordinating and undertaking the implementation of the approval process, and from feedback sought from the British Psychological Society (BPS) who work jointly with the HPC at the majority of the approval visits.

Visitors' reports
Visitors' reports are produced after an approval visit has been conducted to a programme. These reports detail the visitors' recommendation about whether a programme should be granted open-ended approval or have ongoing approval reconfirmed. Their decisions are based upon whether a programme meets all of the Standards of education and training (SET(s)). Visitors' can make one of four decisions:

- to approve or reconfirm ongoing approval of the programme with no conditions;

- set conditions on the programme, all of which must be met before the programme is approved or ongoing approval is reconfirmed;
- not approve the programme; or
- withdraw approval from a programme previously granted open-ended approval.

When conditions are applied to a programme, these are detailed in the visitors' report and always relate to a particular SET and always contain reasons for applying it. Conditions are then met via the submission of further documentation from the education provider to the visitors. The visitors' must be satisfied the documentation submitted in response to the conditions demonstrates how the programme meets the condition and therefore the SET. Education providers are afforded up to two opportunities to meet conditions prior to a final visitor recommendation being made to the ETC.

Section two - Transfer of data from the BPS

The history of data transfer

While the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP) did maintain a register of Educational Psychologists they did not approve programmes for entry onto their register. Instead they relied on the accreditation procedures of the BPS. Therefore the information regarding the transfer of approved programmes was provided to the HPC by the British Psychological Society (BPS).

The BPS has a long history of accrediting programmes for entry onto their register. The BPS accredit a number of programmes which lead directly to eligibility to hold a practising certificate and become a full member of one of their divisions (eg doctorates or 'stage 2' programmes). They also award their own qualifications which are aimed at students who do not wish to attend a higher education institution. These 'society qualifications' lead directly to eligibility to hold a practising certificate and become a full member of one of their divisions. In addition, the BPS accredit a number of programmes which do not lead directly to eligibility to hold a practising certificate and become a full member of one of their divisions (eg undergraduate, conversion & masters or 'stage 1' programmes). They also accredit a number of programmes for those who already hold a practising certificate and are full members of one of their divisions (eg neuropsychology).

In line with the register transfer criteria, it was agreed that only those programmes which allowed students to gain a practising certificate and full membership of one or more of the BPS divisions below should granted open ended approval by the HPC:

- Division of Clinical Psychology;
- Division of Counselling Psychology;
- Division of Educational and Child Psychology;
- Scottish Division of Educational Psychology;
- Division of Forensic Psychology;
- Division of Health Psychology;
- Division of Occupational Psychology; and
- Division of Sport and Exercise Psychology.

The HPC's 'Register of approved programmes' is only available on-line. The list of approved programmes for practitioner psychologists was published, with the relevant caveats, ahead of the register opening on 1 July 2009. When the register opened, the list adopted the same format as the then thirteen existing professions.

The process of data transfer
From an operational perspective, the work required to recalibrate the data provided by the BPS into a format easily utilised by the Education Department has been significant. The volume of work has led to a great deal of time being dedicated to amending the data both pre and post the Register opening. The increased time and resource implication of this was due in no small part to the under-estimation of the sheer number of amendments required to ensure that the data was suitable for the purposes required of it by the HPC. The format in which the data was received played a significant part in increasing this workload.

Initially the data transfer did not include information regarding programmes other than those in the clinical psychology and counselling psychology domains. This data was of limited use for the Education Department as the data was only an overview of the two domains and explanations of what the usual route through to the BPS register. To obtain the data necessary for a HPC register of approved practitioner psychologist programmes a large volume of information was downloaded and modified from the BPS website. This information then had to be reconciled with the overview provided by the BPS.

A further complication arose as a result of obtaining this volume of information from the BPS website. This was because it was not often clear which programmes would provide successful graduates with eligibility to apply to the HPC Register and those which would instead only grant graduates chartered membership of the BPS. Due to the initial partial transfer of data and the difficulties encountered when obtaining information from the BPS website it was subsequently very resource intensive to clarify and cross reference data to ensure that it was robust and was in a format that could be easily utilised by education executives, registration advisors, applicants to the register and members of the public.

Historical programme information
The list of historical programmes has had to undergo significant work. It has had a high impact on the Registrations Department, the Education Department and on the BPS. It has been a very resource intensive process for all involved due to the large volume of inquiries and queries.

The single largest contributing factor to this has been the lack of detailed information about education programmes prior to 1997. This is because there was no formalised accreditation process pre 1997 for education and training programmes which enabled successful graduates to gain chartership with the BPS. This has had the consequence that the BPS have often been called upon to make informed decisions regarding the information they hold. This has affected the initial uncertainty regarding the accuracy of the transfer to HPC. However the BPS have proved to be an extremely valuable resource of information regarding the data the HPC now holds. This has been thrown into sharp focus when compared to the Hearing Aid Council who, having been disbanded, are no longer available to consult regarding inconstancies in the

data they held regarding currently approved and historic hearing aid dispenser programmes.

A great number of queries have come in from applicants to the Register to the Education Department, the Registrations Department and the BPS. To manage this volume of queries and questions and to expedite the process a 'common approach' to communication between the organisations, and departments, has been discussed and agreed. This has led to the BPS Partnership and Accreditation team and the HPC Education Department dealing with organisational cross-communication regarding historical programme information. This has enabled faster and clearer communication as the type and format of the data required has been highlighted and agreed. It has also meant that communication between the Education and Registrations Departments has been formalised which has expedited the process of answering the questions regarding specific applicants' qualifications.

To identify common problems and also to maintain a record of these queries a log was created in the Education Department in June 2010. This has allowed the Department to track queries and the outcomes of these queries and has been a useful tool in identifying the type and volume of information available to answer those queries. This has gone hand in hand with the log of amendments which have been made to the historical programme information since the Register opened in 2009. This process of amending the information is still ongoing and is likely to continue until the grand-parenting period for practitioner psychologists has finished.

Table 1 Number of amendments to the historical data by psychological domain

Psychological domain	Number of amendments to data	Percentage
Counselling Psychology	10	23%
Clinical Psychology	11	25%
Educational Psychology	19	43%
Health Psychology	3	7%
Occupational Psychology	1	2%
Forensic Psychology	0	0%
Sports & Exercise Psychology	0	0%
Total	44	100%

In total, since 11 June 2009 there have been 44 amendments agreed by ETC to the list of historically approved programmes now held by the HPC. Over half of these amendments, 23, have been to amend the dates between which the programmes ran while 20 new programmes have been added to the list and one validating body has been changed. 43% of these amendments have been regarding educational psychology programmes. Of these amendments

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10 have been the addition of a new programme to the list with just under half of those from Scottish education providers. The reason for their initial omission from the data provided is most likely as a result of the split between the division of educational psychology and the Scottish board of educational psychology at the BPS. With the removal of these programmes this would bring the number of amendments into line with those from clinical and counselling psychology and as such there has been no particular identifiable trend to suggest that programmes from the domain of educational psychology have been particularly affected by the data transfer.

**Graph 1 Number of amendments to the historical data by psychological domain**
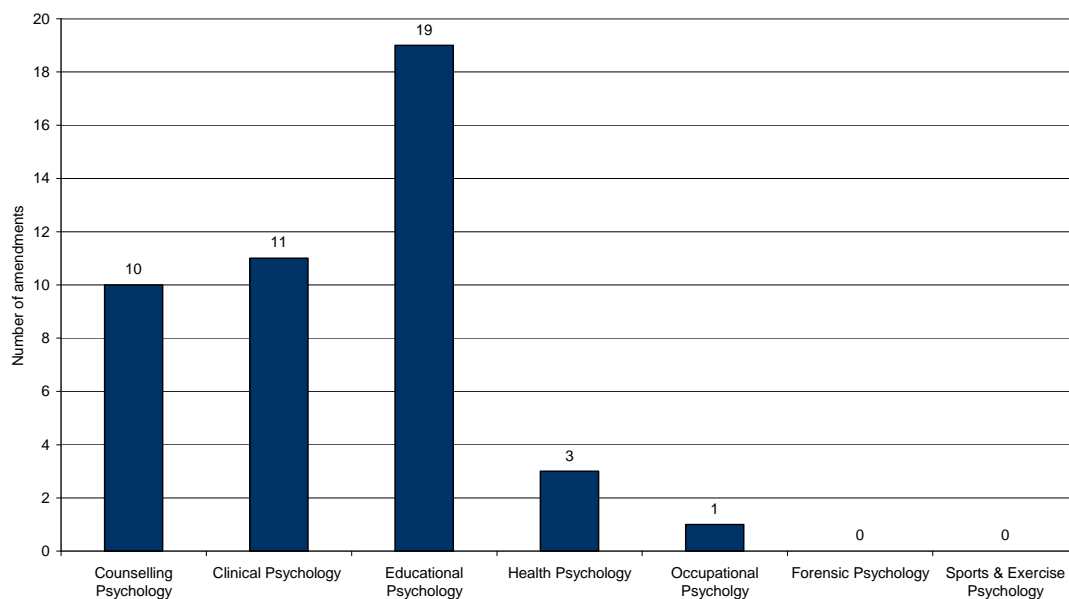
The domains of occupational psychology and sports and exercise psychology have very few programmes with only 4 approved programmes between them. Therefore it was expected to see that there would be few or no amendments to be made to the data provided by the BPS as there was relatively little detail to transfer. There have been no amendments to the list of historic forensic psychology programmes. This is most likely due to the relatively uniform route to BPS chartership at MSc level through a higher education institution (HEI) education provider. There are only two other types of education provider with one being the BPS and as such the process of compiling the data would have been less complicated than in other domains.

As graph 2 shows, the majority of amendments were completed prior to February 2010 which suggests that the reason for the required changes was that the initial data set was incomplete. This is backed up by the apparent lack of accuracy in the initial data set with over half of the amendments being made to the dates historical programmes were running between. This reinforces the evidence obtained in the qualitative data and highlights how

difficult the process of reconciling this information has been to obtain the information and ensure that it is accurate and up to date. The graph also demonstrates that there has been a reduction in the number of amendments having to be made. It is anticipated that this reduction in number amendments will continue as time progresses.

Graph 2 Number of amendments to the historical data by occurrence and psychological domain
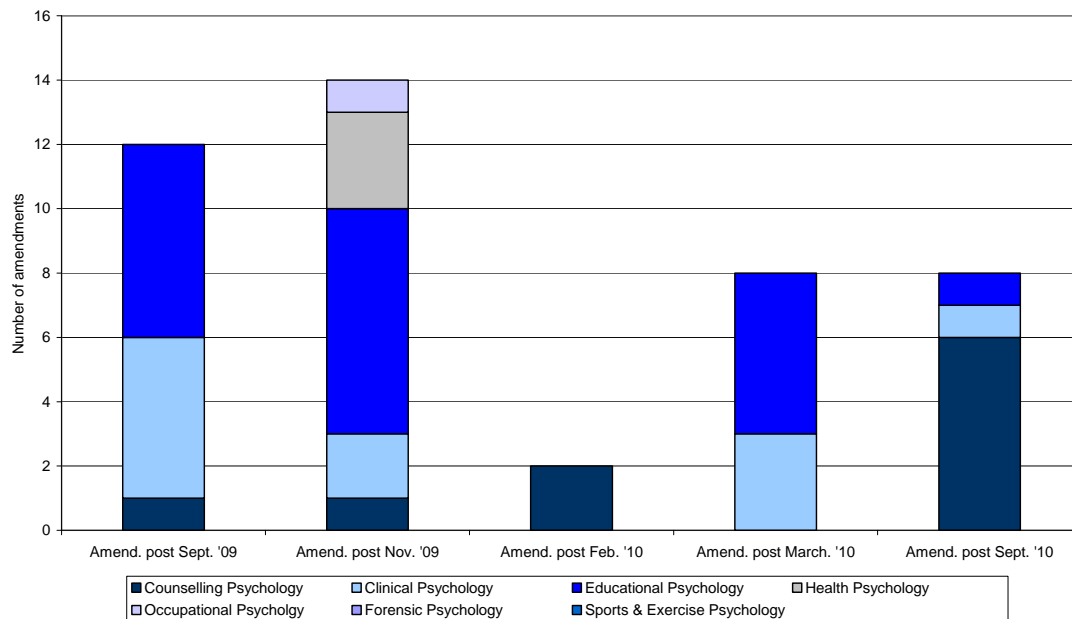
Since 23 June 2010 the Education Department has received a total of 18 queries regarding the data it holds about historical Education programmes. Of these queries 15 have been unique with 3 having been follow-up queries regarding further detail. Since the queries log has been put in place only 8 amendments have occurred to historical programmes due to these queries. As graph 2 shows 8 amendments is a reduction from the number of amendments at the end of 2009. During the period that the queries log has been in place an amendment to the data held by HPC has been made after just over 2 queries have been received by the Education Department. While the number of amendments has fallen it is not possible to compare data of queries as the log has only been in place since June 2010. On average the Education Department is taking just under 3 days to assess, respond to and action a query about these historical programmes.

Conclusions
From the data collected and reviewed there are some clear outcomes. Initially the data transferred from the BPS was not what was expected or required to be utilised effectively by HPC. This meant that a significant amount of work was required to collate and calibrate the information for use by the Education Department both pre and post the opening of the Register for practitioner psychologists. This work, to ensure that the data is up to date and accurate, is still ongoing and while slowing does not look like finishing in the near future. It

is anticipated that work on amendments to this data will be required up until the period of grand-parenting has finished on 1 July 2012. There are several aspects from this process of data transfer which can be learnt from and taken forward by the Education Department to aid the efficiency of transfer if a new profession were to join the Register.

The first aspect is that the Department should identify the data required and request it in the format that it can be most easily utilised by HPC. This will then hopefully reduce the amount of time and resource expended in identifying what data has been provided. It should also reduce the amount of work needed to collate the information into a useable format. If the data is provided as requested this should reduce uncertainty from HPC in terms of the accuracy of data transfer which in turn should lessen the requirement for amending the data once the Register has opened.

Secondly the queries log which was put in place for practitioner psychologists should be put in place as soon as a new profession is on-boarded and the Education Department starts fielding queries. This will enable trends in queries to be indentified and allow the department to indentify if there are any specific actions which could be undertaken to lessen the workload associated with dealing with the queries. This may lessen the workload for those members of staff dealing with the queries and would also help to identify how best to manage enquiries in respect of communicating with any organisation which may have held the data previously.

Section three - Approval visits to practitioner psychologist programmes

**Practitioner psychologist programmes which have been visited**
Having collated the data from the BPS, included the new programmes which are now being offered by education providers and clarified the mode in which they are delivered; there are currently 101 practitioner psychologist programmes which have HPC approval. This 42% increase from the initial list of 71 agreed by Education and Training Committee can be explained partly by the addition of new programmes but more significantly by the clarification of the modes of delivery. This again highlights the work that has been done to clarify and collate the transferred data since the opening of the Register for practitioner psychologists. Of the 101, 25% of programmes have been visited, had visitors' reports produced and provided with the initial recommendation of the visitors, thus forming a substantial evidence base from which to identify any emerging trends and draw conclusions.

Table 2 Number of approved programmes and proportion visited

Psychological domain	Number of approved programmes	Number of programmes visited	Percentage visited
Clinical	35	8	22.9
Counselling	18	3	16.6
Educational	15	5	33.3
Forensic	11	3	27.2
Health	18	6	33.3
Occupational	1	0	0
Sport and Exercise	3	0	0
Total	101	25	24.7

Of the currently approved programmes those in the clinical psychology domain count for over a third with 35 programmes being approved of which 23% have been visited. The counselling psychology and health psychology domains each account for almost 20% of the number of approved programmes. Programmes in the educational and forensic domains make up a quarter of programmes together while there are only 4 programmes from the occupational and sport and exercise psychology domains combined. Because of their low number no approved occupational psychology or sport and exercise programmes have yet been visited. As a result these domains are not included in the majority of this review as there is no data available. All other domains have had a significant proportion of their programmes visited. The only exception to this is counselling psychology as only three programmes have been visited. However as almost 17% of programmes have been visited it is unlikely to provide anomalous results.

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Graph 3 Number of programmes visited by domain
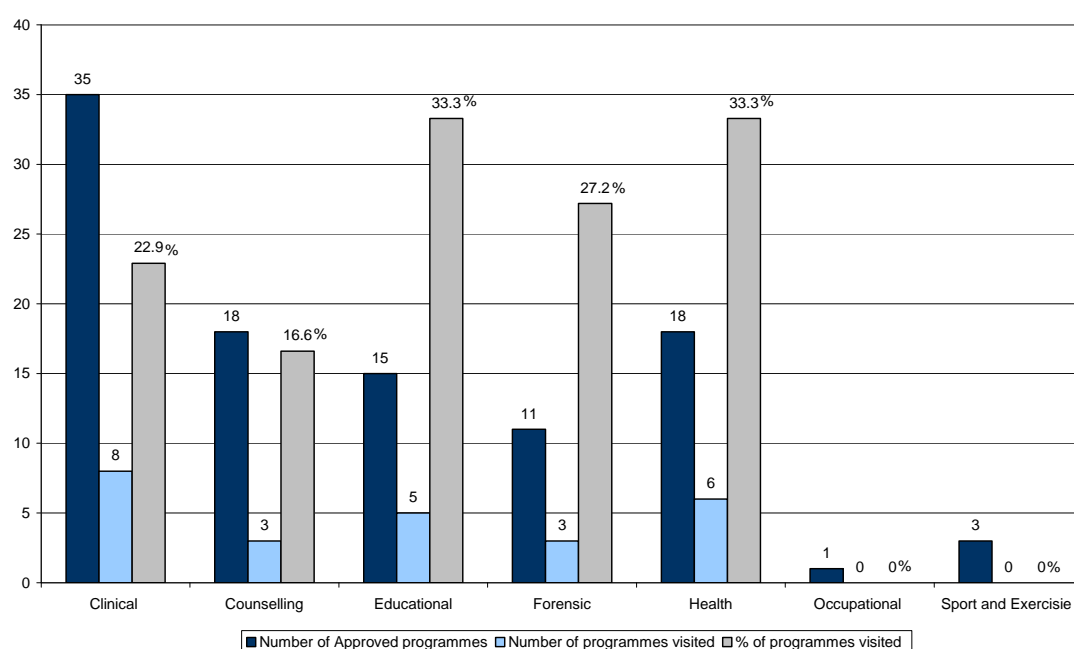
As clinical psychology has had the greatest number of programmes visited it is anticipated that it will show a trend which can be extrapolated across the other psychological domains in terms of average results. However it is not anticipated that the clinical psychology programmes will map directly onto programmes from other domains instead it is anticipated they will provide an indication of what results can be expected in the future. This is especially the case as the programmes which are still to be visited are those which have most recently gone through the BPS accreditation process.

Lists of visits and outcomes
All HPC reports on programme approval are published at www.hpc-uk.org. If you would like more information regarding one of these visits listed below, please visit our website.

Table 3 list of visits to PP programmes which have been undertaken*

| Education provider	Programme	Mode of study	Date of visit	Status at 1 November 2010
University of Nottingham	Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology	Full Time	13/01/2010	Approved
University of Nottingham	Top up Professional Doctorate in Forensic Psychology	Full Time	13/01/2010	Approved
British Psychological Society	Qualification in Counselling Psychology	Flexible	04/03/2010	Approved

Plymouth, University of	Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology	Full Time	03/03/2010	Approved
Institute of Psychiatry	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy)	Full Time	30/04/2010	Approved
University of Birmingham	Applied Educational and Child Psychology (D.Ed.Psy)	Full Time	30/04/2010	Approved
University College London	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DclinPsych)	Full Time	19/03/2010	Approved
Bristol, University of	Doctorate of Educational Psychology (D.Ed.Psy)	Full Time	22/04/2010	Approved
Manchester, University of	Educational and Child Psychology (D.Ed.Ch.Psychol)	Full Time	14/04/2010	Approved
Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust	Doctorate in Child, Community and Educational Psychology (D.Ch.Ed.Psych)	Full Time	14/05/2010	Approved
City University	Doctorate in Counselling Psychology (Dpsych)	Full Time	01/07/2010	Approved
Institute of Education	Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DEdPsy)	Full Time	17/06/2010	Approved
Teesside University	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DclinPsy)	Full Time	13/05/2010	Approved
Exeter, University of	Doctorate in Clinical and Community Psychology (DClinPsy)	Full Time	03/06/2010	Approved
Exeter, University of	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology	Full Time	03/06/2010	Approved
Leeds, University of	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsychol)	Full Time	23/06/2010	Pending
Surrey, University of	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (PsychD)	Full Time	09/06/2010	Approved
British Psychological Society	Diploma in Forensic Psychology	Flexible	23/06/2010	Approved
London Metropolitan University	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology	Part Time	25/06/2010	Approved
London Metropolitan University	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology	Full Time	25/06/2010	Approved

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Manchester, University of	Doctorate in Counselling Psychology	Full Time	19/08/2010	Approved
West of England, Bristol, University of the	Professional Doctorate in Health Psychology	Full Time	09/07/2010	Pending
West of England, Bristol, University of the	Post Graduate Diploma in Health Psychology (Professional Practice)	Full Time	09/07/2010	Pending
Glamorgan, University of	MSc Health Psychology	Full Time	09/07/2010	Pending
Glamorgan, University of	MSc Health Psychology	Part Time	09/07/2010	Pending

*Note: all programmes listed here were visited prior to 20 August 2010 and had their visitors' report and visitors' recommendations approved no later than 21 October 2010 unless otherwise stated.

Outcomes of visits

Graph 4 Summary of visit outcomes to practitioner psychologist (PP) programmes
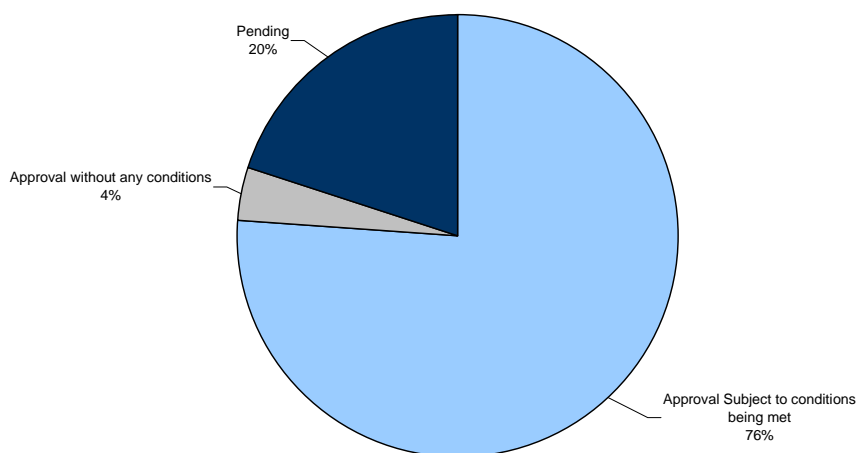
Graph 4 summarises the results of the outcomes of visits to practitioner psychologist (PP) programmes which have had a final decision made by Education and Training Committee. There are 5 programmes still awaiting a final decision and are pending a final outcome, although all have been recommended for approval or ongoing approval subject to meeting conditions.

It is anticipated that 3 of these programmes will have a final decision made at Committee on 9 December 2010. 19 programmes have either had approval confirmed or had their ongoing approval reconfirmed subject to conditions being met while 1 programme had approval confirmed with no conditions set against it.

Table 4 Summary of outcomes for PP programmes and all programmes in 2008-09

Decision	PP programmes	2008 - 09
Approval of a programme without any conditions	4%	9%
Approval of a programme subject to all conditions being met	76%	71%
Non-approval of a new programme	0%	0%
Pending	20%	18%
Withdrawal of approval from a currently approved programme	0%	1%

Table 4 compares the data of the visits to practitioner psychologist (PP) programmes to that of all approval visits in the academic year 2008-09. The trend which emerges from this is that the visits to PP programmes are very similar in terms of final outcomes to the approval visits to all other professions in the 2008-09 academic year. The proportion of visits to established programmes and new programmes is also similar with 28% of PP programmes visited being new programmes compared to 38% of visited programmes being new in 2008-09.

Where discrepancies do appear they are quite small. For instance programmes given approval without any conditions does appear to have a discrepancy with over double the percentage of programmes achieving this in 2008-09 when compared to the PP programmes. However there was one PP programme which only had one condition set against it. If this condition had not been set then 8% of the PP programmes would have been granted ongoing approval without any conditions. This would have also made the percentage figures for approval of a programme subject to all conditions being met almost identical. It is worth noting also that no PP programmes have either had approval not given or had approval withdrawn.

Therefore these figures demonstrate that there are no trends specific to PP programmes which have so far developed when the final outcome has been

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decided. It was anticipated that a low percentage of PP programmes will be given approval without any conditions due to these programmes lack of experience and familiarity with the HPC approval process. This is further enforced when looking in detail at the conditions which have been set on the programmes.

Conditions

Table 5 Number of conditions set on PP programmes and all visited programmes in 2008 - 09

Psychological domain	Number of programmes visited	Number of conditions	Average number of conditions per programme
All visited PP programmes	25	26	10
All programmes in 2008-09	91	801	9

Table 5 compares the average number of conditions set against PP programmes with the number of conditions set against all visited programmes in 2008-09. From this it is clear that there is little difference between the two. While the average number of conditions set is higher for PP programmes there are a couple of mitigating factors. When the new PP programmes are removed then the average drops from 10 to 9.5 which suggests that there is very little difference between the established programmes and all of the programmes visited in 2008-09. The standard deviation for the PP programmes is also 6.5 which demonstrates a wide variety in the number of conditions set with several programmes getting a high number of conditions and several getting a low number. It is anticipated that through visiting more PP programmes this standard deviation will reduce as will the average number of conditions set.

Again with little difference between the PP programmes and all of the programmes visited in 2008-09 there appears to be no emerging trend which would indicate that PP programmes are performing any differently when subject to the approval process. It also indicates that the number of conditions being set on PP programmes is in line with other professions. This is in line with the qualitative data gathered from the education executives. However one thing to note is that education executives noted the programme teams delivering PP programmes are often surprised by the number of conditions set on their programmes. This may indicate that while the PP programmes are not performing any differently from other programmes approved by HPC the education providers' perception of the process might be different.

Table 6 Number of conditions set on PP programmes

Standard of education and training	Number of conditions	Average	Percentage
SET 1	0	0	0
SET 2	53	2	20
SET 3	38	1	15
SET 4	22	1	8
SET 5	95	4	37
SET 6	52	2	20

Table 6 highlights that on the practitioner psychologist programmes visited there have been significantly more conditions being set against 'SET 5 Practice placements' than any other SET. There have also been a significant number of conditions set against 'SET 2 Admissions' and 'SET 6 Assessment'. When compared to the percentages of conditions set against all programmes in 2008-09 however there is a definite correlation. In 2008-09 30% of conditions were set against 'SET 5', 22% were set against 'SET 2' and 19% against 'SET 6'. The difference between the PP programmes and those visited in 2008-09 can be reasonably explained by the large standard deviation noted above. However, the difference can also be explained by trends in conditions set against certain psychological domains identified later in the document.

**Graph 5 Number of conditions set on visited PP programmes**
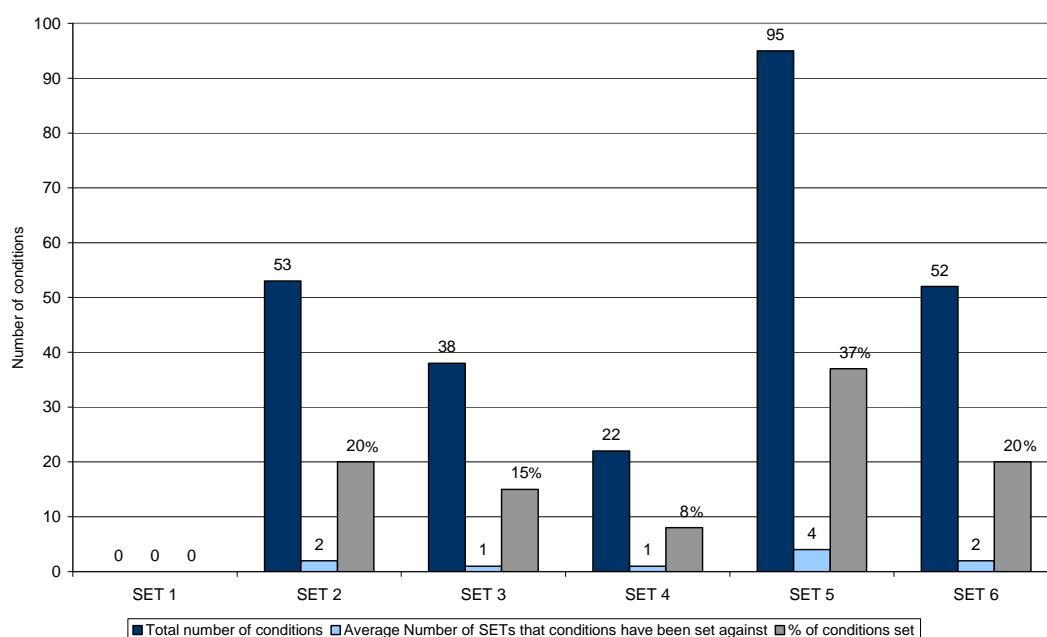
It is worth noting that the figures for 'SET 3 Programme management' and 'SET 4 Curriculum' for PP programmes come out favourably when compared

to the programmes visited in 2008-09. In 2008-09 10% of conditions were set against 'SET 4' and 19% against 'SET 3'. This demonstrates that there have been fewer aspects of the curriculum and programme management of PP programmes which have needed additional evidence to satisfy the visitors that these SETs are being met.

As before there are no clear differences in the performance of PP programmes when compared to all of the programmes visited in 2008-09. The slightly higher number of conditions set against 'SET 5' can be explained by the high standard deviation across the PP programmes while there are aspects of programmes from particular psychological domains. However there is a positive trend for PP programmes in that there have been fewer conditions set against their curriculum and programme management. This is particularly so when looking at established PP programmes only. When new programmes are not included in the analysis 15% of conditions are against 'SET 3 Programme management' and 7% of conditions are against 'SET 4 Curriculum' which is significantly better compared to the figures for programmes visited in 2008-09.

Graph 6 Number of conditions set on visited PP programmes
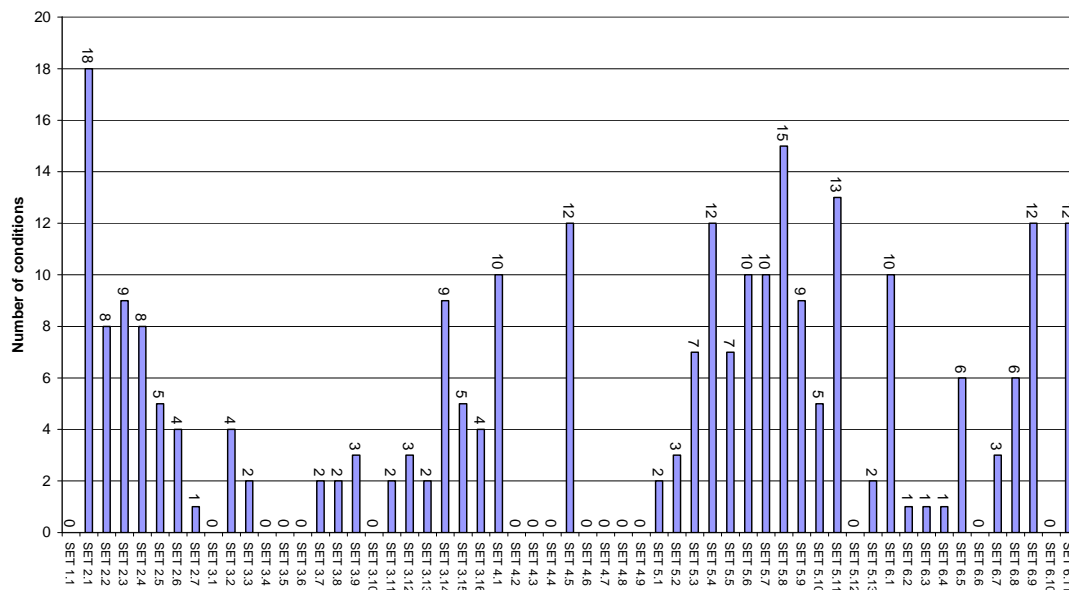
Graph 6 highlights the individual standards against which the most conditions have been set against all of the visited PP programmes. The most significant is SET 2.1 against which 18 conditions have been set. 15 conditions have been set against SET 5.8, 13 against SET 5.11 with 12 conditions each set against SET 4.5, 5.4, 6.9 and 6.11. Due to the fact that the SETs changed in 2009 there is no directly comparable data from all visits in the academic year 2008-09 apart from around SET 2.1. However from the qualitative data gathered from the education executives it is felt that there has been no real difference between the conditions set on PP programmes and those set on programmes from other professions.

Graph 7 The seven standards of education and training with the highest number of conditions set against them
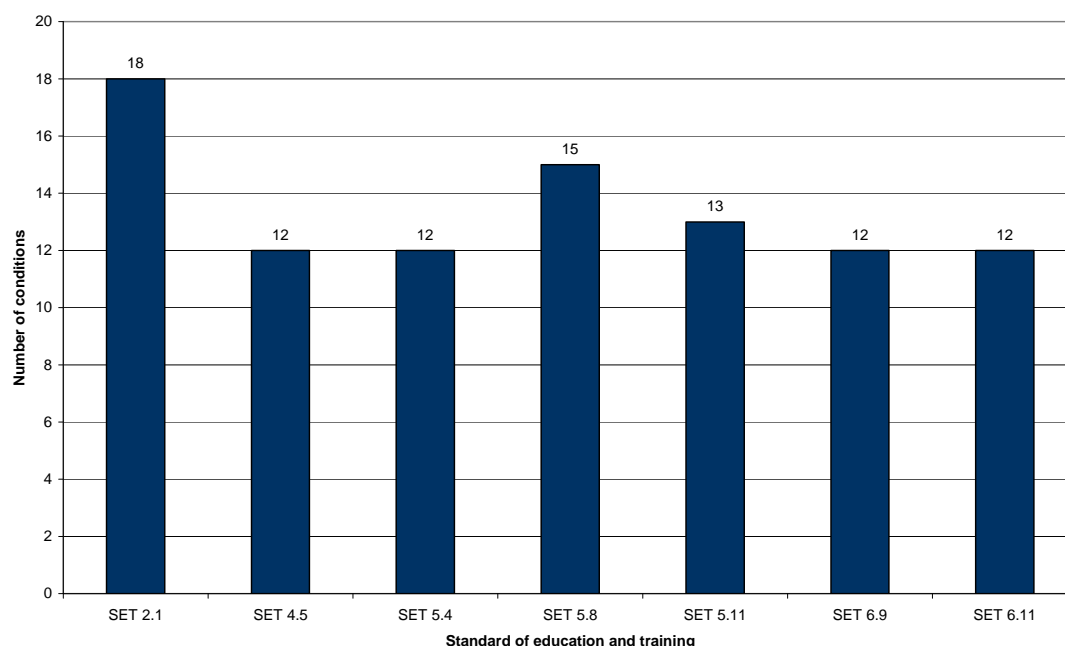
SET 2.1 has been the standard against which most conditions have been set. Of these 75% were set because the programme documentation had used terminology which was not correct when referring to the HPC and the role of HPC in approving education and training programmes. The meant that education providers did not make it clear in their information that completing a programme means students are 'eligible to **apply'** for registration with HPC. Instead they used phrases like 'completing this programme entitles you to be registered with the HPC' or 'once you have completed this programme you will be registered'. This is a very common condition and is the one which had most conditions set against all visited programmes in 2008-09. The standard which had the second most conditions set against it, on PP programmes, was SET 5.8. All of the conditions set against this standard concerned the training undertaken and provided for practice placement educators. Visitors wanted to see how the practice placement educators (who are commonly referred to by the title supervisor on PP programmes) were given the training to ensure they could supervise students effectively. From the qualitative data gathered this is a condition often set on programmes from all professions and not something particular to PP programmes.

SET 5.11 goes hand in hand with SET 5.8 as 50% of the conditions set against this standard were requesting more information about how education providers prepared both students and practice placement educators to undertake a practice placement. This meant they were asking for specific information about how the education provider ensured that students and practice placement educators were aware of the processes in place to deal with any situation which may come up while a student was on placement. This includes information about the line management responsibility for the student and what to do in case any issues regarding conduct arose. The other 50% of

conditions against SET 5.11 were asking for more information about how the education provider was ensuring consistency when assessing the performance of students on placement. This was usually because the education provider had not supplied the assessment criteria used to assess students while on placement or had not detailed how the marks from placement were moderated to ensure consistency.

SET 5.4 had 12 conditions set against it and all of these were regarding how the education provider maintained a thorough and effective process for approving and monitoring placements. The number of conditions set against this standard relates to the fact that many education providers often misunderstand our placement standards and the level of responsibility they need to assume themselves. This standard had the second largest number of conditions set against it in when visiting all programmes in 2008-09 (when it was numbered as SET 5.6) and as such it is not a surprise to find this number of conditions set against PP programmes. SETs 4.5, 6.9 and 6.11 also had 12 conditions set against them. These standards are three of the most specific in requiring programme documentation to highlight that aegrotat awards do not confer eligibility to apply to the HPC Register (SET 6.9) and to highlight that at least one external examiner should be appropriately HPC registered unless other arrangements are agreed (SET 6.11). SET 4.5 also requires that the education provider ensures that students are aware of the implications of HPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Due the more specific requirements of these standards they often have conditions set against them.

**Table 7 Number of conditions by psychological domain**

Psychological domain	Number of programmes visited	Number of conditions	Average number of conditions per programme
Forensic	3	35	12
Counselling	3	37	12
Clinical	8	49	6
Educational	5	39	8
Health	6	100	16

Table 7 shows a breakdown of conditions set against programmes by psychological domain. As there have been no occupational psychology or sport and exercise psychology programmes visited there is no data to review for these domains. The programmes from the domain of health psychology are those with the highest number of conditions set against them averaging 16 conditions. The programmes from the forensic and counselling psychology domains have an average of 12 conditions set against them while programmes from the educational domain have an average of 8 conditions set

against them. Programmes from the clinical psychology domain have an average of 6 conditions set against them which is the lowest of any domain.

The significant difference in the number of conditions set against health psychology programmes is explained by the methodology health psychology programmes employ in finding and evaluating practice placements for students. The majority of health psychology programmes had conditions set which requested more information about how the education provider approves and monitors practice placements. Because students who are accepted onto health psychology programmes arrive with practice placements they have organised themselves more information was needed to determine how the education provider assumed the level of responsibility for these placements as expected by HPC. This 'spike' in the number of conditions has influenced the average number of conditions set against all practitioner psychologist programmes. It also goes some way to explain why PP programmes have on average one more condition set against them than all of the programmes visited in 2008-09. However it is important to note that while they have had more conditions set against them each health psychologist programme has been recommended for approval or to be granted or have ongoing approval reconfirmed subject to conditions with 2 already having been given ongoing approval and 4 pending a final decision.

Graph 8 Number of conditions set by psychological domain
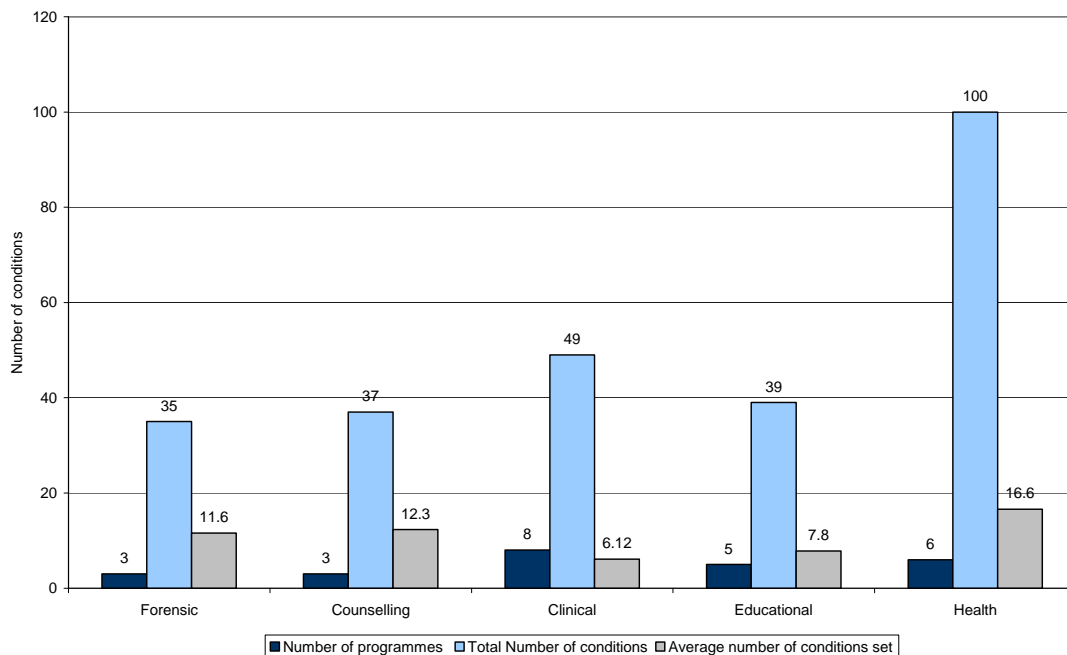
The other trend to note is the relatively low average of 6 conditions set against clinical psychology programmes. This is despite having the second highest number of conditions set against programmes in this domain. The trend here suggests that the greater the number of programmes visited the lower the average of conditions set against programmes from that domain. It is therefore reasonable to expect that as a greater percentage of the PP programmes are visited the average number of conditions will fall.

Visitors' reports

Following a visit, our visitors produce a report which is sent to the education provider. After a report is sent the education provider has 28 days to make any observations on it. After these 28 days, the visitors' report and any observations on it made by the education provider are considered by the Education and Training Committee and the final outcome (including any conditions) agreed.

Table 8 Number of days taken to produce visitors' report

Number of days	Number of reports	Percentage	Number of reports and percentage in 2008-09
7 days or less	1	4	1 (1%)
8 -14 days	8	32	15 (17%)
15 - 21 days	6	24	19 (22%)
22 -28 days	6	24	26 (30%)
29 - 40 days	4	16	15 (17%)
41 - 60 days	0	0	13 (15%)
61 days or more	0	0	0

After the visits to PP programmes 84% of our visitors' reports were sent to education providers within 28 days of the visit. 36% of visitors' reports were produced in 2 weeks or under while only 16 % took over 28 days. This is significantly better than in 2008-09 when 17% of reports were produced in 2 weeks or under and 69% were produced within 28 days. 31% of visitors' reports in 2008-09 took over 28 days to produce. This highlights that while some reports have taken longer than anticipated there has been no significant additional time or resources needed to ensure that the visitors' reports for PP programmes are properly completed.

Graph 9 breaks down the visitors' reports produced by education provider. Only 4 visitors' reports about PP programmes have taken over 28 days to produce with the longest taking 39 days and the shortest taking 7 days. On average it has taken 21 days to produce a report for a PP programme. This is longer than the aim of 14 days but from the qualitative data, education executives have suggested that initially it has taken longer to write the reports to suitably match conditions with the requirements placed on PP programmes due to the lack of familiarity with these programmes. They suggest that writing the reports has become easier as the familiarity with the type of programmes has increased and this suggests that as more programmes are visited the time taken to write the reports will reduce.

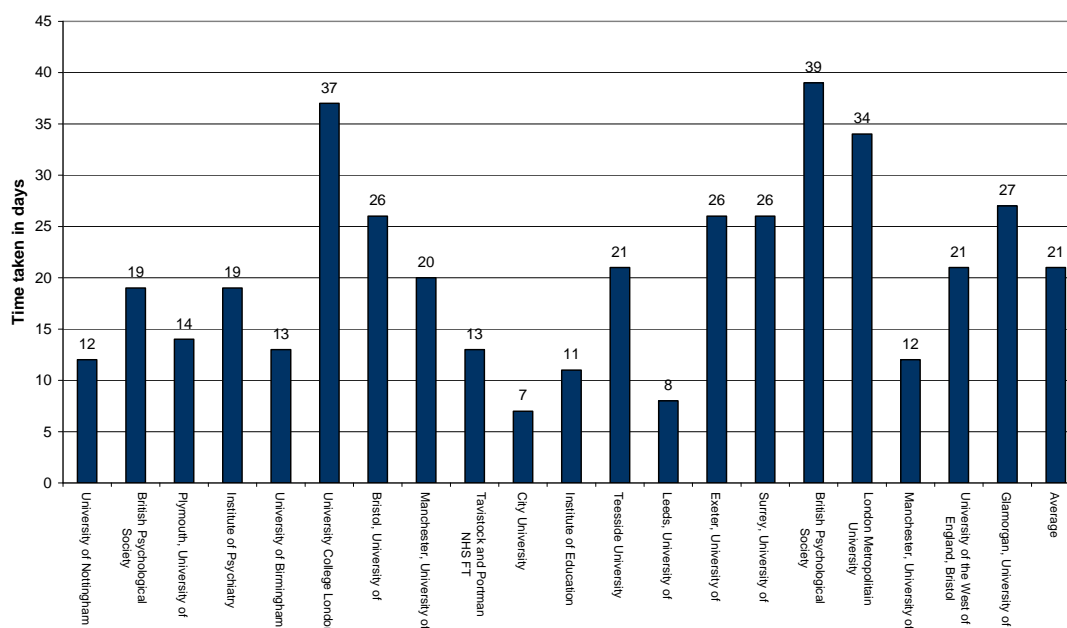**Graph 9 Number of days taken to produce Visitors' reports**

Table 9 Number of months between visit and final decision on programme approval

Number of months	Number of reports	Percentage	Number of reports and percentage in 2008-09
1 month or less	0	0	0 (0%)
1-2 months	2	10	4 (6%)
2-3 months	6	30	9 (13%)
3-4 months	2	10	12 (17%)
4-5 months	6	30	22 (30%)
5-6 months	3	15	12 (17%)
more than 6 months	1	5	13 (17%)

Table 9 and Graph 10 break down the number of months between visit and the final decision on programme approval for the visited PP programmes. The majority of programmes (80%) were approved within 5 months of their visit. This is significantly better than the 69% of all programmes which were approved within five months of their visit in 2008-09. The 'post-visit' process normally takes between eight to ten weeks to complete, which is why our approval process requires that a visit takes place no less that three months before the start of a programme. While 40% of PP programmes were approved within the three month period it must be highlighted that only one education provider had to delay their start of a programme and in this instance the delay was anticipated well in advance of the visit happening. This too is a

better figure than for all visits in 2008-09 where only 19% of programmes were approved within a three month period. For the PP programmes it has taken, on average, just under four months between report being produced and final a decision being made by ETC.

**Graph 10 Number of months between visit and final decision on programme approval**
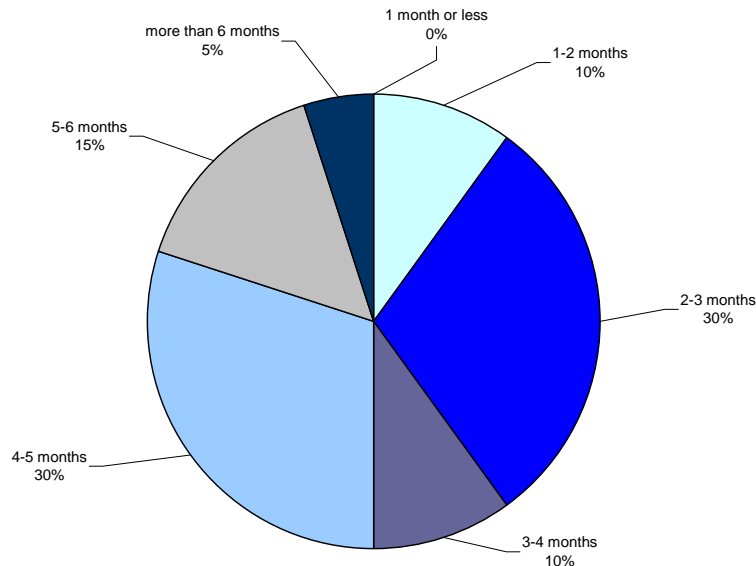
From the qualitative feedback the education executives highlighted the fact that the education providers were very proactive and often met any conditions set on the PP programmes promptly. This often happened within the 28 observation period which suggests that the education providers may have felt that this was both a deadline for conditions as well as a period of observation. The education executives also highlighted that while there were often several conditions set on the programmes they were most often requesting more information to clarify a policy or process or to slightly amend documentation. This in turn has allowed education providers to provide evidence to meet conditions promptly which is borne out in the high figures for decisions made to approve or confirm ongoing approval within the three month period.

Recommendations and commendations
Recommendations are observations on the programme or education provider which do not need to be met before the programme is recommended for approval or ongoing approval. Recommendations are normally set to encourage further enhancements to the programme and are normally set when it is felt that the particular standard of education and training has been met at, or just above the threshold level. In March 2008, the Education and Training Committee made the decision to report on the commendations which were given as part of the approval process. Commendations are observations of innovative best practice by a programme or education provider. The publication of trends in relation to commendations is designed to disseminate good practice in the provision of education and training linked to the professions.

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Graph 11 Number of recommendations by standard
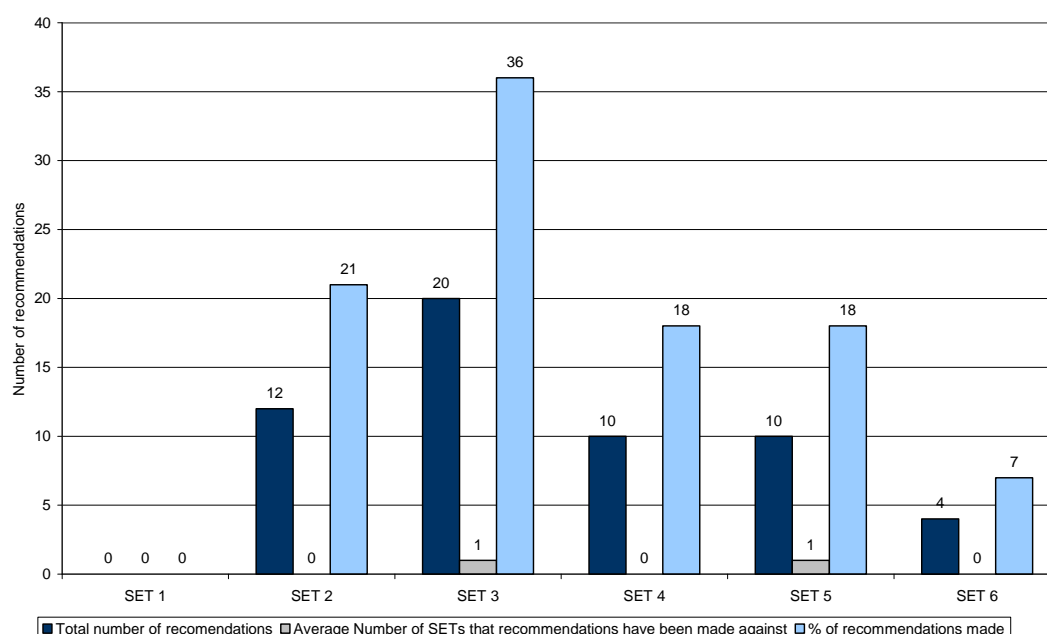
Graph 11 shows a breakdown of all of the recommendations made on the visited PP programmes. Overall the number of recommendations was very low with an average of 2 made. While 'SET 3 Programme management' had the highest number of recommendations made there was no discernable pattern in the type of recommendation. The majority of the recommendations suggested that the programmes clarified certain issues around the programme management by including more information in student handbooks. The recommendations around 'SET 2 Admissions' again did not have a discernable pattern. However, most often these recommendations suggested that the programme team clarify, or further highlight, certain aspects of their admissions procedures to aid the process of recruitment or ensure that applicants were fully aware of the process. The recommendations made on 'SET 4 Curriculum' and 'SET 5 Practice placement' were many and varied and there were no real common threads across either standard.

Table 10 Number of recommendations by psychological domain

Psychological domain	Number of programmes visited	Number of recommendations	Average number of recommendations per programme
Forensic	3	10	3
Counselling	3	7	2
Clinical	8	23	3
Educational	5	8	2
Health	6	8	1

Table 10 breaks down the recommendations made by psychological domain. The figures suggest that a significant number of recommendations were made

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for clinical psychology programmes. However due to the large number of programmes visited this was to be expected. This is borne out by the average number of recommendations made (3) which is broadly in line with each of the other psychological domains. Health psychology programmes have the lowest average number recommendations but this is often the case when programmes have, on average, a high number of conditions they often have a lower number of recommendations. Ultimately the number of recommendations made on PP programmes is low and while several recommendations have been made there are no discernable patterns to suggest that there are any trends particular to PP programmes.

No commendations have been made against any of the currently visited practitioner psychologist programmes. This is not unusual. Commendations are usually given for instances of unique and innovative best practice across all professions regulated by the HPC. As this is the case HPC commendations are rare. For all programmes visited in 2008-09 the average number of commendations given was 0.4. From the qualitative data provided by the education executives it is also highlighted that this is not an unusual occurrence with commendations being rare across all professions due to the unique requirement of any best practice to have a commendation given.

Conclusions
From the data collected and reviewed here it is clear that there are no emerging trends which are specific to practitioner psychologist programmes when compared to programmes from other professions regulated by HPC. Of the 25 programmes that have been visited all have been recommended to have approval or ongoing approval granted subject to conditions with only 5 programmes pending a final decision from Education and Training Committee. This suggests that the BPS accreditation process previously undergone by these programmes was as robust and thorough as anticipated. As such the programmes have had little problem in meeting the requirements of HPC by demonstrating how they meet each standard of education and training (SET).

The number of conditions set against each of the PP programmes has been varied but averages out at 10. This is slightly higher than all of the visited programmes in 2008-09 but as the standard deviation for PP programmes is over 6 it is anticipated that over time, as more PP programmes are visited this average will reduce. This is a trend identified in the clinical psychology programmes and is anticipated to repeated across programmes from the other psychological domains. The majority of conditions set against the PP programmes were in 'SET 5 - Practice placements'. Again this is not an unusual occurrence with most conditions being set against the same standard in all programmes visited in 2008-09. The specific standard against which most conditions were set was SET 2.1. The majority (75%) of these conditions were around the use of terminology in programme information and again reflect the outcomes found in 2008-09 when reviewing all visited programmes in that academic year. This again highlights that while trends are emerging they are not specific to practitioner psychologist programmes.

In terms of visitors' reports there has been no additional resource or work involved for the Education Department in producing the reports for PP programmes than for any other profession. In fact, despite the qualitative feedback that the education executives have initially found the reports slightly more difficult to produce, the reports for the PP programmes are being, on average, produced faster than the reports for all visited programmes in 2008-09. This in turn has led to final decisions being made on PP programmes similarly quickly with 40% having decisions made within 3 months and 80% within 5 months. No trends have been identified in the number and range of recommendations made on PP programmes while no commendations have been made on any visited practitioner psychologist programmes.

Section four - Additional work

Going forward, as highlighted in section two there are lessons to be learned by the Education Department and these will be utilised if any new professions join the Register. In section three no specific trends for practitioner psychologist programmes have been identified and as such there are no specific actions to be undertaken or lessons to be learned from the review of the approval visit data.

In the future it is anticipated that some more work in this area will be conducted by the Education Department. This review focused very much on the process of approval for the practitioner psychologist programmes and the data transfer from one organisation to another. Going forward some quantitative and qualitative feedback should be sought from the education providers and visitors about how they feel the approval process for practitioner psychologists have progressed. Feedback could also be sought from the BPS as to their experiences of both the process of the transfer of data and what their experience of the approval process may be. This would then allow a more holistic review of the process when a greater number of approval visits have been undertaken and for a more detailed analysis of what lessons can be learned and taken forward. It is anticipated that this will be included in the education provider feedback exercise next year with specific elements being practitioner psychologist focused.