

Education and Training Committee – 9 June 2011

Reviewing the profession specific standards of proficiency

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

In March 2010, the Council agreed to the recommendations of the Generic Standards of Proficiency Review Group that the standards of proficiency required some changes to ensure the generic standards are applicable to all professions regulated by the HPC. Between July and October last year we consulted on proposed changes to the generic standards of proficiency, which included reducing the number of overarching generic standards and simplifying the wording of some standards.

After considering the responses received to the consultation at its meeting on 31 March this year, the Council approved the new proposed generic standards, subject to some minor amendments.

The 15 new generic standards are designed to ensure that the generic standards of proficiency are overarching and applicable to all professions we regulate. The new generic standards are broader than the current generic standards and can be applied across all the professions we regulate. The new structure also aims to ensure the terminology used is appropriate and applicable to all professions. Under the new model the majority of standards will be profession-specific; allowing professions to use language relevant to their own profession and ensure the standards are relevant and specific.

The review process

Now the new generic standards are agreed, they will be implemented on a rolling basis alongside new profession specific standards. For the Committee's information, a timetable for the development and consultation on each profession's new standards is appended to this paper.

It is intended that each profession will have a new set of profession-specific standards that sit beneath the overarching standards. These new profession-specific standards will include the existing profession-specific standards and the detailed generic standards relevant to each profession, as well as any other standards that are required.

To ensure the process is manageable, the profession-specific standards will be reviewed in groups of three or four professions at a time – these proposed groupings are set out in the timetable appended to this paper. We will work

with the relevant professional bodies and stakeholder groups to review each profession's standards and to consider any necessary changes. Following the review period we will consult publicly on any necessary changes and then republish the profession's standards alongside the revised generics.

The review process for all the profession-specific standards will be completed over the next two years. We will work with education providers to phase-in the new standards gradually after each profession's revised standards are published.

For the majority of professions, the existing generic standards were set at the appropriate threshold level for public protection and used terminology which the groups were content or comfortable with. Therefore a phased roll-out of the new standards over a period of time would be a low risk exercise. We also need to ensure that the resources of the department are utilised effectively given other departmental and organisational priorities.

Timetable

The groupings of professions outlined in the appended timetable prioritise the revision of standards for professions from which we have received feedback that significant changes are needed. The review of the standards for clinical scientists, biomedical scientists, and practitioner psychologists will take place towards the end of the review period to allow for the implementation of the Modernising Scientific Careers work programme, and for the completion of the grandparenting process for practitioner psychologists.

When the standards change, we need to give existing education providers enough time to make any necessary changes to their programmes and update relevant documentation. The operational roll-out process shown in the timetable summarises and explains the key dates for when each profession's standards can be used in each of the HPC processes and when they will be implemented and delivered by education providers.

Decision

Paper to note

Background information

Paper agreed by Council on 31 March 2011 (enclosure 6 at: www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/committees/archive/index.asp?id=533)

Resource implications

The resource implications for the Policy and Standards Department are accounted for in department planning for 2011/12. The resource implications of the ongoing process of review and eventual publication of the revised standards of proficiency will be taken into account in Policy and Standards workplans for future years.

Financial implications

The financial implications include the costs associated with running a series of consultations on the revised profession-specific standards of proficiency for each profession. These are accounted for in the Policy and Standards workplan for 2011/12. The financial implications of the ongoing process of review and eventual publication of the revised standards of proficiency will be taken into account in Policy and Standards workplans for future years.

Appendices

Timetable for standards of proficiency roll-out: implications for generic and profession specific usage and compliance for education providers

Date of paper

27 May 2011

Appendix

Standards of proficiency roll-out timetable - key to abbreviations

Professions

AT	Arts Therapists
BS	Biomedical Scientists
CH	Chiropodists and Podiatrists
CS	Clinical Scientists
DT	Dietitians
HAD	Hearing Aid Dispensers
ODP	Operating Department Practitioners
OR	Orthoptists
OT	Occupational Therapists
PA	Paramedics
PH	Physiotherapists
PO	Prosthetists and Orthotists
PP	Practitioner Psychologists
RA	Radiographers
SLT	Speech and Language Therapists
SW	Social Workers

Other abbreviations

AM	Annual monitoring process
SOP	Standards of Proficiency
SW PLG	Social Workers Professional Liaison Group

Education department processes

The table overleaf summarises the Education department's approach for bringing the new standards of proficiency into use. The process will work as follows:

- In the first academic year of the implementation of the standards, education providers will be expected to incorporate the new standards into their existing programme structure, which will then be approved by the Education department through the annual monitoring process, or via approval visits for new programmes.
- In the second academic year of the implementation process, education providers will be expected to deliver their approved programme to new students starting the programme using the new standards of proficiency.
- In the second or third academic year, the incorporation of those standards into the programme will be checked through the HPC's annual monitoring processes.
- In the third or fourth year of the implementation of the standards, the first new graduates who will have been taught using the new standards will graduate.

Standards of proficiency roll-out timetable

Profession	Profession specific SOP pre-consultation work starts	Profession specific SOP consultation process starts	Profession specific SOP ready for publication	Academic year – plan incorporation (redesign existing programmes internally. Approve new programmes via visits)	Academic year – implement new programmes to new students only	Academic year – Annual monitoring (AM) audit (assure incorporation of new standards)	Academic year – first output of students from new standards	Education work plan activity (financial years)
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 2 or 3	Year 4 (3 year undergraduate)	
OR AT RA	June 2011	Dec 2011	July 2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 2014-2015	2015-2016 Summer 2016	2011-12 – communication 2012-13 – communication 2013-14 – AM audit 2014-15 – AM audit 2015-16 – AM audit
DT OT PH SLT	Oct 2011	April 2012	Oct 2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2013-2014 2014-2015	2015-2016 Summer 2016	2011-12 – communication 2012-13 – communication 2013-14 – AM audit 2014-15 – AM audit 2015-16 – AM audit
CH ODP PO	June 2012	Dec 2012	July 2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2014-2015 2015-2016	2016-2017 Summer 2017	2012-13 – communication 2013-14 – communication 2014-15 – AM audit 2015-16 – AM audit 2016-17 – AM audit
PA PP	Oct 2012	April 2013	Oct 2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2014-2015 2015-2016	2016-2017 Summer 2017	2012-13 – communication 2013-14 – communication 2014-15 – AM audit 2015-16 – AM audit 2016-17 – AM audit

Profession	Profession specific SOP pre-consultation work starts	Profession specific SOP consultation process starts	Profession specific SOP ready for publication	Academic year – plan incorporation (redesign existing programmes internally. Approve new programmes via visits)	Academic year – implement new programmes to new students only	Academic year – Annual monitoring (AM) audit (assure incorporation of new standards)	Academic year – first output of students from new standards	Education work plan activity (financial years)
BS CS HAD	June 2013	Dec 2013	June 2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2015-2016 2016-2017	2017-2018 Summer 2018	2013-14 – communication 2014-15 – communication 2015-16 – AM audit 2016-17 – AM audit 2017-18 – AM audit
SW	SW PLG	SW PLG	May/June 2012*	2012-2013 & 2013-2014 & 2014-2015*	2013-2014 & 2014-2015 & 2015-2016*	2012-2013 & 2013-2014 & 2014-2015* (visits, not AM)	2015-2016 & 2016-2017 & 2017-18 Summer 2016 & 2017 & 2018*	2011-12 – communication 2012-13 – communication & visits 2013-14 – communication & visits 2014-15 – communication & visits 2015-16 – visits

Education approach

Go live date > Academic year to incorporate (year 1)> academic year to implement (year 2) > Review by HPC (next Annual Monitoring audit) (year 2 and 3)> output from programmes (based on broad assumption that programmes are 3 year undergraduate honours degree) (year 4) >Register (year 4)

* = dependent upon legislative process and ETC decision-making around visit schedule for existing social work programmes (above table assumes all programmes will be visited over the three year period)