

Education and Training Committee

Public minutes of the 50th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Thursday 8 September 2011

Time: 10:30 am

Venue: The Council Chamber, Health Professions Council, Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

Members:

Eileen Thornton (Chair)	Arun Midha
Gerald Armstrong-Bednall	Penny Renwick
Mary Clark-Glass	Deep Sagar
Helen Davis	Jeff Seneviratne
John Donaghy	Jois Stansfield
John Harper	Joy Tweed
Stephen Hutchins	Diane Waller
Jeff Lucas	Stephen Wordsworth
Stuart Mackay	

In attendance:

David Christopher, Head of Education Development
Ruth Cooper, PA to the Director of Operations
Anna van der Gaag, Chair of the Council
Abigail Gorringe, Director of Education
Anna Lubasinska, Customer Services Manager
Steve Rayner, Secretary to the Committee
Charlotte Urwin, Policy Manager
Ruth Wood, Education Officer

Part 1 – Public Agenda

Item 1 Chair's introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the members to the Committee, noting that this meeting would ordinarily be the first of the new Council session, and would have included the election of a Chair as a first item. As the recruitment of new Council members had been delayed by the Appointments Commission, Committee appointments and Chair elections had been moved until the first meeting after September 2011.
- 1.2 The Chair informed the Committee that Gill Pearson would be stepping down from her role with HPC in October. The Chair acknowledged the significant commitment Gill had made to the HPC, and previously to the Council for Professions Supplementary to Medicine. In particular the Chair mentioned Ms Pearson's work in helping to develop standards of education and training, standards for continuing professional development, and in driving the development of online profiles to help registrants understand the context of their relationship with the HPC.
- 1.3 The Committee agreed that the Chair should write to Ms Pearson to thank her for her hard work on their behalf.

ACTION: Chair to write to Ms Pearson on behalf of the Committee.

- 1.4 The Committee noted that an appointment process was underway to appoint a Dietitian member to ETC. The process was being run by the Secretariat in accordance with the Appointment Commissioner's Code for Public Appointments, and would be complete by the beginning of October.
- 1.5 The Chair provided an update on the tendering process for a research project commissioned by the HPC into service user involvement. There had been 22 full responses to the tendering exercise, with several rounds of sifting required to make the final selection. Strong proposals had been received from Universities, but also from professional research organisations. In selecting a proposal the Panel scored independently against a number of criteria including; demonstrated understanding of the brief, and of the issue of stakeholder involvement in context of HPC's role in public protection; the range of exercise and outcomes proposed; and value for money.
- 1.6 The Commission had been awarded to Kingston and St Georges University of London, who would be conducting research and providing a literature review, a matrix of key indicators, a set of options to change the standards of education and training and proposals for the range of HPC's activities service users could take part in.

Item 2 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Gill Pearson, Robert Smith, Annie Turner and Marc Seale, Chief Executive.

Item 3 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.
- 3.2 The paper numbers in the published agenda (ETC 23/11 to ETC 40/11) were in error. The paper numbers should read ETC 45/11 to ETC 62/11.

Item 4 Declaration of members' interests

- 4.1 Gerald Armstrong-Bednall declared an interest in Item 11 – Adaptations for approval and monitoring of hearing aid dispenser aptitude tests. Professor Armstrong-Bednall was the external examiner for one of the programmes discussed in the paper. The Committee agreed that Professor Armstrong-Bednall could remain at the table for the item, but would take no part in discussion or any decision.

Item 5 Minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2011 (ETC 45/11)

- 5.1 The minutes were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Item 6 Matters arising from previous meetings (ETC 46/11)

- 6.1 The Committee noted that the list of actions agreed at previous meetings.

Item 7 Director of Education's report (ETC 47/11)

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Director of Education detailing the work of the Education Department (the Department) between July and September 2011 and providing updates on ongoing projects.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that the Department was working with education providers to complete the approvals process for the academic year 2010/11, and preparing for the academic year 2011/12.

- 7.3 The Committee noted that the schedule for visits for 2011/12 was higher than in recent years. The increase was due to hearing aid dispensers and practitioner psychologists joining the register in recent years and all programmes being required to have a visit.
- 7.4 The Committee noted that the Department's major project, a review of the department's internal education information systems and processes, was underway. The project included decisions which may be brought to the Committee over the next year.
- 7.5 The Committee noted that changes to the approvals and monitoring process should take account of any possible changes to HPC as a result of legislation, as well as external changes in higher education.
- 7.6 The Committee noted the Director's report.

Item 8 Draft policy statement on annotation of the Register (ETC 48/11)

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding post registration qualifications and the annotation of the HPC register.
- 8.2 At its last meeting the Committee had considered the outcomes of a consultation on proposals related to recording post-registration qualifications on the register. This paper presented a draft policy statement regarding annotation of the Register, building on the Committee's previous discussion.
- 8.3 At the last meeting the Committee had agreed high level guiding principles that should underpin any decision to annotate the register, namely that:
- the register should only be annotated in exceptional circumstances;
 - any policy developed on annotation should be proportionate and cost effective; and
 - the policy should relate to annotation of the Register more broadly, rather than post registration qualifications.
- 8.4 The Committee held a discussion of the paper, during which the following points were made:
- 8.4.1 HPC had the power to annotate qualification on the Register. It did not have the power of protection of title or function in relation to annotated specialisms. Protection of title or function would require legislation and was therefore a matter for Government.
- 8.4.2 It was essential to publish a position statement on annotation of the register, to provide clarity for stakeholders.

- 8.4.3 The policy should make a clear differentiation between key points and guiding principles.
- 8.4.4 If the Committee was to agree to annotate the Register it would also need to agree whether it was used in a reactionary way, so to decide whether to annotate following a request by a professional body or other stakeholder, or whether HPC should proactively seek areas where annotation would improve public protection.
- 8.4.5 Annotation of the register in the case of podiatric surgeons would strengthen public protection and would allow HPC to assess and quality-assure the education and training processes for podiatric surgeons.
- 8.4.6 In many professions a function starts off as a specialism and becomes part of the standard scope of practise over time.
- 8.4.7 Creating a second tier of protection in the form of annotation had the potential to undermine the argument that HPC currently provides effective protection to the public by requiring registrants to carry out safe and effective work within their scope of practice.
- 8.4.8 Approving annotations for distinct areas of practice would allow the HPC to set and quality assure standards specific to those specialisms, particularly to ensure CPD in those specialisms.
- 8.5 The Committee agreed that the HPC should not annotate the register unless it was required to by legislation.
- 8.6 The Committee agreed that the policy statement should be redrafted to reflect that the HPC retained the discretionary powers to annotate should it receive compelling evidence that to do so would increase public protection.
- 8.7 The Committee's decision was not unanimous.

ACTION: Policy Manager to provide an amended draft of the policy statement on annotation, taking account of the Committees discussion and decision in paragraphs 8.3 to 8.5 above, to the Committee at its meeting on 17 November 2011.

Item 9 Student registration (ETC 49/11)

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion from the Executive regarding regulation of students by HPC.

- 9.2 The GSCC maintained a voluntary register of social work students in England. The Government has announced that it intends to provide powers to enable the transfer of this Register to the HPC.
- 9.3 At its meeting of 12 May 2012 the Council agreed to undertake an impact assessment looking at voluntary registration of students, looking at the issue of student registration in the round.
- 9.4 The paper provided a draft 'first stage' impact assessment, a draft consultation document and an explanatory note on the methodology used by HPC in developing impact assessments.
- 9.5 The Committee was invited to discuss the documents. The Committee's comments would be fed in to the development of the final drafts which would be discussed by the Council in October.
- 9.6 The Committee held a discussion on student registration, during which the following points were made:
- 9.6.1 It was the Committee and the HPC's responsibility to make clear evidence based decisions, and any decision regarding student registration should be made in this context.
- 9.6.2 In section 3.2 of the report, questions 2 to 4 should be rephrased to ask 'whether there is evidence' rather than asking "what evidence". This would give respondents the opportunity to provide feedback if they could not find evidence.
- 9.6.3 In section 3.21 of the report, question 9 should be removed, and an additional bullet should be added to question 10, asking "whether there is evidence that trainee social workers presented a different case to other regulated professions.
- 9.6.4 Question 10 should be redrafted to read: "Based on the evidence, should the HPC set up voluntary registers of students?".
- 9.6.5 The impact assessment and consultation document should make it clear that it was HPC's responsibility to deliver cost neutral regulation, and should be clear about the the cost implications for students.
- 9.6.6 The Committee noted that the price of £53 had been proposed as an initial registration fee, as it represented the additional cost to HPC of analysing a new registrant's application. The Committee asked the Executive to look into whether the same fee would be applicable to students in subsequent years of pre-registration.

9.6.7 It would be helpful for the consultation document to tease out what it was about registration which improved public protection during practise placements, and how to manage risk within different supervision contexts.

9.7 The Committee agreed that 'student fitness to practise' was the most appropriate term to use.

ACTION: Director of Policy and Standards to take account of the Committee's comments in paragraph 9.6 above when completing the final draft of the impact assessment and consultation document for approval by the Council.

Item 10 Updating the guidance on 'health and character' (ETC 50/11)

10.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive which provided proposed changes to the guidance published by HPC on the health and character required of HPC Registrants.

10.2 Between 11 April and 1 July 2011 the HPC consulted on changes to the guidance which had been necessitated by removal of the health reference requirement and changes to the way HPC considered information provided by Registrants through self-referral.

10.3 The Paper included the results of the consultation, and a draft version of the guidance including proposed amendments.

10.4 The Committee recommended that the Council:

- (a) approve the document 'Guidance on health and character' for publication (subject to legal scrutiny and minor editing amendments); and
- (b) approve the text of the consultation responses document for publication on the HPC website (subject to legal scrutiny and minor editing amendments).

ACTION: Policy Officer to submit the Committee's recommendations, as outlined in paragraph 10.4 above, to the Council at its meeting of 20 October 2011.

Item 11 Adaptations for approval and monitoring of hearing aid dispenser aptitude tests (ETC 51/11)

11.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding two hearing aid dispenser programmes approved by HPC at the point of transfer from the Hearing Aid Council register.

- 11.2 The programmes provided assessment of candidates previously acquired academic and practical experience, but as it did not appear that the some of the programmes included practice placements, it was unlikely that they would be able to meet all of the requirements under the HPC Standard of Education and Training (SET) 5.
- 11.3 The paper provided an analysis of the issue, and recommendations for the Committee regarding adaptations to the approval process for hearing aid dispenser aptitude test programmes or equivalents in the same profession.
- 11.4 The Committee agreed to the following adaptations to the approval and monitoring process:
- (a) Education providers of aptitude tests or equivalents for the profession will be informed of the initial expectation to meet all of the standards of education and training to gain approval for a programme. However, education providers will be able to express a rationale that some standards under SET 5 are not applicable because of the admission criteria for the programme.
 - (b) Visitors will review programmes in the approval process in the normal way, but may make recommendations that some standards under SET 5 are not applicable for the rationale outlined in 4.1 and the robust nature of the admissions process of the programme.
 - (c) The Education and Training Panel will review reports in the normal way but may make decisions to grant approval without all standards under SET 5 being met as a result of the rationale outlined in 4.1 and the robust nature of the admissions process of the programme.
 - (d) After approval is granted for and such programmes, affected education providers will be informed that HPC must be notified of the intent to introduce practice placements into programmes with a minimum of nine months' notice before implementation. An approval visit will be required to review changes to the programme.
 - (e) The annual monitoring process will operate in the usual way. However, it is expected that visitors will recommend that a visit takes place as soon as possible if information comes to light that practice placements have been introduced into an affected programme.
 - (f) The major change process will operate in the usual way. However, it is expected that a recommendation will be made for a visit to take place as soon as possible if information comes to

light that practice placements have been, or are intended to be, introduced into an affected programme.

ACTION: Director of Education to amend the approval and monitoring processes to incorporate the above changes.

Item 12 Visitor reports - commendations (ETC 52/11)

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive providing a summary and review of the use of commendations.
- 12.2 At its meeting of 9 June 2011, the Committee discussed feedback from Education and Training Committee Panels, regarding the regularity of observations submitted by education providers contesting the HPC's policy of providing commendations following visits.
- 12.3 The paper provided background into the use of visitors' reports and commendations, and summarised the feedback received from key stakeholders on the practice (namely education providers, visitors, Education and training Committee Panel members and Education officers involved in approval visits).
- 12.4 The Committee noted that commendations had originally been developed to align the HPC's approval process with the quality enhancement agenda.
- 12.5 The Committee agreed that it would be vital to ensure that the rationale for any decision to cease the practice of commendations would need to be clearly and consistently communicated to education providers.
- 12.6 The Committee agreed that the peer review and collaborative approach to approval visits would not be affected by the removal of commendations.
- 12.7 The Committee agreed that:
 - (a) commendations should be removed from visitors' reports with effect from Thursday 8 September 2011;
 - (b) recommendations should remain in visitors' reports;
 - (c) the analysis of commendations should not be included in the 2011 annual report (covering the 2010-2011 academic year);

- (d) the decision to remove commendations should be communicated to education providers and stakeholder via the Education Update (October 2011 edition); and
- (e) the themes of identifying and disseminating good practice and identifying and disseminating different ways to meet threshold standards should be carried over into future discussions around the HPC's approach to quality enhancement and work plans for 2012-13 and beyond.

ACTION: Director of Education to deliver the changes outlined in paragraph 12.7 above.

Item 13 Hearing Aid Dispensers - list of approved programmes (ETC 53/11)

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding revisions to the published list of hearing aid dispenser programmes approved by the HPC.
- 13.2 The paper provided proposed changes to the list of approved programmes resulting from submitted by education providers as part of the approval process. The Committee had considered similar changes to the list at previous meetings.
- 13.3 The Committee agreed:
 - (a) that the programmes listed in paragraph 4.1 of paper ETC 53/11, which have submitted their consent, have their ongoing approval status withdrawn; and
 - (b) that the list of approved programmes should be amended to take account of the programme title listed in paragraph 4.2 of paper ETC 53/11.

Item 14 Practitioner Psychologists - list of approved programmes (ETC 54/11)

- 14.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding revisions to the published list of practitioner psychologist programmes approved by the HPC.
- 14.2 The paper provided proposed changes to the list of approved programmes resulting from information received by the Education Department from education providers. The Committee had considered similar changes to the list at previous meetings.
- 14.3 The Committee accepted the amendments to the currently approved programmes outlined in Appendix 1 of paper ETC 54/11; and the

amendments to the historically approved programmes outlined in Appendix 2 of paper ETC 54/11.

Item 15 Closure of approved programmes (ETC 55/11)

- 15.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive providing a list of approved education programmes that have closed, or are closing . These programmes either have no students, or have students but are no longer recruiting additional cohorts.
- 15.2 At its meeting on 27 September 2007 the Committee agreed the process for withdrawal of approval from closed programmes to ensure that education providers could not re-establish training programmes which led to HPC registration.
- 15.3 The Committee agreed:
- (a) that the programmes listed in appendix 1 of paper ETC 55/11, which have submitted their consent, have their ongoing approval status withdrawn; and
 - (b) that the programmes listed in appendix 2 of paper ETC 55/11, which have not submitted their consent, have their ongoing approval status withdrawn.

ACTION: Director of Education to write to the providers of programmes listed in appendices 1 and 2 of paper ETC 55/11 with the Committee's decision to withdraw approval from those programmes recorded as closed.

Item 16 Review of the HPC admission form for international/EEA applicants (ETC 56/11)

- 16.1 The Committee received a paper for discussion/approval from the Executive regarding revisions to application forms published by HPC to enable international health professionals to apply for entry to the HPC register.
- 16.2 The changes had been developed following feedback from applicants, registrants and HPC employees, and were intended to make the forms clearer, and more 'user friendly'. The change to the reference section would also assist the registrations department in verifying applications.
- 16.3 The Committee approved the changes to the admission form outlined in paper ETC 56/11 and recommended that the Council approve the updated application form at its meeting of 22 September 2011.

Item 17 Transfer of regulatory functions from the GSCC to HPC (57/11)

- 17.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Council Chair regarding the project to transfer regulatory function from the GSCC to the HPC.
- 17.2 At the Council meeting on 14 October 2010, the Council agreed that there would be a standing item on every Council and Committee agenda, whereby the Executive would update the meeting on the progress of the project. As the project was developing rapidly, a verbal report on progress would be made to each meeting.

Legislative timetable

- 17.3 The 3rd reading of the Health and Social Care Bill was now complete, and the Bill had been sent to the Lords. There had been no changes to the section of the legislation relating the HPC and the GSCC.
- 17.4 It was not clear when the current parliamentary session would end, and whether the legislation would be passed in this time. It was hoped that the Department of Health would be in a position to provide further information regarding the timetable by the end of September.
- 17.5 The completion date for the legislation and subsequent enactment timetable clearly had significant implications for HPC and GSCC. The HPC continued to work closely with the GSCC, and the relationship was strengthening at all levels.

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- 17.6 The draft standards of proficiency for social workers in England had been well received by the group.
- 17.7 The Group had discussed the issue of a 'supported year in employment' for new social work graduates in their post qualifying year. In addition to the proposal that this supported year be assessed by the regulator, the group was considering the possibility of greater involvement by the College of Social Work.
- 17.8 The Committee acknowledged and gave thanks for the great deal of additional work that the Council Chair and the Executive Team were putting into the transfer project.

The Committee noted the following papers:

Item 18 Draft items for the Education Department work plan 2012-13 (ETC 58/11)

Item 19 Review of the process of approval of hearing aid dispenser pre-registration education and training programmes (ETC 59/11)

Item 20 Health and character declarations (ETC 60/11)

Item 21 Education and Training Committee Panel decisions (ETC 61/11)

Item 22 Report from Committee representative at external meetings (ETC 62/11)

Item 23 Date and time of next meeting

23.1 10.30 am - Thursday 17 November 2011

Item 24 Any other business

24.1 There was no further business.

Chair

Date

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