Education and Training Committee, 9 June 2016

Perceptions and experiences of the HCPC's approach to continuing professional development standards and audits - update

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

At its meeting on 10 September 2015, the Education and Training Committee discussed the outcomes of research which explored registrants' and stakeholders' perceptions and experiences of the HCPC's CPD standards and audits.

At that meeting the Executive included a draft management response to the research recommendations which was discussed by the Committee. This includes proposed work to review and rewrite the published guidance in light of the findings.

This changes to the guidance have yet to be progressed, pending the Council's discussion of the outcomes of research carried out to explore 'continuing fitness to practise'. That paper was considered by the Council at its meeting in May 2016. The Council agreed that changes to the guidance should be progressed.

The following are attached.

- A timetable for reviewing and rewriting the guidance.

- A copy of the September 'management response' with updates where appropriate from the Executive.

In summary, the letter sent to registrants who successfully meet the requirements has recently been updated. Other recommendations where action was required will be largely met through the review and rewrite of the guidance.

Decision

This paper is to note; no decision is required.

Background information

- Paper considered by the Education and Training Committee on 10 September 2015 (includes copy of the final research report). http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004CECEnc03-PerceptionsandexperiencesoftheHCPCsapproachtocontinuingprofessionaldevelopmentstandardsandaudits.pdf

- Council meeting, 19 May 2016. Continuing fitness to practise. http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10005000Enc08-ContinuingFitnesstoPractise.pdf

Resource implications

Resource implications include reviewing and rewriting the guidance. These resource implications are accounted for in Policy and Standards Department planning for 2016-17.

Financial implications

Financial implications include costs associated with publication of the revised guidance, including plain English editing and printing costs. These are estimated at £5-8K dependent on the length of the revised guidance. These costs will be incurred in the 2017-18 financial year and will be accounted for in Policy and Standards Department budgeting for that financial year.

Appendices

None

Date of paper

27 May 2016

Review and rewrite of published CPD guidance

1.1   There are two guidance documents:

- Your guide to our standards of continuing professional development ('short guide').

- Continuing professional development and your registration ('long guide').

1.2   In addition, there is an information document sent to registrants when they are selected for audit which draws on the guidance to explain more about what a registrant needs to do to participate in an audit.

1.3   The short guide was developed originally as a concise guide which could be mailed out to all registrants when the CPD requirements were first put in place. As part of the review and rewrite, we anticipate that the two guidance documents will be combined into one document, which will be comprehensive, but as concise and clear as possible.

1.4   The revised guidance will be subject to a public consultation. The information sent to registrants would be updated in light of this and to take account of ongoing operational developments (e.g. the forthcoming introduction of the ability to submit CPD profiles online).

1.5   The following is the timetable for the review and rewrite of the guidance.

Activity	Timescale
Review and rewrite of guidance	Late spring / summer 2016
Approval of draft guidance for public consultation	Education and Training Committee – 8 September 2016. Council – 21/22 September 2016
Public consultation	September 2016 to January 2017
Approval of consultation analysis and final text of guidance	Education and Training Committee and Council – March 2017
Publication of guidance	Spring 2017

Recommendation	Executive response
1. The HCPC should consider ways in which it could offer more detailed feedback for registrants following acceptance of their profiles - e.g. a simple 'grading' system.	**Accept in part** This has been a theme in feedback since the CPD standards and audits were introduced – that registrants who are successful in the audit are disappointed that they do not receive feedback on the quality of their audit submission (just that it met the CPD standards). The Executive continues to consider that providing such qualitative feedback would be challenging because it would add to the time involved in administering each audit and because it may be likely to generate further correspondence from registrants unhappy that they been told that their submission in some way required improvement, despite it being accepted. Further, doing this would be a deviation from our approach to ensuring that the standards are seen as threshold requirements that need to be met but can be exceeded. Instead, the Executive is in the process of reviewing the standard correspondence used during audits to ensure that the content and tone is appropriate. In particular, we will ensure that the relevant 'accept' letter acknowledges in some way the time and effort put in by registrants in putting together profiles for audit and explains that feedback is not routinely given and why. (This is part of meeting recommendation 2 below.)

	Update The accept letter has now been updated. The letter: • informs the registrant that they have had their profile accepted; • says that this means that they have met the CPD standards and explains that we do not give specific feedback and why; • explains that meeting the standards means that they have continued to learn and develop for the benefit of their service users; and • acknowledges the time and effort involved in completing their audit submission, thanking the registrant for participating in the process. Overall, the tone of the correspondence is now much improved. The review and update of other correspondence will take place as part of the registration improvement and transformation project. This will include reviewing tone of voice and ensuring that the correspondence reflects the processes redesigned as part of the project.
2. The HCPC should review and update its standard correspondence and guidance in the light of the research findings.	**Accept** The HCPC's standard correspondence has been regularly reviewed and updated. The improvements made may not be fully reflected in the outcomes of the research because it

	included registrants audited between 2011 and 2014. The published guidance has been updated before with minor revisions, but not for some time. The Executive is undertaking a review of standard correspondence and is proposing to undertake work to review and revise the published guidance. With respect to the guidance, there is scope to make it clearer, more concise and generally more in keeping with more recent guidance we have published. ***Update*** At its meeting in May 2016, the Council discussed a paper on 'Continuing fitness to practise'. They agreed that changes to the guidance should now be progressed, tentatively agreeing that at this stage significant changes to the standards or process did not appear necessary. The changes to the guidance will be informed by the findings of the market research.
3. Review the frequent reasons for requesting further information at first submission and ensure that these are given more prominence within the guidance literature.	**Accept** As part of meeting recommendation two, we will review the common reasons for requesting further information and ensure this is reflected in the revision of the guidance. We will ensure that the guidance materials are much clearer and explicit about the desirability of providing a dated list of activities in order to meet standard one ('registrants must maintain a continuous, up to date and accurate record of their CPD activities').

4. Consider asking registrants for their consent for anonymised audit profiles to be used as examples.	**Requires further consideration** We have published a sample profile for at least each part of the Register. In many cases, multiple profiles per profession have been published. These are produced by the professional bodies, by real registrants in different areas of practice, and published on the website joint-badged. The existing sample profiles were very well received in the research – with 75% finding them useful – so it might be better to focus on reviewing and revising the published guidance rather than focusing on the sample profiles at this stage. At very least, this is a low priority recommendation. ***Update*** We will review, consult on and re-publish the guidance in the first instance. We are currently working with a professional body to develop a further sample profile for the website.
5. Continue to work with employers to raise the profile of CPD and the requirements of the HCPC with an emphasis on encouraging different forms of learning and CPD if funding for traditional courses is not available.	**Accept** We will continue to engage with employers about the CPD standards and audits. One way in which this is done on an ongoing basis is via our employer events.
6. Raise awareness amongst registrants of the wide variety of CPD activities available and how this can be recorded.	**Accept** We will meet this recommendation as part of reviewing and revising the guidance materials.

| 7. Work with professional bodies to ensure that online systems for recording CPD complement the requirements of the HCPC standards and audit process. | **Accept in part**

We plan to introduce the ability for registrants to fill in and submit their CPD profiles online as part of the registration system review and build project which is ongoing (timescales for this component TBC).

This should go some way to meeting this recommendation and help registrants in very easily transferring information from any online CPD diaries / tools they use. However, these tools are often designed for a slightly different purpose (i.e. collecting CPD information also to meet professional body or employer requirements) and complete complementarity may not be possible to achieve.

Update

The registration improvement and transformation project is underway, with CPD the first area to be addressed. The ability of registrants to submit their CPD online is part of the project. Subject to testing and operational readiness, the intention is to introduce this in early 2017. |
| 8. Consider the promotion of named 'audit champions' within the workplace to enable registrants to seek peer support during the audit process. | **Do not accept**

We should be encouraging and supportive of registrants who support others going through the CPD audit process and of registrants who feed back their experience to peers – and this might be incorporated into the guidance.

However, a system of 'audit champions' may be cumbersome to administer and may cross over into a more professional body |

	role. We should, however, continue to ensure that we give good and timely advice to registrants who contact us about their audit submissions.
9. Consider offering targeted support to those who have come to the profession through non-academic routes and/or improving the HCPC's guidance materials to address this.	**Accept in part** We agree that registrants who trained some time ago or who were registered via grandparenting, for example, may not have training in reflective practice and therefore may require more assistance. We think this recommendation can be achieved by ensuring that our messages in the guidance are clearer about what we expect from registrants during an audit.
10. Consider consulting further with assessors on what improvements could be made to the assessment process.	**Accept in part** This recommendation is based on a very small handful of assessors who were interviewed, a small number of which raised points about the assessment process. The Executive's feedback from assessors to date has been largely positive and that they do have sufficient time during the assessment process. The Executive is currently working with assessors to develop internal guidance for assessors to assist in their role. The Executive will continue to consult with assessors as appropriate and necessary.