

**Health Professions Council
Approvals Committee – 5 September 2006**

ADVERTISING PROTOCOL FOR EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

The HPC executive has identified, through experience of undertaking approvals visits and researching education provider websites, that a number of education providers refer to the HPC erroneously, or identify their programme as HPC approved, when it is pending approval. We do not believe that such errors are deliberate, but arise rather as a result of a lack of information and understanding.

In consultation with the HPC's Communications Department and after having sought legal advice, the attached document has been written for education providers to ensure that they have guidelines to assist them when advertising their programmes. It is intended that this document will be available on the HPC website, and will be sent to all programmes as part of the information pack they received when initially organising an HPC visit.

Decision

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

Background information

None

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Background papers

None

Appendices

Regulatory Status Advertising Protocol for Education Providers

Date of paper

22 August 2006



Regulatory Status Advertising Protocol for Education Providers

Education – Approvals and Monitoring Department

The HPC is a regulatory body whose main aim is to protect the public. We currently regulate 13 professions and may regulate further professions in the future. The professions we currently regulate are:

- Arts therapists;
- Biomedical scientists;
- Chiropodists and podiatrists;
- Clinical scientists;
- Dietitians;
- Occupational therapists;
- Operating department practitioners;
- Orthoptists;
- Paramedics;
- Physiotherapists;
- Prosthetists and orthotists;
- Radiographers; and
- Speech and language therapists.

In line with the UK model of regulation, we protect the title of the practitioner rather than the role of the practitioner. This means that if an individual is practicing under one of the professional titles protected by us, and is not registered with us; they are not practising legally and are liable to prosecution.

In order to meet our aim of protecting the public, we undertake a number of tasks, one of which is to approve and monitor pre-registration educational programmes offered by education providers for the professions we regulate. Once a student successfully completes an HPC approved pre-registration programme, they are eligible to apply for HPC registration.

We also undertake visits to post-registration supplementary prescribing and LA/POMs programmes for allied health professionals who are already HPC registered. Students who successfully complete these programmes will have their registration annotated with the additional qualification.

The term 'HPC approved' applies only to those programmes which have been approved by the relevant HPC Committee and which appear on the HPC's list of approved programmes. Please refer to our website at: www.hpc-uk.org

We have provided the following information to assist education providers who offer programmes in the above disciplines to correctly inform prospective students about the regulatory status of their programmes. The information provides guidelines about referring to the HPC in promotional materials and may also be useful to education providers when preparing documentation for a HPC Visit.

General advertising/promotional information:

- All advertising and promotional materials, including written and website materials, relating to an education or training programme for any of the HPC regulated professions must be accurate and must not be misleading, false or exaggerated.
- The term 'state registered' is no longer used by the professions we regulate and should not be incorporated into any materials relating to an HPC approved programme.
- The HPC is not a professional body and should not be referred to as such in any materials related to an HPC approved programme.
- The HPC should be referred to as a 'regulatory body' or 'statutory regulator' in any materials relating to an HPC approved programme (or a programme pending HPC approval).
- The HPC 'approves' educational programmes. We do not 'accredit' or 'validate' programmes. Advertising, promotional and programme documentation should reflect this terminology where possible.
- An educational programme, which does not provide eligibility for graduates to apply for HPC registration, should not contain any reference to an HPC protected title in the programme title.
- Programme materials or education provider policies must clearly state that an aegrotat or otherwise compensatory award, does not provide eligibility for admission to the HPC Register or for annotation of an individual's current registration

Advertising/promotion of HPC approved programmes:

- The term 'HPC approved' may only be used in promotional material for the programme if;
 - the programme has been approved by the HPC's Education and Training Committee and leads to eligibility for graduates to apply for HPC registration, or,
 - the programme has been approved by the HPC's Education and Training Committee and leads to annotation of the registered practitioner's registration.
- Following final HPC approval of a programme, which will be confirmed in writing, the programme may be advertised on the UCAS system as being HPC approved. We have provided a standard statement to UCAS for such

programmes and this is available for you to add to the description of your programme when you are updating the UCAS system.

- Following final approval of which will be confirmed in writing, the programme may be advertised by using the HPC badge, which will be provided to the education provider upon request. The logo may only be used for those programmes approved by the HPC.
- HPC approval of a programme does not automatically lead to HPC registration for graduates but rather to 'eligibility to apply for HPC registration'.

Advertising of programmes undergoing the approvals process:

- The terms 'pending HPC approval' or 'subject to HPC approval' may only be applied to a programme prior to being granted HPC approval, if an HPC Approval Visit has been requested and is being actively organised with the HPC. Pending status must remain in place until you have received formal written approval from the HPC.

Programmes not approved by HPC:

- Any programme, which is not approved by the HPC, or not involved in the HPC approval process at the time of advertising, may only contain reference to HPC if it states clearly that the programme **is not** HPC approved.
- Any programme, which has had HPC approval withdrawn, must remove all reference to HPC approval and any HPC logo immediately. The programme may only contain reference to HPC if it states clearly that the programme **is not** HPC approved.
- Any programme, which is not granted HPC approval at the end of the Approval process, must remove all reference to HPC approval and any HPC logo material immediately. The programme may only contain reference to HPC if it states clearly that the programme **is not** HPC approved.
- Any programme, which is not approved by the HPC, may not use the HPC logo under any circumstances.