

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the 72nd meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Thursday 24 November 2016

Time: 10.30 am

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

Members: Joy Tweed (Chair)
Stephen Cohen
Maureen Drake
Joanna Mussen
Sonya Lam

In attendance:

Claire Amor, Secretary to the Committee
Ashley Antonio-Mortley, Registration Appeals Manager
Jonathan Bracken, Solicitor to Council
Brendon Edmonds, Head of Educational Development
Christopher French, Registrations Manager
Abigail Gorringe, Director of Education
Michael Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards
Richard Houghton, Head of Registrations
Jamie Hunt, Education Manager
Anna Lubasinkia, Registrations Manager
Greg Ross-Sampson, Director of Operations
Marc Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar

Public Agenda

Item 1 - Chair's welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Committee and those in the public gallery to the meeting.

Item 2 - Apologies for absence

- 2.1 Stephen Wordsworth gave his apologies.

Item 3 - Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4 - Declaration of members' interests

- 4.1 Members had no interests to declare in connection with the items on the agenda.

Item 5 – Minutes of the meeting of 8 September 2016 (ETC 40/16)

- 5.1 The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting of the Education and Training Committee.
- 5.2 The minutes were accepted as a correct record to be signed by the Chair, subject to the inclusion of Maureen Drake in the attendance list.

Items for discussion/approval

Item 6 – Regulation rethought (ETC 41/16)

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that, In September 2016, the PSA published 'Regulation rethought'. This is a follow up to their thought paper 'Rethinking regulation' and sets out proposals for the reform of regulation.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that the PSA concludes that:-
 - current arrangements duplicate the role of other regulators in education leading to unnecessary burden and expense;
 - regulator focus should be on ensuring that learning outcomes for registration are achieved, with broader questions of course management left to others; and

- a review is required to ensure that regulators have a clear focus, intelligence is shared and there is no duplication of effort.

6.4 During discussion the following points were made:-

- the Policy and standards Department workplan for 2016-17 includes proposals for market research of education providers experience of the HCPC's approvals and monitoring processes. This would include concepts of regulatory burden. It is expected that a brief for the research will be presented to the Committee at its meeting in March or June 2017;
- the Committee were not clear on the evidence base used by the PSA to support its recommendations;
- the Healthcare sector is subject to extensive regulation due to the very clear public protection risks involved. It is therefore not to be unexpected that healthcare education be similarly regulated, but any duplication should be addressed;
- education provider concerns about burden are often in relation to the burden of the audit process rather than the requirements being too prescriptive. It is not clear which aspect the PSA have focused on. Criticism of the HCPC's standards in relation to Social Worker education for example has been that the standards are not prescriptive enough;
- experience from the Education and Training Panel of the conditions applied by approval visits suggest that this process is important for maintain quality. The Committee expressed concern about these issues falling through the net if responsibility was split between a number of bodies; and
- the Council of Deans for Health were supportive of the HCPC's role in light of the changing landscape of education provision.

6.5 The Committee agreed that the PSA's report suggested that the regulators should not be maintaining Standards of Education and Training (SETs) but focusing only on the Standards of Proficiency (SoPs) being met by a programme graduate. The Committee discussed the interaction of the SETs and SoPs and agreed that they are integral and that it was not possible to be assured of learning outcomes without being assured of the quality of a programme.

6.6 The Committee discussed the importance of fitness to practise considerations beyond profession specific knowledge. Placements are integral to the fitness to practise of a new graduate and their ability to meet the SoPs and therefore it was important that the HCPC should be able to satisfy itself of the quality of placement arrangements.

- 6.7 The Committee discussed the possibility of a single set of standards for education and training to apply to all regulators. The Committee agreed that there was much commonality and that it was possible.
- 6.8 The Committee discussed the different approaches to education programme approval by the health professions regulators. It was noted that many models exist, mainly driven by individual circumstance, for example the low number of medical schools enables the GMC to have more in depth engagement. The predecessor to the PSA, the CHRE, produced a report in 2009 that did some comparison work but this was limited. The HCPC reviewed the other regulators' standards during the recent SETs PLG.
- 6.9 The Committee discussed the education aspects of the annual performance review by the PSA. It was noted that the PSA do not focus on education and ask for little in the way of submissions in this area, the majority of the PSA's standards relate to fitness to practise.
- 6.10 The Committee discussed the low number of concerns received by the Committee about approved programmes. The Committee noted that more queries are received than complaints and that this data is flagged in subsequent programme visits. The HCPC encourages local resolution where possible and has specific criteria of the complaints it can consider.
- 6.11 The Committee noted the report.

Item 7 – International professional equivalence (ETC 42/16)

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that the HCPC currently registers approximately 2800 applicants each year who have qualified outside of the UK. The number of international registrations is growing every year. The paper proposes a new approach to scrutinising international applications.
- 7.3 The Committee noted the following points:-
- currently all applications are scrutinised on an individual basis, based on the information provided by the applicant;
 - it is proposed that a list of comparable qualifications is introduced alongside the current individual assessment of international applications;
 - programmes assessed as comparable will be presented to the Education and Training Committee for approval. The Education and Training Committee will have the power to remove a qualification from the list;

- a number of monitoring methods will be put in place as detailed in the paper; and
- it is hoped that the new approach will improve the experience of applicant, being quicker and simpler and more in line with the UK-approved programme application route. In addition it will result in efficiency savings for the HCPC and enhance consistency when scrutinising applicants from one course.

- 7.4 The Committee noted that as part of the research to support the new approach, data on all physiotherapy applications which were received between 2010-2015 from applicants who qualified in Australia, Greece and Ireland was gathered and analysed. This analysis then provided background to assessment carried out on the HCPC's behalf by an independent expert.
- 7.5 The Committee discussed the risk of the new approach. It was agreed that the level of risk was not greater than the current process. Individual courses will be risk assessed. Monitoring will be ongoing so that a course can be removed from the list if concerns arise. The Committee will have the power to remove a course from the list at any time. All non-academic information will continue to be individually assessed.
- 7.6 The Committee discussed engagement with professional bodies, agreeing that their support was desirable. It was noted that if the Committee agrees to the proposed new approach information on the process will be shared with the professional bodies.
- 7.7 The Committee discussed possible employer concerns with the new approach. It was noted that employers are more likely to benefit from the new approach as it will reduce processing times for applicants who may be waiting to fill a vacancy. The Committee suggested that data on workforce shortages could be used to prioritise which courses should be assessed first.
- 7.8 The Committee discussed the issue of currency, noting that a method for the removal of a course from the list should be added, if no successful applications are received within a set time, it was agreed that courses should not be on the list indefinitely.
- 7.9 In response to a question it was noted that the definition of professions varies internationally. The process of equivalence will be based on course outcomes rather than the title of the profession.
- 7.10 The Committee agreed with the independent expert's view that the mapping process would be strengthened by using a second reviewer. The Executive agreed to arrange this second review before the list was presented to the Committee in Spring 2017.
- 7.11 The Committee thanked the Registrations team for the thorough approach they had taken in producing a very convincing case for change.
- 7.12 The Committee agreed:-

- the alternative approach outlined in the attached paper;
- that the model should be further explored with research continuing;
- the template list of comparable qualifications; and
- to allow the Executive to create a list of comparable qualifications in relation to the Australian, Greek and Irish qualifications in physiotherapy, for the Committees consideration at its next meeting in March 2017.

Item 8 – Professional referee requirement – European mutual recognition and international applications (ETC 43/16)

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that application forms for registration for the UK approved, European Mutual Recognition (EMR) and international routes to registration have been updated and applicants will now have the ability to complete these forms electronically
- 8.3 The Committee noted that as part of this redesign, it is proposed that the optional requirement for a professional reference for EMR and international applicants be removed.
- 8.4 The Committee noted the following points
- references are often form a personal recommendation that the individual should be accepted to the Register, rather than an objective overview of the applicant's professional experience;
 - applications that are sent without a professional reference are currently returned as incomplete. This adds a significant amount of time and cost to the processing of an application;
 - EMR and international applicants will be encouraged to submit the reference, however it will no longer be mandatory; and
 - removing the professional reference will bring the EMR and international applications forms in line with the UK approved programme route applications.
- 8.5 The Committee agreed the removal of the processional reference from the EMT and international application forms.

Item 9 – Overview of Registration Appeals process (ETC 44/16)

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

- 9.2 The Committee noted that the paper provides an overview of the registration appeals process including the role of the Education and Training Committee (ETC). The paper was requested at the recent Council strategy away day.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that information on registration appeals is included in the operational management report which is submitted to each Council meeting.
- 9.4 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 10 – Education and Training Committee’s scheme of delegation in relation to Operations Department (Registration) (ETC 45/16)

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.
- 10.1 The Committee noted that the paper provides an overview of the responsibilities of the Education and Training Committee and the powers delegated to the Executive. The paper was requested at the recent Council strategy away day.
- 10.2 The Committee noted the paper.

Item 11 – Any other business

- 11.1 The Committee noted that Joy Tweed would be stepping down from Council in December. The Committee expressed its thanks to Joy for her service and professionalism as the Chair of the Education and Training Committee.

Item 12 – Date and time of next meeting

- 12.1 Thursday 2 March 2017 10.30am at Park House, SE11 4BU

Resolution

The Council adopted the following:

‘The Council hereby resolves that the remainder of the meeting shall be held in private, because the matters being discussed relate to the following;

- (a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or application for registration;
- (b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;
- (c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
- (d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
- (e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;

- (f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;
- (g) the source of information given to the Council in confidence; or
- (h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council's functions.'

Item	Reason for Exclusion
13	a

Summary of matters discussed in private session

The Committee considered the results of recent investigation into a complaint about an education provider.

Chair

Date

Unconfirmed