

Mr J Rogers  
Chief Executive  
Skills for Health  
1st Floor, Goldsmiths House  
Broad Plain  
BRISTOL BS2 0JP

21 November 2007

Dear John

**Re: QA Framework Consultation**

I am writing to you to express the concerns of the Health Professions Council (HPC) about the Skills for Health **QA Framework Consultation** published in September 2007.

As I am sure you are aware, the HPC is a UK-wide statutory regulator established by Parliament in 2001. The HPC regulates over 180,000 healthcare professionals from 13 professions. We are responsible for setting the standards of education and training and the standards of proficiency. We currently approve and annually monitor over 300 university programmes, although we anticipate this will rise to 400 when we commence to regulate registered psychologists in 2008.

The HPC will respond in full to the Skills for Health consultation. However, the HPC has a number of concerns on which we require urgent clarification. They are as follows:

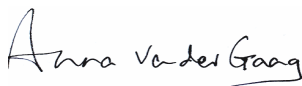
- The Skills for Health consultation document has only one brief reference to the HPC on page 39. No explanation is made to HPC's statutory roles and responsibilities for either education and training or standards of proficiency. It is therefore unclear how the Skills for Health process would interact with our processes and that of education providers.
- Readers of the Skills for Health consultation document may infer from the reference to partners that the HPC has been jointly responsible for the proposals. This is not correct. The HPC does not regard itself to be a partner of Skills for Health. Neither do we endorse the contents of the consultation document.
- The Skills for Health consultation provides no proposals on how the process will be funded.

- The Skills for Health consultation document does not explain how the additional quality assurance process will address the findings of the National Audit Office 2001 report on healthcare education. We also note that the NAO report did not directly address quality assurance issues and was published before the HPC implemented its processes.
- The Skills for Health consultation document makes limited reference to the three devolved health administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and does not address how this will impact UK-wide statutory regulation.
- The consultation provides no evidence, nor is the HPC aware of any, which supports recently qualified registrants who have completed approved programmes of education and training are not fit for purpose.

Because of the concerns of the HPC that I have raised in this letter, I would like to invite you to attend one of the next meetings of the HPC's Education and Training Committee. The Committee will meet at 10.30am on Tuesday 4 December and then on Wednesday 26 March at our offices in Kennington. The invitation to attend the meeting is to enable you to address the concerns set out in this letter and your confirmation that you will be attending a meeting would be most appreciated.

If you have any questions or points of clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Anna van der Gaag**  
**President**



**Eileen Thornton**  
**Chairman**  
**Education and Training**  
**Committees**

**Marc Seale**  
**Chief Executive and**  
**Registrar**