
Education and Training Committee – 12 June 2012

Approved mental health professional programmes – approval and monitoring processes

Executive summary and recommendations

This paper should be read alongside the papers entitled ‘List of approved programmes – approved mental health professionals’ and ‘Criteria for approving approved mental health professionals’ programmes’. It seeks to agree the means by which those programmes transitionally approved by the HCPC should be dealt with after 1 August 2012. The Education and Training Committee is asked to agree a mechanism to manage those programmes midway through a GSCC quality assurance process at the point of transfer as well as the longer term approach to confirming their open ended approval.

Introduction

Background

It is anticipated that 30 approved mental health professionals’ (AMHP) programmes will be transitionally approved by HCPC on 1 August 2012. In the main, these programmes are postgraduate diplomas and masters. A piece of work is on-going to ensure that the register of approved programmes includes any modules/units (or combinations of modules/units) that also equate to approved approved mental health professionals training.

The GSCC have approved AMHP programmes as part of their post-qualifying framework for social work education and training. This includes a system of approval, monitoring, review and inspection. Approval involves a two stage process (institutional level followed by course level), with the second stage usually involving a site visit by GSCC officers and/or independent visitors. Monitoring involves an annual submission of internal evaluations of course quality, external examiners reports and stakeholder monitoring exercises. Reviews occur on a five-year cycle and usually involve a site visit by GSCC officers and/or independent visitors. Reviews formally confirm re-approval for the programme. Inspections can occur at any time if there is evidence to suggest a concern. Inspections involve a site visit by a panel of GSCC officers and independent visitors.

During 2011 the GSCC inspected all approved AMHP programmes to determine that they continued to meet the requirements outlined in their revised specialist standards and requirements for post-qualifying social work education and training (Social work in mental health services, revised May 2010). Individual inspection

reports have been published and all post inspection work complete. The GSCC is currently analysing trends from their AMHP work and is due to publish a composite report shortly.

On-going quality assurance work at the point of transfer

Given the recent GSCC inspection visits, it is anticipated that there will be minimal, if any, outstanding work in progress at the point of transfer. However, to manage the risk, should once arise, it is proposed that the mechanism outlined in appendix 1 is adopted by HCPC. The mechanism draws on executive and visitor expertise and assessment, with Education and Training Panels retaining any final decision-making powers. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis and be cognisant of the interim standards.

Approval and monitoring arrangements with the HCPC

Given the recent GSCC inspection visits and the requirement for HCPC to develop AMHP criteria, it is proposed that AMHP programmes remain transitionally approved for at least 18 months. In other words, there will be no scheduled approval visits to existing programmes until the 2013-2014 academic year. In exceptional circumstances, where concerns are raised or requests for new programmes are received, the approval and monitoring processes will be utilised.

In addition, it is proposed that the 30 AMHP programmes are visited over a two academic year period. The two academic years would be 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. It is intended that all visits would be held by July 2015, with approval of all programmes confirmed by the 2015-2016 academic year at the latest.

These proposals aim to balance the needs of the statutory regulator with those of the education provider and are recommended for a number of reasons. Primarily, they recognise the intention and workload associated with the recent GSCC inspection process. Secondly, they offer a reasonable and feasible timescale for education providers without being overly-burdensome. Thirdly, they offer a realistic and achievable timescale given our resources, priorities and commitments to pre-registration social worker in England programmes and the existing fifteen professions.

The prioritisation within these two academic years would take into account existing quality assurance evidence transferred from the GSCC, information presented to HCPC after 1 August 2012 and where possible, be cognisant of and responsive to the demands on the education providers. Appendix 2 provides an indicative schedule. The finalisation and implementation of the schedule should become the delegated responsibility of the Director of Education from here on. .

Decision

The Committee is asked to agree the following:

- To approve the mechanism for managing those programmes midway through a GSCC quality assurance process at the point of transfer; and
- To approve the long term approach to approval and monitoring AMHP programmes.

Background information

Education and Training Committee, 9 June 2011 - Approved mental health professionals (AMHPs)

Resource implications

Resources have been accounted for in 2012-2013 Education Department work plan and budget, and will be taken forward into future work plans and budgets.

Financial implications

Finance resources have been accounted for in 2012-2013 Education Department work plan and budget, and will be taken forward into future work plans and budgets.

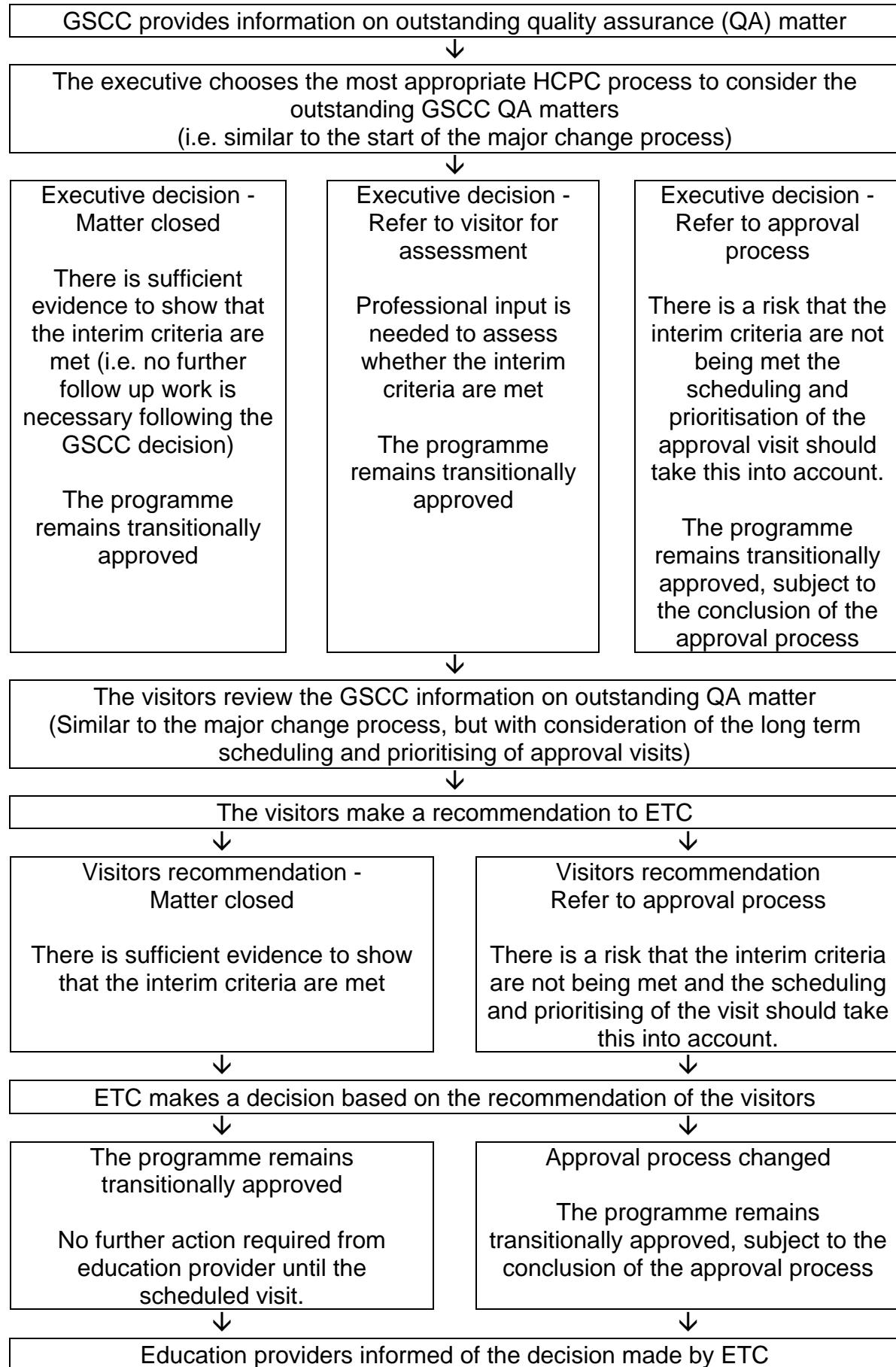
Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Mechanism for considering AMHP programmes midway through a GSCC quality assurance process at the point of transfer
- Appendix 2 – Indicative approval visit schedule for AMHP programmes

Date of paper

30 May 2012

Appendix 1 – Mechanism for considering AMHP programmes midway through a GSCC quality assurance process at the point of transfer



Appendix 2 – Indicative approval visit schedule for AMHP programmes

Academic year	Education providers
2012-2013	No scheduled visits to existing AMHP programmes
2013-2014	Birmingham City University Bournemouth University Leeds Metropolitan University Middlesex University University of Birmingham University of Bradford University of Brighton University of Chester University of East London University of Hertfordshire University of Manchester University of Wolverhampton
2014-2015	Anglia Ruskin University Canterbury Christ Church University Kingston University Northumbria University Sheffield Hallam University University Campus Suffolk University of Central Lancashire University of Cumbria University of East Anglia University of Huddersfield University of Lincoln