

Education and Training Committee, 2 March 2017

International professional equivalence – progress update

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

At the meeting on the 26 November 2016 the Education and Training Committee (ETC) discussed and approved the international professional equivalence paper. The Committee had a number of recommendations relating to the next steps in regards to establishing the international professional equivalence process. The Executive wishes to update the Committee on the further progress of the project.

Background information

In November 2016 the Committee agreed the following:

- to proceed with the alternative approach to scrutinising international applications for admission to the Register;
- 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 Committee's consideration at its next meeting in March 2017.

The Committee has also recommended the following:

- that it will be desirable that the mapping of qualifications is strengthened by the use of a second independent reviewer;
- that the issue of currency of professional qualifications which are considered for inclusion in the list of comparable qualifications is explored;
- that the support of professional bodies is desirable in introducing the new approach, and that the Executive will share the information relating to this with relevant professional bodies.

Progress update

Since the ETC meeting in November the Executive have completed the following actions:

1. Continued with the scrutiny of Australian qualifications by the appointed reviewer, Eileen Thornton. The initial report relating to available Australian qualifications shows a very high level of equivalency.
2. Appointed the second reviewer as requested by the Committee, Karen Harrison of Coventry University, who has an extensive knowledge of HCPC's application process for those qualified elsewhere than in the UK and worked with HCPC in multiple partner roles over the years.

The second reviewer has now provided the Executive with an initial draft report and this initial draft is currently being considered and finalised by the Executive and will be presented to the Committee at the next Committee meeting.

3. The Executive has met with a representative of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), which is the relevant professional body for physiotherapy profession in the UK. That meeting took place on 29 November 2016, 2.30-4.30pm, at CSP's office. Mrs Birgit Mueller-Winkler, CSP's Professional Adviser International Development welcomed the new alternative approach.
4. Continued to identify the next countries and professions to be analysed once the process in for Australian, Greek and Irish qualifications is completed. We are currently undertaking historical records analysis for applicants who applied to HCPC between January 2014 and December 2016, reviewing the number of applications for each profession, country of origin of linked qualifications as well as the outcomes and success rates of each application. This activity will inform our decision to identify the next qualifications to be considered for inclusion in the comparable qualifications list.

The Executive proposes to provide a further a paper at the next ETC meeting in June, including the qualifications to be approved for inclusion in the comparable qualifications list. The finalised reports from the two independent reviewers and recommendations for the next stage of the project will also be included in June's paper.

Decision

This paper is for discussion; no specific decision is requested.

Resource implications

Previously outlined in the initial paper on the 26 November 2016.

Financial implications

Previously outlined in the initial paper on the 26 November 2016.

Date of paper

20 February 2017