

Education and Training Committee, 6 September 2018

Review of the introduction of the service user and carer involvement standard

Executive summary and recommendations

In 2013, the Education and Training Committee decided to introduce an education standard requiring service user and carer involvement in education and training programmes. The standard applied to all HCPC approved programmes from September 2014.

This report reviews the introduction of this standard, and the outcomes from assessments of programmes meeting this standard. It also provides a view of the success of our approach to introducing and assessing this standard, and considers learning points for future assessments of new standards.

Results from the analysis show that:

- two thirds of programmes visited and three quarters of programmes assessed via annual monitoring were able to meet this standard at the first time of asking;
- the vast majority of programmes that did not meet the standard first time were able to meet it via the continuation of the approval or monitoring process;
- a visit was triggered to a small number (0.3 percent of the total programmes assessed via annual monitoring) of programmes that did not meet this standard through the process;
- there were no trends to show particular professions or models of training struggled with evidencing their service user and carer involvement;
- there were several thematic issues with programmes meeting this standard, which are explored in detail in the report; and
- nine out of ten education providers were happy with the support we provided in helping them to meet this standard.
- we will continue to monitor how programmes meet this standard through changes being introduced to the annual monitoring audit process for the 2018-19 academic year.

Decision

- The Committee is asked to discuss the paper. No decision is required.

Background information

- [Service user and carer involvement in education and training programmes – consultation responses and our decisions](#) – Education and Training Committee paper, 6 June 2013

Resource implications

- None

Financial implications

- None

Appendices

- Service user and carer involvement – reviewing operational activities relating to the introduction of the new standard (2014-17)

Date of paper

16 August 2018

Service user and carer involvement – reviewing operational activities relating to the introduction of the new standard (2014-17)

In 2013, the Education and Training Committee decided to introduce an education standard requiring service user and carer involvement in education and training programmes. The standard applied to all HCPC approved programmes from September 2014.

This report reviews the introduction of this standard, and the outcomes from assessments of programmes meeting this standard. It also provides a view of the success of our approach to introducing and assessing this standard, and considers learning points for future assessments of new standards. We used the following information to come to our conclusions:

- structured and unstructured data about our operational process outcomes relating to the standard; and
- feedback from education providers.

The data used in this report is correct as of 12 June 2018.

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Section 1: Introduction of the standard

Involvement of service users and carers in our quality assurance processes links to the Public Standards Authority's (PSA) standard of good regulation relating to education and training (standard 2), which requires that the "process for quality assuring education programmes... takes account of the views of [several groups, including] service users".

The standards of education and training guidance supported and encouraged education providers to involve service users and carers in their programmes, as part of showing us how they met specific standards (such as the standard requiring regular monitoring and evaluation of programmes). However, service user and carer involvement was not a requirement of the standards themselves. Therefore, it was possible to approve programmes, which did not involve service users and carers at all.

In 2012, we sought out the views of stakeholders on a proposal to amend our standards of education and training (SETs) and supporting guidance to require service user and carer involvement in approved programmes. From the responses¹, there was widespread agreement for a standard to be introduced. In particular, the following points were made:

- Involvement was commonly referred to as a part of good practice in delivering education and training.
- Involvement is consistent with a partnership between service users and carers and professionals, and is consistent with meeting service user and carer needs and expectations.
- Involvement increases the accountability of programmes to those who receive services from learners once they are qualified.

3 Programme management and resources

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme

On 1 September 2014, we introduced the above standard. We assessed whether programmes met this new standard as follows:

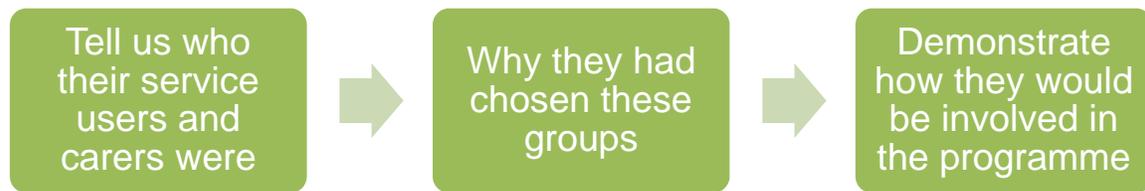
- For new programmes, we assessed whether this standard was met alongside all other standards at approval visits. In order to help us assess whether this standard was met, we introduced a meeting with service users and carers into our approval visit agenda.
- For existing programmes, we assessed whether this standard was met via our annual monitoring process in either the 2014–15 or the 2015–16 academic year. In order to help us assess whether this standard was met, we required education providers to specifically address how they met this standard for the first time.

We considered that it would not be difficult for programmes to meet this standard. Research conducted before the introduction of the standard² showed that programmes usually involved service users and carers in some way. As with our other standards, the

¹ Consultation on service user involvement in education and training programmes approved by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/closed/index.asp?id=150

² Service user involvement in the design and delivery of education and training programmes leading to registration with the Health Professions Council www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/research/index.asp?id=550

standard was set up so it could be met in different ways by different programmes. Through our evidence requests, we asked education providers to:



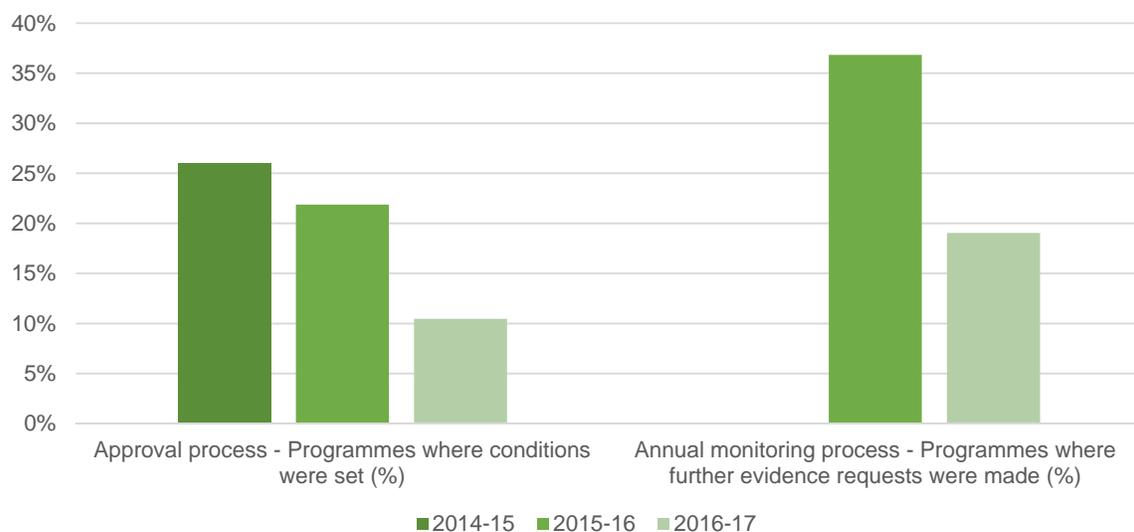
Across the last three academic years, around two thirds of visited programmes, and around three quarters of programmes assessed via annual monitoring, met the standard at the first time of asking.

Section 2: Thematic analysis

In this section we have undertaken analysis of issues that education provider faced when meeting this standard.

Across the three academic years where we assessed this standard, we saw a steady decrease in programmes experiencing issues with meeting the standard. This reduction was likely due to education providers better understanding our requirements as time went on, due to the guidance and materials that we supplied.

Programmes that did not meet the standard at the first time of asking, by process and academic year



Analyses of the data identified three key themes with programmes not meeting the standard, which are explored in the sections below.



Theme 1: No formal involvement

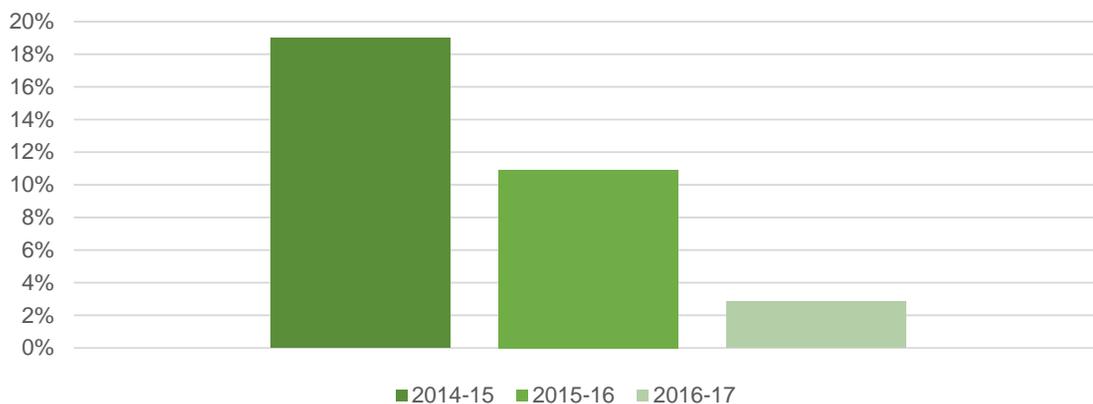
The most prevalent issue with programmes meeting the standard was formalising current involvement of service users and carers, and formalising involvement as the programme developed. For the approval process, more than half of the conditions set relating to service users and carers related to this issue. An example of a condition in this area is provided below:

Condition: The education provider must submit further evidence regarding the plans for continued service user and carer involvement within the programme.

In assessing these conditions, the common subtheme was a lack of policies and procedures in place for the involvement of service users and carers. Often, plans for continuing involvement were yet to be finalised. As such, the visitors required evidence of a formal policy or process that would ensure service users and carers would be involved in the programme on an ongoing basis.

We saw a marked improvement in providers' understanding of how to meet the standard, following us running a series of seminars focused on how to meet this standard, and us publishing online guidance. This was also supported by the feedback from education providers (via the education provider survey) with around 80 per cent of respondents indicating that it was either 'very easy' or 'easy' for them to collate the evidence to meet the SU&C standard.

Percentage of programmes where conditions were set for no formal involvement, by academic year



When assessing if existing programmes met this standard via annual monitoring, this became less of a prevalent issue. Often, education providers had either a strategy in place, or a school wide policy which covered this area.

Theme 2: Support and / or training

The second most common issue relating to service user and carer involvement was a lack of support for service users and carers. Often, this meant that there was little evidence of how service users and carers would be prepared, supported and trained in their role, specific to the programme. Around 1 in 10 of the conditions set for this standard related to this issue.

In assessing the reasoning given for all conditions relating to service users and carers, more than half also noted that visitors required further information about how service users and carers are supported in their role. So although often this issue was not mentioned in conditions themselves, it was an issue that visitors wanted to pick up with providers, as an interlinked concern. The following anonymised example of a condition and reasoning demonstrates this point:

Condition: The education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how services users and carers are involved in the programme.

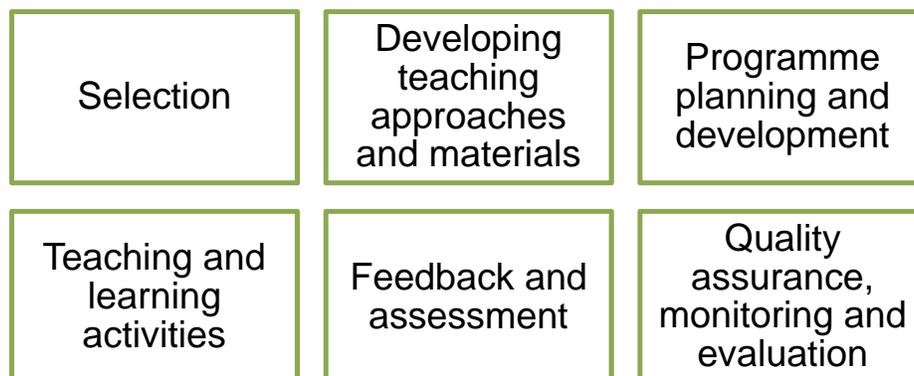
Reason: For this standard, the visitors were directed to the education provider's service user and carer document, which defined the services users and carers of the education provider. The visitors did not consider these individuals as service users and carers, as they use the services of the education provider rather than of registered professionals. During the meeting with the programme team, it was explained that there were plans to involve service users and carers in the interview process for the programme and send learners to national conferences to meet with service users and carers. The visitors note that this involvement is more appropriate, however could not determine how this would be implemented and how the service users would be recruited, supported and trained for their involvement on the programme. Therefore, the education provider is required to provide further evidence to demonstrate how services users and carers are involved in the programme.

In annual monitoring, requiring further evidence for the support and training offered to service users and carers was also a reoccurring theme with around 70 per cent of issues at least partially relating to this area in across the two years.

Theme 3: Clarification of the type(s) of involvement

The third most common theme was a lack of clarity in which areas of the programme service users and carers were involved, with 9 per cent of programmes having conditions set in this area across the three years. In annual monitoring more than 50 per cent of the further evidence requests related to this theme.

Although we are not prescriptive with the areas of programmes that service users and carers must be involved in, we suggest that education providers could involve service users and carers in some of all of the following:



Often, education providers noted where service users and carers might be involved, but were either not specific about their role in these areas, or did not consider why they were involving service users and carers in these areas.

For example, if an education provider noted that they would involve service users and carers in their admission process, they might not have:

- specified what role individuals would play in this area (for example, on the interview panel, patient voice in a group exercise, etc); and / or
- demonstrated why this involvement positively contributed to this area of the programme.

On the latter point, the guidance for this standard notes that service user and carer involvement must not be tokenistic, and therefore we sought to understand the positive impact that the education provider was aiming for when involving service users and carers. Without this impact, service users and carers were not truly involved in the programme.

Issue noted in this area were often not found in isolation. Usually, when we set conditions requiring clarification of the type of service user and carer involvement, we also found that no formal arrangements were in place (*theme 1*) and as such, there often was no training or support (*theme 2*) available.

Section 3: Profession specific trends

No professions stood out as having a particular issue with meeting this standard. The proportion of conditions set for particular professions were relatively consistent with the proportion of programmes visited for that profession.

Through the consultation, stakeholders noted that professions that were not traditionally patient facing (for example biomedical scientists and clinical scientists) may struggle to meet this standard. This was not a finding of our analysis. Programmes from these professions were equally able to meet this standard as programmes from other professions.

That there are no notable profession specific trends demonstrates the flexibility with which this standard can be interpreted by education providers. This allows us to ensure that service users and carers are being involved appropriately to the programme and profession.

Section 4: Programmes where further scrutiny was required

The majority of approved programmes met our requirements through our annual monitoring process. However, across the two years, there were three approved programmes assessed via annual monitoring where we decided to visit to consider whether our standards continued to be met. These visits were triggered, at least in part, by visitors being unable to make a judgment that the standard was met via the annual monitoring process. This is a small number of programmes, considering 913 programmes went through the annual monitoring process in the two years.

We visited two programmes solely because they were unable to meet the service user and carer standard via annual monitoring. At these visits, we were able to review all areas of the programmes, and in both cases ended up setting conditions across several standards.

For the other programme, there were also several other issues flagged through the annual monitoring process in addition to the service user and carer standard. At the visit, conditions were set across several standards.

Via annual monitoring, we normally review whether programmes continue to meet standards. When needing to meet a standard for the first time, the vast majority of education providers were able to understand our requirements and demonstrate how they met the standard through the normal process. Not meeting the service user and carer standard via annual monitoring was a potential indicator that there were wider issues with programmes. We were then able to intervene and assess both the trigger issue (that the education provider had not demonstrated how they met the service user and carer standard), and any wider issues that presented themselves through the process.

Section 5: Education provider perceptions

Broadly speaking, education providers felt supported with implementing the service user and carer standard. Nine out of ten respondents to our education provider survey considered that we could not have done anything differently to help them meet the standard. We have considered suggestions from the survey in the recommendations section of this report.

Section 6: Thinking towards the future

From the outcomes of this review, we can take some confidence around our approach to two pieces of upcoming work.

Expanding the evidence base for annual monitoring

From the 2018-19 academic year onwards, all approved programmes will need to evidence how their service user & carer involvement continues to remain effective, and how it continues to be reviewed and developed³. The Committee took the decision to introduce this new requirement to ensure there were mechanisms in place to understand how our standards continue to be met in this area in the future. These requirements coincide with further evidence being gathered around the management of practice-based learning.

Specifically, education providers will be required to provide the following information in their next audit submission regarding service user and carer involvement:

³ HCPC website: Changes to annual monitoring audit requirements - <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/education/processes/changestoam/>

- Information regarding where on the programme service user and carer involvement has taken place and its effectiveness
- Feedback from stakeholders regarding service user and carer involvement, areas for further development and any information regarding action plans

These new requirements should enable our visitors to understand how the new standard continues to be met, and importantly, how programmes and different professions and areas of practice continue to develop their approaches to including service users and carers in the delivery of their programmes. Further analysis around this new requirement, and other changes being introduced through the annual monitoring process will be reviewed in the future.

Section 7: Conclusion

The vast majority of education providers were about to meet the service user and carer standard with relative ease through our processes, as demonstrated through analysis of the data we hold, and from feedback from education providers. The data also showed a decline in the number of issues found by our visitors over the implementation period for this standard. This shows that our requirements became better understood, and that the materials we developed, and continued to update and promote, had a positive impact on education providers' understanding of this standard.

We can now state that this standard is met by all approved programmes, and that they involve service users and carers in a way that is appropriate to the programme and profession.