

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Education and Training Committee held in public on:

Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026

Time: 10am

Venue: Videoconference (Microsoft Teams)

Members: Katie Thirlaway (Chair)
Rebekah Eglinton
Helen Gough
Carl Stychin
Helen White

Apologies: None

In attendance:

Claire Amor, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs
Francesca Bramley, Governance Manager
Matthew Clayton (for item 12)
Georgia Cross, Governance Officer
Thalia Lau, Student Representative
Rachael Gledhill, Head of Policy and Standards
Richard Houghton, Head of Registration
Jamie Hunt, Head of Education
Nicole Small, Operational Manager – Quality and Assurance Training
Andrew Smith, Executive Director of Education, Registration & Regulatory Standards and Deputy Chief Executive
Stephanie Tempest, Clinical Fellow

1 Welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The chair welcomed those present to the meeting The Chair formally welcomed the Student Representative, Thalia Lau, who was attending her first Committee meeting.
- 1.2 The Committee noted that the public session of the meeting would be recorded and transcribed to support minute-taking.

2 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

3 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

4 Declaration of members' interests in relation to agenda items

- 4.1 No interests were declared.

5 Minutes of the Education and Training Committee meeting held in public on 6 November 2025

- 5.1 The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of its meeting held in public on 6 November 2025.

6 Minutes of the Education and Training Panel meeting held in public on 28 November 2025 and 30 January 2026

- 6.1 The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of its meetings held in public on 28 November 2025 and 30 January 2026.

7 Matters arising

- 7.1 The Committee noted the matters arising from its previous meetings and agreed the proposed actions for closure.

8 Registration Performance Report

- 8.1 The Head of Registration presented the report, confirming strong overall performance across the Registration functions.
- 8.2 The following areas were highlighted:

- Overall registration service performance remained strong, with UK applications being processed within a median time of one to two working days throughout the reporting period.
- The international registration team had been scaled down, following a period of increased staffing on fixed-term contracts to manage higher application volumes. A core team was now in place based on forecast activity for the coming year and there would be a flexible response to any future changes in demand. The recruitment portal and talent network would enable those interested in future roles to remain engaged with the HCPC.
- The registration appeals KPI had not been met during the reporting period. A range of process improvements had been introduced from February 2026, including changes to the way appeals days were scheduled and run and improvements to case management. Responsibility for scheduling and running appeals days has transferred to the Tribunal Services team and the intention was to increase capacity to around six to eight appeal hearing days per month, subject to monitoring and the availability of panel chairs.
- The work of the HCPC Registration Quality Assurance Team (RQAT) continued, with early audit findings helping to establish a baseline for assessing decision-making quality across the function, including tests of competence. The RQAT worked closely with the Assurance and Compliance team to maintain a consistent approach to quality assurance.
- The new contact centre telephony platform had gone live in November 2025, with no disruption to service. Timely responses to telephone and email enquiries had been maintained.

8.3 A noticeable number of appeals had not met the threshold for acceptance, and the Committee noted that AI-generated submissions may be contributing to an increase in lower-quality or formulaic content across appeals and complaints. This trend would continue to be monitored.

8.4 The Committee noted that performance against the appeals KPI was influenced by older cases that had been adjourned, cancelled or rearranged. The Committee received assurance that a deep dive into appeals was underway to explore this further.

8.5 In response to a question, the Head of Registration confirmed that all upheld appeals during the reporting period involved additional information being provided as part of the appeal or on the day of the hearing, providing assurance on the quality of the initial decision-making.

QA team looking at panels - and had identified themes such as drafting quality, consistency of approach and areas where panels may benefit from further support.

9 Education Performance Report

- 9.1 The Head of Education presented the performance report.
- 9.2 Performance across five KPIs remained stable and the number of open assessments had reduced significantly, improving workload manageability and supporting future timeliness. The team continued to undertake proactive assessments to confirm that providers continue to meet the standards, with several focused review assessments linked to education provider performance data having been completed and relevant cases closed.
- 9.3 The reduction in the spot-check quality KPI was attributed to incomplete recording of engagement with professional bodies where formal information-sharing mechanisms exist, rather than a lack of engagement itself. A structured recording mechanism has now been implemented through the case management system, and improvement is expected in future reporting cycles.
- 9.4 Workforce pressures in specific professions including psychology, paramedics and physiotherapy were discussed, particularly mismatches between learner numbers and employment opportunities. While workforce planning was not within the HCPC's remit, these pressures had implications for programme sustainability and practice-based learning capacity. The executive continued to work with NHS England and professional bodies to gather intelligence and support informed regulatory decision-making.
- 9.5 Work on the HCPC data hub had continued, with the aim of presenting an end-to-end view of the professional lifecycle, including programme capacity, learner numbers, transition to the register, demographic data and early-career attrition.
- 9.6 The Committee noted that increased granularity, for example separating data for diagnostic and therapeutic radiography where the data allowed, would support future insights and decision-making.

Action: The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards would liaise with the Head of Insight and Analytics to ensure that the data hub enabled access to pipeline data broken down into specific modalities within individual professions where possible.

10 Update to Education partner allocation framework.

- 10.1 The Head of Education introduced a paper proposing updates to the Education partner allocation framework for approval assessments.

- 10.2 The proposals were intended to enable more effective use of all three education partner roles. The main change proposed was to deploy visitors for stage 2 (programme-level) approval assessments where they had the required skills and experience, with lead visitors focusing on institution-level issues that cut across programmes. These proposals would not have any financial implications. A small number of minor editorial changes to the framework were also proposed.
- 10.3 The Committee agreed that the proposals were proportionate, would promote the effective use of partner capacity.
- 10.4 The Committee approved the updated Education partner allocation framework, for use for new approval assessments from April 2026.

11 Education key performance indicator (KPI) review

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper setting out proposed revisions to Education KPIs and reporting arrangements.
- 11.2 The current KPIs had been introduced in September 2021 alongside the education quality assurance model and had only been minorly adjusted since. The review drew on four years' experience of operating the model, including a greater understanding of what was normal and achievable, particularly in view of increasing case complexity. In the sample report provided, some KPIs were showing red, even with the revised thresholds. These targets were nonetheless considered achievable.
- 11.3 The proposed KPIs were designed to provide a clearer understanding of team performance against core regulatory functions (approval and monitoring) and to give better coverage of the four pillars of the education quality assurance model.
- 11.4 Many of the detailed KPIs would be used by the Education team and ELT for internal performance management, with a subset reported to the Committee. No changes to Council-level KPIs were proposed at this stage, given the planned wider organisational review to align KPIs with the new corporate strategy.
- 11.5 The Committee discussed the balance between achievability and stretch and agreed that the proposed KPIs struck an appropriate balance: they were more realistic but remained stretching and aligned with stakeholder expectations.
- 11.6 The Committee recognised that the implementation of new KPIs would create a break in trend data for year-on-year comparison, but accepted that this was justified by the need for a more mature, well-calibrated framework.
- 11.7 The Committee welcomed the proposal to bring an annual supplementary paper reflecting on overall performance of the education quality assurance model, including delivery against its four pillars, alongside the regular case-level performance reports.

- 11.8 The Committee discussed how the ongoing review of the standards of education and training (SETs) might intersect with Education KPI reporting. While any changes to the SETs were not expected to result in further changes to the Education KPIs themselves, it would be important for the Committee to receive clear reporting on sector implementation of the revised SETs.

Action: The Head of Education would consider how an evaluation of education provider's performance against the revised SETs could be incorporated into future Education annual reports.

- 11.9 The Committee approved the revised education KPI framework and associated reporting approach subject to the following amendments:

- clarifying that partner-led stage 1 assessments normally related to new education providers; and
- explicitly describing the data sources within scope and the associated reference periods for the KPI on data used in assessments.

Action: The Committee's feedback would be incorporated into the final Education KPIs prior to finalisation.

12 Scope of practice and delegation update – resource development

- 12.1 The Committee received an update on the NHS England-commissioned project on scope of practice, delegation and supervision, with a focus on advanced levels of practice.
- 12.2 The Committee noted that the project was due to conclude at the end of March 2026, with pre-designed versions of resources on track and most being published by this time. A wide range of multi-purpose and multi-format resources had been developed. This included an update that had been jointly produced with the General Osteopathic Council on advanced levels of practice. The HCPC had engaged with Chief Allied Health Professions Officers and their deputies the Centre for Advancing Practice, professional bodies and colleagues in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 12.3 The Committee welcomed the strong emphasis on communications and ongoing promotion, recognising the risk that valuable resources can be under-used if not actively highlighted over time.
- 12.4 The Committee noted the plans to align promotion with wider events such as Advanced Practice Week, and encouraged continued focus on reaching managers and leaders, including those from professions not always described as AHPs but who manage AHPs, ensuring coverage of non-NHS settings, and supporting use of the materials in both pre-registration and post-registration education, including via the reflective tools and infographics.
- 12.5 The Committee expressed its thanks for the quality and breadth of the work and recorded its appreciation to the Clinical Fellow for her contribution to the project and to the Committee's work more broadly.

13 Review of committee effectiveness

13.1 The Committee considered the annual review of its effectiveness, noting that nine survey responses had been received, which was an increase on the previous year.

13.2 The Committee welcomed the overall positive feedback and discussed the suggestions for further improvement, which centred on:

- time for reflection on discussions and decisions, particularly following complex or sensitive items;
- time to consider wider strategic issues and horizon scanning, including engagement with employers and the education provider sector;
- the use of deep dives into performance report themes where these would add value; and
- the provision of focused training for new members on reading papers strategically to support scrutiny and constructive challenge.

13.3 In discussion, the Committee agreed that deep dives were most effective when they arose in response to specific issues or risks, rather than as a standing agenda item, and noted that deep dives 'as required' were included on the forward plan as a prompt.

13.4 The Committee supported the following:

- reinstating an annual Committee workshop, potentially held in person and combining strategic discussion, horizon scanning and training elements;
- considering occasional in-person meetings, recognising that while virtual meetings supported efficiency, they were often more transactional;
- ring-fencing time for reflection/debrief in private session agendas where significant or difficult decisions were anticipated.

Action: The Committee Chair and the Governance Manager would develop a proposal to address the key review recommendations for consideration at the next Committee meeting in June 2026.

14 Review of standing orders

14.1 The Committee reviewed its standing orders. No changes were proposed and the Committee agreed that no changes to the standing orders were required.

15 Committee forward plan

15.1 The Committee noted the forward plan.

16 Resolution to move the meeting to private session

16.1 The Committee resolved that the remainder of the meeting would be held in private, because the matters being discussed related to matters which, in the opinion of the Chair, were confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or Council's functions.

16.2 The meeting was briefly adjourned.

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