

***Standards of Education and Training review meeting, 22
November 2007: Summary of decisions and issues from 13/09/07***

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The attached paper sets out some of the principles behind the Standards of Education and Training (SETs) and summarises the issues that arose from the review meeting on the 13 September 2007.

Decision

This paper is for information.

Background information

None

Resource implications

N/A

Financial implications

N/A

Appendices

None

Date of paper

8 November 2007

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Introduction

The Health Professions Order says that we must set our standards to protect the public, and that we must set standards which are necessary for safe and effective practice. This is why our standards are set at a 'threshold' level (the minimum standard that must be met before we can allow entry onto the register).

The Standards of Education and Training (SETs) were published in 2004. They are applicable to education providers and the programmes that they run for professions currently regulated and those which may be regulated in the future.

They have been used by education providers and visitors for 3 years to assess whether a graduate from an educational programme will meet the Standards of Proficiency.

A professional liaison group (PLG) has been set up to review the SETs and examine, discuss and agree to any alterations to the SETs or guidance that the group feel are required.

Aims

The work plan sets out the aims of the review, to ensure that the SETs:

- assist in HPC's primary role to protect the public;
- are fit for purpose;
- are suitably flexible so that they are relevant to the education and training of all 13 professions;
- are appropriate for the requirements of education and training;
- are easily understood by education providers and all other relevant stakeholders; and
- are applicable UK wide.

About the meeting on 13 September 2007

The first meeting of the PLG took place on the 13 September 2007. It was split into two sessions. In the morning session, the group went through each SET individually discussing the written submissions that had been received against each SET. The written submissions came from a number of sources including details retained from the 2006 consultation on the SETs guidance.

At the afternoon session, there was representation from the professional bodies representing the professions that we register. The attendees were split into 5 groups to discuss an individual SET in-depth and then a wider group discussion was conducted at the end. The following paper sets out the aims of the review

and summarises the discussion and decisions made at the 13 September 2007 meeting.

Summary of 13 September 2007 issues and decisions

The group felt it was important to review both the wording and layout of the standards as well as the guidance given for the standards. The following summary sets out the decisions and future alterations that are to be made to the SETs and guidance. It is structured to go through each SET individually and in numerical order.

The details of any changes to specific SETs, or to the guidance for specific SETs, is set out in detail in the document 'Issues to consider and suggested changes to the SETs'.

SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register

The PLG agreed that the inclusion of 'normally' in SET 1 was an essential safeguard against the unlawful fettering of the Council's discretion as, if a programme which was provided in a form other than one of the awards set out in SET 1 was nonetheless capable of delivering the Standards of Proficiency and the remaining SETs, the Council could not refuse to approve it solely on the basis of the form of award.

The PLG also felt that 1.1.4 and 1.1.5 should be rearranged so that the professions were listed alphabetically. 1.1.5 will also be reworded, the words 'in operating department practice' will be removed so that the level of award is given in line with the lay out for all other awards in the SET.

It was agreed that the meaning of 'or equivalent' in SET 1.1.1 should be clarified in the guidance along with a more detailed explanation on the qualification levels required.

SET 2: Programme admissions

The PLG felt that the guidance on SET 2 should give clear advice on the HPC's health and character requirements and be linked to the HPC's guidance on those issues. It was decided that clearer guidance was also required for SETs 2.1, 2.2.1 and 2.2.5.

SET 3: Programme management and resource standards

The PLG felt that a new SET was required that would make it necessary for health and character checks to be maintained during the course. They also believed that the standards should be regrouped so that they were in an order that separated the SETs in to resources or programming.

Alterations were suggested to SETs 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.8, 3.10, and 3.13 along with the guidance to 3.1, 3.6, 3.9 and 3.11. The details for these alterations are set out in detail in the suggested changes paper.

SET 4: Curriculum standards

A new standard will be added to require the students to be aware of the HPC's Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

The group suggested alterations be made to SETs 4.2, 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6 along with alterations to the guidance for 4.4 and 4.7. The details for these alterations are set out in detail in the suggested changes paper.

SET 5: Practice placements standards

The PLG felt that further detail was required for the review of this SET and stated that the guidance should be strengthened to indicate that there may be considerable variation in the duration of placements for different professions. They also stated that the guidance should state that there is also a requirement for evidence to be provided of the adequate and appropriate provision of placements.

The PLG suggested alterations be made to SETs 5.3.2, 5.7 and 5.13 as well as combining SETs 5.8.1 and 5.8.3. There should also be alterations to the guidance for 5.1, 5.6, 5.8.2, 5.9 and 5.12. The details for these alterations are set out in detail in the suggested changes paper.

SET 6: Assessment standards

The PLG believed that these SETs should be structured more clearly to separate requirements for assessment of students and the requirements for assessment regulations. They also felt that it should be possible to combine Sets 6.1, 6.2 and 6.6 into one SET.

Alterations should be made to SETs 6.4 and 6.7.2 along with the guidance to 6.3 and 6.5. The details for these alterations are set out in detail in the suggested changes paper.