
Professional Liaison Group for the review of the standards of education and training, 11 September 2015

Progress of the review and emerging themes

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

In September 2014, the Education and Training Committee (ETC) agreed the scope, process and timeline for a periodic review of the standards of education and training (SETs) and accompanying guidance.

During the first phase of the review, the Executive has undertaken a range of research and engagement activities to gather feedback views from stakeholders, including education providers, professional bodies, service users and carers, HCPC Education Department employees and visitors.

This paper provides information on the activities undertaken to date and the emerging themes which are proposed for consideration by the PLG.

Decision

The PLG is invited to discuss this paper.

Background information

- Education and Training Committee, 11 September 2014. Review of the standards of education and training.
<http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004814Enc02-Reviewofthestandardsofeducationandtraining.pdf>

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

None

Date of paper

1 September 2015

Progress of the review and emerging themes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We aim to carry out periodic reviews of all our standards approximately every five years. This is to ensure that they remain fit for purpose; are well understood by our stakeholders including registrants, service users and carers, education providers and the public; and take account of change, including the regulation of new professions and changes in practice, legislation, technology, guidelines and wider society.
- 1.2 The standards of education and training (SETs) were last reviewed starting in 2007, and the current standards came into effect in July 2009.
- 1.3 This paper provides background information on the current review of the SETs, the activities undertaken to date, and the emerging themes which are proposed for consideration by the Professional Liaison Group (PLG).

2. Background to the review

- 2.1 In September 2014, the Education and Training Committee (ETC) agreed the scope, content, process and timeline for a periodic review of the SETs and accompanying guidance, which commenced in late 2014.¹
- 2.2 It was agreed for the review to be carried out in three phases:
 - 1) Research and stakeholder engagement – September 2014 to October 2015
 - 2) Professional Liaison Group (PLG) – September 2015 to March 2016
 - 3) Public consultation – September to November 2016
- 2.3 The review is planned to finish in 2017, with the new standards applicable to education and training programmes from the 2017-2018 academic year.

3. Stakeholder engagement activities

- 3.1 During the first phase of the SETs review, the Executive has undertaken a range of activities aimed at gathering views from a number stakeholder groups, including education providers, students, service users and carers,

¹ Education and Training Committee, 11 September 2014. Review of the standards of education and training. <http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004814Enc02-Reviewofthestandardsofeducationandtraining.pdf>

HCPC Education Department employees and visitors. Activities completed to date are outlined below:

- An Education Stakeholder Event held in April 2014 was attended by current and former ETC members, education providers and professional bodies. This provided an opportunity for preliminary discussion and feedback from stakeholders about what areas the SETs review should consider.²
- A meeting of the Allied Health Professions Federation Education Leads (AHPEL) in October 2014 included a session on the SETs review and broad discussion on how the standards could be amended or strengthened. Representatives from eight professional bodies were in attendance.
- The Policy Manager attended the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Allied Health Professions Advisory Group meeting in December 2014 to give a brief presentation about the role of the SETs and plans for the review. Small group discussions were held based on key themes.
- HCPC Visitor refresher training days in October, November and December 2014 and February 2015 (five in total) included a session on the SETs review. Members of the Policy and Standards Department attended to facilitate small group discussions on key themes relating to the SETs.
- Two dedicated service user and carer workshops were held, one at Sheffield Hallam University (April 2015) and one at St George's University of London (June 2015). Attendees included service users and carers who were involved in the design or delivery of programmes at these universities, as well as academic staff. The Policy Manager helped to facilitate 'world café' style discussion sessions, aimed at gathering feedback on service users' and carers' expectations of education for health and social care professionals.
- A half-day off-site workshop in May 2015, attended by members of the Education and Policy and Standards departments, focused on the utility, effectiveness and clarity of the SETs and guidance in the context of the approval and monitoring process. Attendees discussed issues such as ownership, applicability and language and terminology in the SETs and guidance.
- The annual Council of Deans Summit, held in May 2015, included two workshops on the SETs review, aimed at gathering feedback from deans of healthcare faculties. The Director of Policy and Standards and the Policy Manager gave presentations on the progress of the review and conducted discussion sessions around key themes.
- The Director of Education and the Policy Manager attended a meeting of the Academic Registrars Council in June 2015 to engage with senior managers responsible for academic administration at universities and

² This event was strictly speaking outside of the timeframe of the review but played a significant part in informing the scope and content of the review.

higher education institutions. Discussions focused on clarity and understanding of the SETs and guidance.

- In July 2015, the Director of Education led discussions at a workshop organised by the Higher Education Academy on practice education in Wales. These included consideration of what educators and professionals could do to improve practice education.
- 3.2 Feedback gathered through these activities has been used to draw out the themes listed in section 5. Further detail on the issues discussed in relation to some of these themes will be presented to the PLG in subsequent papers.
- 3.3 The following stakeholder engagement activities are planned to take place alongside the PLG:
- Following on from the April 2014 event, an Education Stakeholder Event is planned for October 2015. This will be an opportunity to update stakeholders on the progress of the review and facilitate more targeted discussions based on the outcome of research.
 - A member of the Policy and Standards Department will attend the Joint Universities Council Social Work Education Committee's (JUC SWEC) next meeting, which is currently planned for October 2015, to gather feedback from social work education stakeholders on the outcomes of the review to date.
 - The Education Department holds seminars for education providers each autumn. The 2015 seminars will focus on themes arising from the review.

4. Commissioned research

- 4.1 Two large-scale pieces of research have been commissioned from external researchers as part of the review. They are outlined below:
- Researchers at Keele University have been commissioned to undertake research into the extent and nature of interprofessional education (IPE) in the education and training programmes approved by the HCPC. A key aim of the research is to inform the text of a possible new standard (and supporting guidance) which may require IPE in approved programmes in the future. The researchers will present their findings at the Education Stakeholder Event in October 2015.
 - A research team at the joint Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education of Kingston University and St George's University of London has been commissioned to examine the role and effectiveness of the SETs in ensuring preparation for practice among newly qualified registrants across the HCPC-regulated professions. The final report is expected at the end of October 2015.
- 4.2 These research topics are included as themes for consideration by the PLG; findings from the research will be supplemented by feedback from stakeholders on related issues to inform the group's discussions.

5. Themes

- 5.1 The topics below have been identified as key themes for consideration by the PLG, given their prevalence in feedback from stakeholders.
- 5.2 Overall, the comments received to date through stakeholder engagement activities have not indicated that there are significant issues with the existing SETs, in terms of the reasonableness of expectations or significant risks which are not sufficiently addressed. For the most part, it appears that minor amendments to wording and terminology are needed rather than a large-scale overhaul of the standards. More significant amendment may be called for in a small number of cases.

➤ Currency of the standards

- 5.3 The SETs and accompanying guidance were last reviewed and published in 2009. Since that time, the landscape of education providers has changed significantly and the HCPC has taken on regulation of three new professions. Stakeholder feedback indicates that some amendment is needed to ensure the standards remain current and ‘future proofed’.

➤ Link to the SCPE

- 5.4 Stakeholders have been overwhelmingly in support of strengthening the link between the SETs and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE).

➤ Practice placements

- 5.5 SET 5 on practice placements was a very frequent topic of discussion among stakeholders. Concerns include the ability of education providers to secure appropriate placements, lack of clarity around ownership of placements, and the need for adequate training for practice placement educators, among other issues. Feedback indicates that additional guidance may be needed in this area.

➤ Interprofessional education

- 5.6 As stated above, a research project on IPE in HCPC-approved programmes has been commissioned from Keele University. Stakeholder feedback has been overwhelmingly in favour of introducing a positive requirement for IPE in the SETs. However some concern remains about the ability of programmes in some professions to implement such a requirement.

➤ Preparation for practice

- 5.7 As stated above, researchers at Kingston University and St George’s University of London have undertaken research to examine the role of the SETs in ensuring that newly qualified professionals are prepared and fit to

practise. Stakeholders have discussed the difference between preparation for practice and readiness for employment.

➤ **Student involvement and feedback**

- 5.8 A number of stakeholders have recommended that the standards include a requirement to involve students in programme management and actively seek feedback from students as a means of monitoring and evaluation.

➤ **Values and values-based recruitment**

- 5.9 All NHS-commissioned healthcare education programmes in England must operate some form of values-based recruitment (VBR). Many stakeholders support inclusion of a requirement in the SETs for consideration and assessment of an applicant's values at the point of admissions. Discussions have also focused on the inclusion of values in teaching and assessment.

➤ **Format and language in the standards**

- 5.10 We have received a number of comments about the format of the standards. Stakeholders have noted the large number of individual standards (57), and some have recommended that the document could be made more concise. Other feedback has highlighted issues around the clarity of language in the standards.

➤ **Format and content of the guidance**

- 5.11 Similarly, stakeholders have commented on the format of the guidance document. There have been varying opinions regarding the types and amount of information which should be included.

6. Feedback on SET 1

- 6.1 During discussions with stakeholders in the first phase of the review, we received quite a few comments about standard 1 in the SETs, on the level of qualification for entry to the Register (known as 'SET 1'). Many have expressed support for raising the expected level of qualification for certain professions, in particular paramedics.
- 6.2 This issue is the subject of ongoing discussion by the ETC and, as agreed by the Committee, is considered 'out of scope' for this review.

7. PLG considerations

- 7.1 The PLG is invited to discuss the progress of stakeholder engagement and research activities to date, as well as the proposed themes for discussion by the group.
- 7.2 The PLG may wish to consider whether there are any other themes or topics which require formal discussion in this forum.