Revised standards of education and training (SETs) – *key considerations for education providers*

6 October 2026



Introduction

This document is for education providers when considering the changes they may need to make to meet our revised standards of education and training (SETs). All education providers and programmes must meet the revised SETs from September 2027. It sets out the additional requirements within our revised SETs, when compared to the existing version of the SETs.

All education providers will need to undertake a compliance exercise during one of the three academic years from 2027-28. Education providers and programmes must meet the revised SETs from September 2027, regardless of when their compliance assessment is.

How you should use this document

The areas noted through this document will form the basis of our compliance assessments. We recognise that you may already meet some of these requirements and may not need to make changes to address the areas in this document. However, we will assess compliance against all new and revised requirements.

Therefore, we suggest that you consider these areas in a **structured and central way across your institution**, including whether you need to make changes to comply with the revised SETs. We also suggest that you keep records of your internal assessment, decision-making, and the changes you make to be ready for the effective date of September 2027. You can then use your records as a basis for your compliance assessment submission.

We recommend that you read this document in conjunction with the revised SETs guidance, to ensure you understand the purpose and requirements of each standard, and the terms within the standards themselves.

Contents

Introduction *2*

How you should use this document **2**

Contents *3*

Additional requirements for standards that have been changed *4*

Equality, diversity and inclusion (institution and programme levels) **5**

Monitoring, evaluation, enhancement and feedback (institution level) **6**

Safety, inclusivity, and support (institution level) **7**

Admissions mechanisms (institution and programme levels) **8**

Programme design, delivery and assessment (institution and programme levels) . **10**

Involvement of stakeholders (institution level) **12**

Partnerships and resourcing (programme level) **13**

New standards *14*

Institution level standards **14**

Programme level standards **14**

Further information *15*

Additional requirements for standards that have been changed

This section explains the additional requirements within our revised SETs that build on the requirements in the current SETs. We have written this section in a way that defines our additional requirements, so it is clear which areas you need to consider and work on to build on your current approaches (where needed). As you already meet the current SETs, you will not need to demonstrate every aspect of the revised SETs through our compliance exercise. Instead, you will only need to demonstrate how you meet the new or changed requirements.

Although there are new requirements in these standards, this does not necessarily mean you will need to introduce new activities or processes. You may already be meeting some of these requirements and be able to use existing evidence to demonstrate compliance.

We have grouped these additional requirements into a series of themes to simplify the work you will need to undertake when reviewing your alignment and making any changes needed.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (institution and programme levels)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How strategic underpinning for EDI is achieved through education provider strategies and policies
- How programmes are informed by strategic underpinning for EDI

Linked revised standards:

- 2.2 Principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion are embedded in strategies and policies in all settings, and these are meaningfully implemented, monitored, and reviewed to support good quality experiences and outcomes for all learners and others involved in programmes (institution level)
- 7.2 The programme is informed by principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and relevant strategies and policies are effectively implemented, monitored, and reviewed across the programme (programme level)

Existing standards have been replaced to move the focus from specifics for applicants and learners to a wider expectation that EDI is embedded across the organisation and its programmes. They now require that:

- Principles of EDI are embedded at both a strategic and operational level across all relevant policies and in all settings
- Programmes are informed by principles of EDI, building on revised SET 2.2, to ensure strategic intent is translated to operational impact through programmes.

Monitoring, evaluation, enhancement and feedback (institution level)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How you specifically consider the three concepts of quality, safety and fairness of provision in an ongoing way
- How provision is enhanced relating to quality, safety and fairness
- How you ensure that programmes are subject to effective external scrutiny
- How you consider and address feedback and complaints from any source
- How you respond effectively to complaints, feedback, and learner requests for academic appeals

Linked revised standards:

- 2.3 The quality, safety, and fairness of education and training provision is regularly monitored, evaluated, and enhanced across all settings (institution level)
- 6.2 There is effective external scrutiny of programmes including at least one appointed person who has the appropriate professional experience and qualifications relevant to the programme (institution level)
- 6.7 The education provider receives and responds effectively to complaints, feedback, and learner requests for academic appeals (institution level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- Strengthens the requirements by explicitly referencing ‘quality’, ‘safety’ and ‘fairness’
- The addition of ‘enhance’ creates a new requirement that quality, safety, and fairness is enhanced in all settings
- A new requirement for ‘effective external scrutiny’ of programmes, which must include (but is not limited to) at least one appointed person to contribute to this external scrutiny
- A new requirement recognising that feedback can be provided which may not be categorised as a complaint or academic appeal
- A new requirement recognising that complaints and feedback can be provided by any party
- Emphasis on responding effectively to complaints, feedback and learner requests for academic appeals

Safety, inclusivity, and support (institution level)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How you ensure practice-based learning environments are inclusive
- How you ensure non-practice-based learning environments (such as, but not limited to, the academic setting) are safe, inclusive and supportive
- How the conduct, character and health of learners is managed and, where required, addressed, considering the relationship between learners' conduct, character and health and service user safety
- How the safety of others involved in programmes (other learners, staff, and learners themselves) is considered when making decisions about the conduct, character and health of learners

Linked revised standards:

- 3.1 All learning environments are safe, inclusive and supportive for learners, service users, and others involved in programmes (institution level)
- 3.4 The ongoing conduct, character and health of learners is considered, managed and, where required, addressed by the education provider, to maintain the safety of service users, carers, and others involved in the programme (institution level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- Scope expanded to ensure safety, inclusivity and support apply to all learning environments, and to ‘others involved’ in programmes, in addition to learners and service users
- Inclusivity is more explicit as a requirement
- emphasis on the relationship between service user safety and the assessment of a learner’s conduct, character and health
- Requirements added that conduct, character and health of learners is 'managed and where required addressed'
- Linked the conduct, character and health of learners, including maintaining the safety of other learners, staff, and the affected learners themselves

Admissions mechanisms (institution and programme levels)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How admissions requirements are *set at the appropriate level* for:
  - Health, conduct, character, criminal conviction checks and English language proficiency, ensuring that learners can safely participate in programmes and meet our professional standards
  - The level and content of the programme
- How admissions processes are *fair*, specifically:
  - How requirements for health, conduct, character, criminal conviction checks and English language proficiency are applied fairly
  - How assessment of prior learning and experience is undertaken to support fair admissions decisions
  - That programme-level admissions requirements are applied fairly
- Where others from outside of the education provider are involved in admissions decision making, how they are enabled to contribute in line with your admissions processes and requirements
- How you ensure requirements for health, conduct, character, criminal conviction checks and English language proficiency are effective in ensuring that learners can safely participate in programmes and meet professional standards

Linked revised standards:

- 4.1 The admissions process is fair, transparent, and accessible, and enables the applicant, education provider, and others involved to make informed decisions about admissions to programmes (institution level)
- 4.2 Applicants' prior learning and experience is assessed to support fair admissions decisions across all entry routes (institution level)
- 4.3 There are fair, appropriate, and effective admissions requirements covering health, conduct, character, criminal conviction checks, and English language proficiency, to ensure learners can safely participate in programmes and meet professional standards (institution level)
- 7.5 The selection and entry criteria are appropriate to the level and content of the programme and are fairly applied in admission decisions (programme level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- Recognition that there may be multiple decision points, and these decisions may be taken or informed by different parties
- Embedded the concept of fairness, to make this more explicit as a requirement
- Strengthens requirements for recognising prior learning and experience, creating flexibility for different models of learning
- Improved clarity about selection and entry criteria by focusing on their appropriateness to the level and content of the programme
- Explicit on the outcome for admissions decisions, that learners must be able to safely participate in programmes and meet professional standards

Programme design, delivery and assessment (institution and programme levels)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How the role of the HCPC is communicated effectively to learners
- How requirements for progression and achievement are communicated to relevant parties, and monitored to ensure they are effective
- How you are aware of relevant external reference points, and which reference points you use to inform programme design, to ensure the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills, and knowledge base of current members of the profession
- The mechanisms you use to ensure the relevant external reference points are considered in the initial design and continued development of programmes
- How programme design was and continues to be informed by evidence and reflective practice
- How evidence and reflective practice supports the adoption and integration of appropriate methods and technologies

Linked revised standards:

- 5.2 The education provider effectively communicates the role of the HCPC to learners and ensures that learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme may lead to eligibility for admission to the Register (institution level)
- 5.4 Assessment requirements for progression and achievement across programmes are clearly set, communicated, and monitored (institution level)
- 8.7 Relevant external reference points are used to ensure the programme reflects the philosophy, core values, skills, and knowledge base of current members of the profession (programme level)
- 8.10 The programme design is informed by evidence and reflective practice, and supports adaptation and integration of appropriate methods and technologies (programme level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- Additional requirement for education providers to communicate the role of the HCPC to learners
- New requirements that assessment requirements are communicated and monitored
- Replaced ‘curriculum guidance’ with ‘external reference points’ which acknowledges the different reference points that may be reflected within programmes
- Made evidence-based design and reflective practice central to programme design, rather than focusing on these concepts primarily at learner level (where they remain embedded within the standards of proficiency and must be delivered and assessed through programmes)

Involvement of stakeholders (institution level)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How service users and carers are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of programmes
- How service user involvement contributes meaningfully to the quality, effectiveness, and relevance of programmes
- How learners are involved in the design and evaluation of programmes
- How learner involvement contributes meaningfully to the quality, effectiveness, and continuous improvement of programmes

Linked revised standards:

- 6.3 Service users and carers are actively and meaningfully involved in the design, delivery, and evaluation of programmes contributing to their quality, effectiveness and relevance to health and care practice (institution level)
- 6.6 Learners are actively and meaningfully involved in the design and evaluation of programmes, contributing to their quality, effectiveness, and continuous improvement (institution level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- More specific requirements for how service users and carers must be involved, specifying their meaningful role in design, delivery and evaluation
- More specific requirements for how learners must be involved, specifying their meaningful role in design and evaluation

Partnerships and resourcing (programme level)

Areas to focus on (will be assessed through compliance check):

- How you ensure formal partnership arrangements with all delivery partners (for example practice education providers, workforce organisations, and employers)
- How your partnership arrangements enable regular and effective collaboration and joint evaluation with delivery partners
- How your requirements and expectations for the appointment of staff in all settings mean they are qualified and experienced to safely and effectively deliver and support the programme, as relevant to their role (which may be in delivering teaching and learning, support services, management and leadership, and other areas)

Linked revised standards:

- 9.1 There are formal partnerships between the education provider and their delivery partners, that involve regular and effective collaboration and joint evaluation, which ensure the provider's responsibility for the programme (programme level)
- 9.2 There are sufficient qualified and experienced staff in all settings to safely and effectively deliver and support the programme in a way that enables learners to achieve the Standards of proficiency and prepare for practice (programme level)

Differences in the revised standards relevant to your developments:

- Explicit requirement that formal partnerships arrangements are in place with delivery partners, to ensure effective collaboration and joint evaluation
- Broadened requirements for these arrangements from solely practice education providers to include all 'delivery partners'
- Clearer link to the outcome needed for staffing, to enable learners to prepare for practice, with the reference to safely and effectively delivering and supporting the programme

New standards

You will need to meet the following new standards from September 2027. As these standards are new, you will need to demonstrate how you meet each standard for the first time through your compliance assessment.

You should review the revised SETs guidance when considering alignment with these new standards, and when making any required changes.

Institution level standards

- 3.3 The wellbeing of staff and others involved in programmes is supported to enable effective contribution to the programme and the quality of learning.
- 5.5 Appropriate and ethical use of technology in learning, teaching, and assessment is identified, embedded, clearly communicated to learners and educators, and regularly reviewed to support alignment with current practice.
- 5.6 Learners receive timely and meaningful feedback to empower and enable them to have an active role in their own development.

Programme level standards

- 9.4 Educators are up to date in the use of current technologies and digital tools relevant to their profession and that are used in teaching, supervision, and assessment

Further information

For more information about the revised standards of education and training, visit hcpc-uk.org/standards/set/revised-standards-of-education-and-training-2026.

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