

General Education Seminars 2010

Introduction

This document provides a summary of all the common questions which delegates asked across all of our general education seminars delivered in autumn 2010. If you require any further information regarding any of the information contained within this document please contact us at education@hpc-uk.org.

Frequently asked questions

Can a programme be delivered by distance learning and still be approved?

The Standards of education and training (SETs) can be met in a variety of different ways and have been applied successfully across different models of education. It is important to note that a programme must meet all 57 standards to be approved by the HPC, however the way each programme meets these standards may differ.

For programmes delivered by distance learning, we would need to be assured the programme has the necessary resources, management and quality assessment processes in place to ensure a student receives the support needed and that any placement experiences are appropriate to facilitate learning. We would need to be satisfied that a student completing such programme would meet the standards of proficiency required to be considered safe and effective for practice.

Does the HPC have a threshold number of conditions which would result in a programme not being approved?

During an approval visit, we need to make sure that a programme meets our SETs and that those who successfully complete the programme meet our SOPs. There are a large number of standards against which we must assess a programme; however the HPC does not have a defined number of conditions which would result in a recommendation to our Education and Training Committee that approval should not be granted to a programme. All programmes are given the opportunity to respond to conditions through our post-visit process.

For information on the HPC approval process please visit the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/education/providers/approvals/

Does the HPC require professional bodies to attend an approval visit and what happens if they don't attend?

When conducting an approval visit, we have overall responsibility for ensuring a programme meets our standards. The Health Professions Order dictates we must assess programmes against our standards and arrive at any decision independently. Therefore we do not require professional bodies to attend an approval visit and leave this decision down to the discretion of the education provider.

However, the HPC acknowledge the important role the professional body has in the quality assurance process and if a professional body is invited to an approval visit, the HPC welcomes the opportunity to participate in joint discussions with them.

Does the HPC set a time limit for applicants from an UK approved programme to apply to the Register?

Applicants who are applying to the Register for the first time have 2 years from the date of graduation to receive the HPC reduced application rate for new applicants. Applicants do however have 5 years to apply to the register from their graduation date. After this 5 year period has expired applicants will be subject to returners to practice requirements. For more information about applying to the Register please use the following links below:

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/uk/

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/students/

Professional body requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) are different to those of the HPC. How do I know what I need to submit?

We define CPD as 'a range of learning activities through which health professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively and legally within their evolving scope of practice'. For more information on the HPC CPD requirements and what you may need to submit please use the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/registrants/cpd/

Professional bodies and regulatory bodies have different guidelines regarding codes of conduct. What HPC guidance is available to students regarding conduct and ethics?

The HPC publications 'Guidance on health and character' and 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students' address issues of conduct and ethics for students and education providers.

The 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students' assists students when considering issues regarding conduct and ethics whilst completing an approved programme and also introduces them to the 'Standards of conduct, performance and ethics', the standards they must meet as a registered health professional. Students must be aware of our standards of conduct, performance and ethics as they must meet these standards at the point of entry to the Register and also understand how these standards relate to them whilst completing an approved programme.

The 'Guidance on health and character' provides both education providers and students with further information about issues to consider as part of the admissions process to a programme and also when a student applies to the HPC Register.

These guidance documents are designed to support education providers in teaching students about conduct and ethics and will assist them when considering issues and making decisions regarding students' conduct.

You can download copies of these guidance documents using the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/education/providers/studentguidance/

Is it possible, as a result of a student appeal at an institutional level, for a student fitness to practice decision to be overturned which was made at a programme level?

SET 3.16 ensures any HPC approved programme has a process in place to deal with concerns about students' profession related conduct. However we do not specify what a process must contain. Therefore each education provider will have different policies in place which articulate how matters concerning student fitness to practice are dealt with specifically and any specific regulations regarding the right of appeal for a student. To approve a programme, we will want to see evidence to support the choice of process, which must be appropriate to the programme and how it is delivered.

How long does the registration process take?

For applicants who apply via the 'UK approved programme' route we aim to process completed applications for registration within 10 working days (this time may vary depending on the volume of applications received). Once we have processed the application our on line Register is immediately updated.

For applicants either applying for 'Readmission to the Register' or via our 'International' or 'Temporary' registration routes, the registration process will take significantly longer than 10 days.

For further information on the HPC Registration process please use the links below:

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/uk/

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/readmission/

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/international/

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/temporary/

Does the HPC put any limit on the timescale of overseas placements?

We do not approve individual practice placement sites and therefore do not set any limit on timescales for individual placements undertaken overseas. However, to approve a programme we will want to be sure there are clear reasons for the number, length and range of placements for a programme, including any decisions to provide overseas placements.

We will also need to see evidence that the education provider has overall responsibility for all placement sites, including all aspects of placement learning and that they have suitable systems in place to support this learning. This would include evidence of:

- How placement sites are approved by the education provider before use, how these sites are regularly monitored and how the placement has links to the management of the programme;
- How the education provider manages all teaching, learning and assessment on placement;
- How information is provided to students and practice placement providers;
- How the education provider ensures each placement has adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff and;
- How the education provider provides regular training to practice placement educators.

Please refer to SET 5 of our Standards of education and training which provides further information on practice placements.

A student is subject to an education providers' fitness to practice process, but remains on and successfully completes the programme. Does this need to be disclosed when applying to the Register?

When we approve a programme we approve the process an education provider has in place for dealing with concerns about a students' profession-related-conduct. If a student is subject to an education provider's fitness to

practice process and remains on the programme as a result, the education provider or student does not need disclose this information to the HPC.

Where can I find further information about the process for dealing with complaints about an education or training provider?

As well as approving and monitoring our approved programmes, we also listen to concerns that anyone might have about them. We do this through our Education Provider Complaints Process.

For information about this process please visit the link below.

www.hpc-uk.org/education/programmecomplaints/

I have a concern about a registrant, how can I report this to you?

Anyone can contact us and raise a concern about a registered professional. This includes members of the public, employers, the police and other professionals.

For information on raising a concern about a professional and what you can expect from us in raising concern, please use the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/complaints/

What is the HPC's strategy for communicating with the public?

The HPC has a dedicated Communications Department which manages all major communications with our stakeholders. For further information on the way the HPC communicates with the public please use the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/mediaandevents/

Does the HPC have any plans to produce a Standards of proficiency (SOPs) guidance document?

The Standards of proficiency for the 15 professions we currently regulate are the minimum standards we consider are necessary to protect members of the public and ensure the safe and effective practice of the professions we regulate. It is important that our registrants meet our standards and are able to practice lawfully, safely and effectively. However we do not dictate how an individual should meet our standards. There is normally more than one way in which each standard can be met and the way in which an individual meets our standards might change over time because of improvements in technology or changes in practice.

To ensure our SOPs are reflective of current practice, the HPC is currently reviewing the generic standards of proficiency to ensure these standards are applicable to all the professions we regulate. This will be followed by a review of the profession specific standards for each profession. The amended standards are planned to be implemented in 2012-13.

Are education providers expected to demonstrate evidence for each SOP in the SOPs mapping document?

Yes. At an approval visit we will want to see evidence of how the learning outcomes for the programme relate to the SOPs. It may be the case that one learning outcome relates to more than one standard of proficiency depending on the programme. We will want to see evidence of how each SOP is delivered and assessed on the programme and how all students who complete the programme have demonstrated how they meet the SOPs.

If a student graduates from an approved programme, will they be accepted onto the HPC register?

If a student successfully completes an approved programme they will be 'eligible' to apply for registration. The HPC must apply further checks on all applicants at the point of registration. These checks require an applicant to undergo health and character checks prior to entry onto the Register.

SET 2.1 ensures all applicants to a programme are advised the successful completion of it provides 'eligibility to apply' to the HPC Register. For more information regarding the application process please follow the links below:

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/

www.hpc-uk.org/apply/students/

Does the HPC collect from and distribute information to education providers about the issues that arise from education providers FTP cases?

The HPC 'Guidance on health and character' publication advises education providers can tell us if they have removed a student from a programme. If we believe the misconduct is serious enough, we can keep this information and look at it if the person ever applies to us for registration in the future. At present this is the only information we collect regarding the outcomes of student fitness to practice cases.

Our Policy and Standards Department are conducting further work reviewing our current approach to student fitness to practice issues and have made initial recommendations on possible future approaches the HPC could take. A copy of the most recent paper presented to the Education and Training

Committee on 16 September 2010 regarding student fitness to practice can be found using the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/aboutus/committees/educationandtraining_archive/

Can I use real fitness to practice hearing outcomes with students when discussing issues of performance, conduct and ethics?

Yes. The HPC makes public the outcomes of all Fitness to Practice hearings (FTP) on our website. The HPC also produces press releases relating to specific FTP hearings which are available on the front page of our website. Education providers can adapt these FTP cases to assist them in the teaching of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics. Case studies are also available in our 'Guidance on health and character' publication.

For further information on the archive of hearings outcomes please follow the link below:

www.hpc-uk.org/complaints/hearings/