

Council, 10 February 2016

Policy and Standards Department report

Executive summary and recommendations

**Introduction**

The attached report provides an update about the activities of the Policy and Standards Department.

**Decision**

The Council is invited to discuss the report.

**Background information**

None.

**Resource implications**

None as a result of this paper.

**Financial implications**

None as a result of this paper.

**Appendices**

None.

**Date of paper**

30 January 2016

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## **Policy and Standards Department report – 10/11 February 2016**

This paper provides an update about the work of the department.

### **Consultations**

- There are no open consultations

- Recently closed consultations:

- Consultation on revised conduct and ethics for students. The outcomes of this consultation are due to be reported to the Education and Training Committee and to the Council in March 2016.
- Consultation on amendments to the Registration and Fees and Practice Committee Rules. The outcomes of this consultation are due to be reported to the Education and Training Committee and to the Council in March 2016.

### **Ministerial statement on professional regulation**

On 17 December 2015, Ben Gummer MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, published a ministerial statement on professional regulation. This sets out that the Government intends to consult later this year on its policy in this area. It also confirms its decision not to regulate public health specialists from non-medical backgrounds. A copy of the statement is appended to the paper 'Regulation of further professions / occupations' being considered at this Council meeting.

### **PSA performance review 2016**

- The PSA has revised its arrangements for its performance review of the regulators. There are a number of changes, including the following.
  - The performance reviews will be staggered, with each regulator's report published when it is ready.
  - The PSA will collect some data from the regulator every quarter.
  - The performance review process will comprise the PSA's initial stages audit of the fitness to practise process, with an audit of cases closed before consideration at the investigation stage taking place for each regulator at least once every five years.
  - Having gathered information about the regulator, the PSA may decide: no further review is required; a review of a change is required; a targeted review is required having identified concerns against a

standard; or a more detailed review is required having identified more substantial concerns.

- We have volunteered to be the first regulator to go through the new process. We have submitted performance data to the PSA.

### **Review of the standards of education and training**

- The third meeting of the PLG took place in January 2016. The work is progressing well and is on course to report to the Education and Training Committee and the Council at their meetings in June and July 2016.

### **Review of the standards of proficiency for social workers in England**

- A stakeholder event to consider feedback received during the review took place in January 2016.
- We anticipate that a consultation document and draft revised standards of proficiency will be produced for consideration by the Council in March 2016.

### **Research**

The following provides an update about some of the research activities managed by the Department.

- **Costs and impact of CPD (Newcastle University; commissioned by the Department of Health)**  
A survey of a sample of registrants started from 18 January 2016.
- **Professionalism and conscientiousness in healthcare professionals – study two (Durham University).** The final report for this study has been finalised. A paper will be considered by the Council at its March 2016 meeting.
- **Literature review on links between cautions and convictions for alcohol related offences, alcohol dependency and fitness to practise / work (King's College London).**  
The final report of this study is nearing finalisation. We anticipate bringing a paper to the Council at its May 2016 meeting.
- **Understanding the prevalence of fitness to practise cases about paramedics and social workers in England.**  
This project is currently out to tender. The deadline for proposals is 26 February 2016. Following feedback at the last meeting, the proposed completion date of this work has been brought forward to May 2017.