Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the 68th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Thursday 19 November 2015

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: The Council Chamber, Health and Care Professions Council, Park House, 184 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

Members:

Sonya Lam (Chair)
Eileen Mullan
Joanna Mussen
Stephen Wordsworth

In attendance:

John Barwick, Acting Director of Fitness to Practise (from item 9 onwards)
Elaine Buckley, Chair of Council
Abigail Gorringe, Director of Education
Michael Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards
Jamie Hunt, Education Manager
Liz Johnson, PA to the Director of Education
Jacqueline Ladds, Director of Communications
Louise Lake, Director of Council and Committee Services
Marc Seale, Chief Executive and Registrar
Alan Shillabeer, Investigations Manager, Fitness to Practise
Alex Urquhart, Education Officer

Public Agenda

In the absence of Joy Tweed, the Committee nominated Sonya Lam to Chair the meeting in accordance with paragraph 5 (4) of the Education and Training Committee Rules.

Item 1 - Chair's welcome and introduction

1.1   The Chair welcomed the Committee and those in the public gallery to the meeting.

Item 2 - Apologies for absence

2.1   Apologies for absence was received from Joy Tweed.

Item 3 - Approval of agenda

3.1   The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 4 - Declaration of members' interests

4.1   Members had no interests to declare in connection with the items on the agenda.

Item 5 – Minutes of the meeting of 10 September 2015 (ETC 32/15)

5.1   The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting of the Education and Training Committee.

5.2   The minutes were accepted as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

Item 6 – Matters arising (ETC 33/15)

6.1   The Council noted the matters arising from the meeting held on 10 September 2015.

Items for discussion/approval

Item 7 – Review of Social Work Education 2012-2015 (ETC 34/15)

7.1   The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

7.2   The Committee noted that a review had been carried out which looked at the HCPC's work in the area of qualifying social work education, following the completion of approval assessments of programmes transferred from the GSCC. The report looked at the outcomes of the process, and provided comments on the HCPC's experiences in social work education. Following the Committee's input, the report will go through the HCPC's publication process and it is anticipated to be formally published in January 2016.

7.3   During the discussion the following points were made:-

- The Communications Plan would draw on key themes, for example, key learning points, with a view to ensuring that any content was not too 'text-heavy';

- Further consideration may need to be given as to how we present the comparisons with those processes carried out by the College of Social Work;

- Our findings in relation to concerns about the scarcity of placements for social work students was a key message that needed to be communicated;

- Given the uncertainty around the future of the college of Social Work's endorsement scheme, and as a result of HCPC being less prescriptive in terms of placements, it was possible that we may see an increase in the number of programmes submitting major change requests;

- With reference to the use of the word "patient" on page 37 of the report ("The profession should be patient before it attempts to draw conclusions…"), the Committee agreed that an alternative word would be preferable.

7.4   The Committee discussed the paper and noted the content.

Item 8 – Review of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) approval visits 2013-2015 (ETC 35/15)

8.1   The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

8.2   The Committee noted that a review had been carried out which looked at the HCPC's work in the area of AMHP training, following the completion of approval assessments of AMHP programmes transferred from the GSCC. The report set out the outcomes of the process, and provided comments on the HCPC's experiences in AMHP education. It is anticipated that this review will be completed and the final report available in January 2016 at which time it will be published.

8.3   During discussion, the following points were made:-

- Since this report had a smaller audience compared with the review of social work education considered earlier on the agenda, the intention was to eventually publish the report but ensuring it in no way detracted from the communications plan for the social work education report;

- The Committee noted that when the regulatory functions of the GSCC were transferred, the HCPC did not take responsibility for all the post-qualifying (PQ) programmes. The Committee agreed that it would be helpful, under paragraph three of page two of the report, to provide a greater explanation in terms of the responsibilities that transferred over from the GSCC and those that remained with the GSCC in relation to AMHP training.

8.4   The Committee discussed the paper and noted the content.

Item 9 – Health and Character Review (ETC 36/15)

9.1   The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

9.2   The Committee noted the health and character process had been in operation since June 2005. The first review had taken place in 2008 at which point it was decided that a future review should be undertaken. The second such review, covering the period April 2011 – March 2013, was completed in autumn 2013, when a decision was taken that future reviews should be biennial. Accordingly the paper reported on the third review and covered the two year period from April 2013 to March 2015.

9.3   During discussion, the following points were made:-

- The Committee noted that it was proposed that the Executive would review the health and character policy to move towards a position where there was a greater use of administrative sign off. This proposal was based on the fact that 95% of those decisions submitted to Registration Panels were approved. An increase in the proportion of declarations that can be approved administratively will minimise delays for applicants while also enabling some resources to be redeployed to other priority workstreams;

- There was support from the Committee in terms of updating the policy. With reference to paragraph 4.2 which set out the numbers of applicants that make unnecessary declarations, there was support to revisit the guidance in the hope of reducing those numbers;

- The suggestion was made that this was a useful paper and one which education providers would be interested in. On that basis, it would better to use professions' full titles rather than initials. Furthermore, the appendices were in fact the body of the report and so should be named as such;

- The Committee noted that it was rare for applicants not to make declarations where they should;

- The Committee noted the importance of working with education providers in this area in order to ensure that students are screened to ensure that they don't go to the time and expense of undertaking a programme to then be refused registration at the end;

- It was noted that whilst the HCPC can give some broad advice to education providers, it was difficult to respond to enquiries as we couldn't always categorically state whether an applicant was likely to be denied registration given his or her declaration;

- The suggestion was made that the Executive look at those cases where graduates have been denied registration to inform the policy and guidance in this areas.

9.4   The Committee:

i)   noted the operation of the health and character process over the two years;

ii)   agreed the Executive should work on revising the Health and Character policy for consideration at the next Education and Training Committee meeting.

Item 10 – Developing a student survey for use in monitoring (ETC 37/15)

10.1   The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

10.2   The Committee noted that Kingston and St George's (University of London) were commissioned earlier this year to undertake research looking at preparation for practice as part of the review of the standards of education and training. The report is currently being finalised and will be considered by the SETs PLG at a future meeting. The Executive proposes extending this project, to ask the research team to draw on the findings of the study to develop and pilot the content of a student survey. The aim of this would be to benefit from the input of final year students direct into the monitoring process. This would have the potential benefit of achieving greater third party evidence, input and verification into the monitoring process. The outcomes of the project would be reported back to the Committee for a final decision about whether and, how, such a survey might be administered as part of monitoring.

10.3   During the discussion the following points were made:-

- There was concern that there was a danger of 'survey fatigue' since many surveys were undertaken by universities for the various quality

assurance frameworks. The suggestion was made that data could be taken from elsewhere rather than creating our own;

- The Committee noted that within our existing approval process, for both the approval of new programmes and major changes to existing programmes, we do meet with students but not as part of the annual monitoring or major change processes. However, we were looking at the feasibility of considering student feedback more regularly;

- The suggestion was made that the focus be taken away from surveying but instead look at the wider options. This could be done by broadening the research proposal to consider "how can we elicit the student voice in our monitoring?"

- Caution was expressed about what we were looking to achieve since the course may deliver in terms of the standards of education and training (SETS) yet a student may dislike a particular module or lecturer;

- The Committee noted that any proposals in terms of student feedback would need to tie in with the SETS review.

10.4 The Committee agreed that the Executive should resubmit the paper to the March 2016 meeting of the Education and Training Committee with the revised brief : "How can we elicit the student voice in our monitoring?"

Item 11 – Consultation on renaming the local anaesthetics and prescription only medicine annotations (ETC 38/15)

11.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

11.2 The Committee noted feedback that the 'prescription only medicines' annotation or administer the 'local anaesthetics' annotation for Chiropodists / Podiatrists is out of date and confusing for registrants and others. The Executive is proposing to rename the annotations to more closely reflect both exemptions in medicines legislation. A consultation of at least eight weeks is proposed.

11.3 During the discussion the following points where made:-

- The suggestion was made that the consultation was unnecessary since changes to the annotations are required as a result of legislative changes;

- It was noted that the revised annotations would apply to all registrants not just those coming onto the Register once the changes were made;

- It was important to ensure some good communication to avoid confusion about annotations whilst people were familiarising

themselves with the new terminology and until such time as all the certificates that had been issued carried the revised wording.

11.4   The Committee agreed:-

 (i) the text of the consultation document (subject to minor editing amendments and formal legal scrutiny); and

 (ii) a consultation period of at least eight weeks.

Item 11 – Election of Chair (ETC 39/15)

12.1   The Committee received a paper from the Executive.

12.2   The Committee noted that in accordance with the process for the election of Chairs of Committees, it was necessary for the Committee to make a nomination in relation to who should Chair their Committee for the next two years. This nomination would then be submitted to Council for ratification at their meeting on 3 December 2015.

12.3   The Committee agreed to nominate Joy Tweed as Chair of the Committee.

Items to note

Item 13 – Law Commission consultation on mental capacity and deprivation of liberty (ETC 40/15)

Item 14 – Standards of conduct, performance and ethics communications plan (ETC 41/15)

Item 15 – Any other business

15.1   There was no additional business for consideration that day.

Item 16 – Date and time of next meeting

16.1   10.30am – Thursday 3 March 2016 at Park House, SE11 4BU

Resolution
The Council adopted the following:

'The Council hereby resolves that the remainder of the meeting shall be held in private, because the matters being discussed relate to the following;

Item	Reason for Exclusion
17	g
18	a

(a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or application for registration;

(b) information relating to an employee or office holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;

(c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;

(d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;

(e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Council;

(f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime to prosecute offenders;

(g) the source of information given to the Council in confidence; or

(h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council's functions.'

A summary of matters considered whilst the public were excluded from the meeting.

Item 17 - Minutes of the private part of the meeting held on 10 September 2015 (ETC 42/15)

17.1   The Committee considered the minutes of the private part of the meeting held on 10 September 2015.

17.2   The minutes were accepted as a correct record to be signed by the Chair.

Item 18 - Education provider concern: London Ambulance Service (ETC 43/15)

18.1   The Committee considered a paper in relation to the London Ambulance Service and agreed a course of action.

Chair …………………….………..

Date   …………………….………..