

Health Professions Council

2007 – 2008

Work Plans

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Approvals & Monitoring Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The Approvals and Monitoring Department

The Approvals and Monitoring department sits within the Operations Directorate of the Health Professions Council.

The Approvals and Monitoring department's main responsibilities are:

- assisting the Council in approving programmes which health professionals must complete before they can register with us;
- assisting the Council in monitoring programmes which health professionals must complete before they can register with us;
- co-ordinating approvals visits;
- co-ordinating annual monitoring assessment days;
- co-ordinating the consideration of minor/major change submissions, by correspondence;
- publishing Visitors' reports from approvals visits;
- publishing the register of approved programme;
- assisting in the selection and training of Partner Visitors; and
- liaising with education providers and education stakeholders.

This Document

This document aims to set out work priorities for the financial year April 2007 – March 2008, and provide a basis against which the work of the Approvals and Monitoring department can be planned and measured.

This work plan attempts to show the how the standard operational work and planned projects have been scheduled to ensure successful completion, given the resources and time restraints. The Approvals and Monitoring department is both proactive and reactive in its work and as the timescales related to recent changes outlined in the Government's White Paper have not been published, we will need to revisit and update this work plan to take into account new professions coming onto the Register. **The department will therefore need to be flexible in the delivery of its work plan in order to respond accordingly. This document will be kept under review.**

Priorities 2007-2008

The main priority for the department is the day-to-day operation of the approvals and monitoring processes. A smaller, but still significant, part of the Department's work covers the planned projects. These planned projects are enhancement led projects at both process and more strategic/policy level.

Resources

This work plan is based on the assumption of a team of 10 Approvals and Monitoring employees, and a budget of around £680,000. The work plan also assumes that the HPC is able to manage a maximum of 15 approvals visits per month and monitoring relating to approximately 400 approved programmes at any one time. The underlying assumption is that the HPC approves pre-registration programmes in thirteen professions and post-registration entitlement programmes in three areas.

The budget of approximately £680,000 is based on an estimated 110 approvals visit, 5 annual monitoring assessment days (with each considering a maximum of 40 submissions) and 75 minor/major changes submissions. These predicted figures are based largely on the operational levels in the 2006-2007 financial year. Our risk based approach to approval and monitoring makes it difficult to forecast precise numbers of visits and monitoring submissions in advance. The mismatch of the financial year and academic year also makes it complicated to plan ahead.

There are currently seven employees in the Approvals and Monitoring department: one education manager, five education officers and one education administrator. A sixth education officer is due to start at the HPC in April 2007. There are currently three vacancies: one education officer, one education administrator and one team administrator.

Recruiting and retaining employees, in order to work effectively and proactively, was the biggest challenge for the Department in the last financial year and is likely to remain a risk for this financial year. This is captured in the HPC's risk register.

During the 2006-2007 financial year, the Approvals and Monitoring department recruited to seven posts. These posts included two administrators' positions which were vacant as a result of internal promotions to the education officer role. The recruitment of education officers was particularly challenging in 2006-2007. On two separate occasions, we were unsuccessful at appointment following the recruitment and selection process. As a result, the department was operating with at least two vacant posts at all times throughout the 2006-2007 financial year.

The education officer role has proved difficult to successfully recruit to, due mainly to the combination of relevant experience and willingness to travel regularly needed for this role. The retaining of education officers poses a new challenge for this financial year.

MAIN OPERATIONAL PROCESSES

There are three main processes which generate the bulk of the department's work and the top priorities. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

1 Approval process

The approval of pre-registration programmes will continue to be the crux of the department's work. In 2007-2008, we are planning to undertake approximately 110 visits. We are expecting visits to paramedic science and biomedical science programmes to continue to increase and visits to supplementary prescribing programmes to decrease. We anticipate more visits to programmes as a result of annual monitoring and major changes and more multi-professional visits. It is likely that the peak months of activity will continue to be February – June as the majority of visits piggyback education providers' internal events which take place at this time.

2 Annual monitoring process

The annual monitoring process will begin its third cycle in the 2007-2008 financial year. As a process it is now fully embedded and operating in a proactive, cost effective and efficient manner. In 2007-2008, we expect to put over 400 approved programmes through this process. We plan to hold five annual monitoring assessment days to consider the majority of submissions. A smaller number of submissions will be considered by correspondence to ensure a timely turnaround. We anticipate that the busiest months will continue to be February – June as this is when most education providers' internal monitoring processes are complete, so they are ready to submit documentation to us.

3 Minor/major change process

The minor/major change process will complete its first year of operation during the 2007-2008 financial year. We hope to comprehensively review the process during 2007-2008, based on the experiences of running it for the first time. At this stage, it is anticipated that the changes may need to be made to the criteria, documentation, name of the process, links with cyclical reviews and the relationship with the approval process, to ensure a closer alignment with our standards and a clearer and easier to understand process. Alongside the review, we expect to put approximately 75 submissions through the minor/major change process. We plan to consider all submissions by correspondence to ensure efficiency and value for money.

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

There are seven activities which support the main approval and monitoring processes. These activities aim to raise awareness of our processes amongst key education stakeholders and help promote an open, transparent and collaborative approach to approval and monitoring.

Whilst these activities provide a solid and desirable foundation onto which to operate our main processes, at certain times of the year they do not take priority and some activities, may, if resources are stretched need to be revisited in their totality. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

1 Publications

In 2006-2007, a suite of publications were designed and produced for the first time, namely the approval process supplementary information, the annual monitoring process supplementary information, the minor/major change process supplementary information and the SETs guidance. The department is responsible for updating these publications in 2007-2008. Minor changes are proposed to the approval process supplementary information, annual monitoring process supplementary information and SETs guidance following recent consultations on SET 6.7.5. It is likely that major revisions will be made to the minor/major change process supplementary information following the review of the process. The department's first annual report (covering the 2005 - 2006 academic year) is due to be published shortly. An annual report covering the 2006-2007 academic year will be produced in the last quarter of 2007-2008.

2 Website

The department is responsible for the online register of approved programmes as well as the information online about our approval and monitoring processes. In 2007-2008, the department will continue to work with the Communications department to update the register of approved programmes, so it is more accessible and informative to prospective students and registrants. We will also complete the recent work we have started on updating the information available for education providers, so there is a comprehensive set of online resources. Once this current overhaul is complete, it is likely that future changes to the website will be minimal and less resource intensive.

3 Presentations

In 2006-2007, the department ran the first series of presentations to education providers across the UK. In 2007-2008, we plan to run six presentations (based on a similar format to last year) as well as exploring new arenas for reaching different audiences. The department has produced an evaluative report of last year's presentations and wishes to target future presentations at selective groups who may find the content more beneficial given their imminent contact with the HPC. (e.g. biomedical science and clinical science programme teams or education providers holding multi-professional events)

4 Partner Visitor recruitment, selection and training

In 2007-2008, the department will work with the Partner Manager to consider the reappointment of approximately 130 visitors. The department reviewed the total number of visitors required in spring 2006 ahead of last year's reappointment process. It is likely that the overall number of visitors will be reduced in 2007-2008, although there are certain professions and areas of expertise which may fall below the required levels, if partners choose to stand down at the same rate as last year. It is anticipated that we will need to recruit new visitors from particular professions (most likely dietitians and dramatherapists); visitors with particular post-registration entitlements (prescription only medicine) and visitors with clinical experience to readdress the balance and ensure a broad pool of visitors with mixed experience. New visitors will need to be trained in 2007-2008. There will be no refresher training in 2007-2008.

5 Database

In 2006-2007, the department worked with the IT department to enhance the bespoke approvals and monitoring database. The project to convert this database to a lotus notes database has been postponed. In 2007-2008, the department will develop a number of standard crystal reports to allow improved reporting from the current database and monitor its overall capacity effectiveness.

6 Committee Work

In 2006-2007, the department worked with a number of committees: Education and Training Committee, Approvals Committee and Approvals Panel. A decision was taken to disband the Approvals Committee and its Approval Panels in late 2006. In 2007-2008, the department will be working with the Education and Training Committee and Education and Training Panels. Together with the secretariat department, we will monitor this new arrangement to ensure that decisions on programme approval continue to be made in a timely and cost effective manner.

7 Liaison with stakeholders

In 2007-2008, the department will continue to work with stakeholders (e.g. general public, professional bodies, and educational bodies) in the broad area of education. The majority of work in this area will remain to be reactive.

PROJECTS

There are fourteen planned projects for the 2007-2008 financial year. All of these projects are enhancement focused; some aim to improve work at the operational level and some intend to develop areas at a more strategic/policy level. Although, the department is primarily concerned with the operationalisation of the approvals and monitoring process, it is undertaking a number of projects beyond this scope to maximise the effectiveness of the HPC work on wider educational and registration issues. A lot of this project work will involve collaboration with the Policy and Standards and Registrations departments.

Whilst it is important that these projects are completed, there is less of an urgency to complete them in a short time frame. Consequently, all of these projects have been allocated a long lead time and scheduled for implementation in the periods of 2007-2008, where there is less activity in the main operational areas. This hopes to make best use of the resources available in the department, both in terms of personnel and time. **If resources become stretched at any point, then we will need to revisit the viability of running all of these projects to the proposed timescales.**

The following paragraphs summarise these planned projects.

1 Register of approved programmes

The Approvals and Monitoring department, in conjunction with the Communications department, aim to produce one definite register of approved programmes, which will provide accurate and relevant information for a wide range of users (e.g. prospective students, registrants, employees, education providers and colleagues in the Registrations department). This will involve the completion of the current review of all information handed over from predecessor bodies, including Privy Council and professional body records.

We will investigate the feasibility of updating the register of approved programmes, so that it:

- is in a consistent format for all professions;
- includes correct information on the programme title, education provider name, mode of study and delivery site;
- includes information about whether the approval is current or historic;
- includes a search function to allow users to search for an approved programme given their individual requirements (e.g. location, mode of study);
- includes a full history of programmes approved by successor bodies; and
- can separate out post-registration entitlements programmes from pre-registration programmes.

2 LISA programme list

The Approvals and Monitoring department is currently responsible for maintaining information about approved programmes in two different areas: the bespoke approvals and monitoring database and the online register. The

Registrations department is currently responsible for maintaining information about approved programmes in a third area; LISA (the bespoke registrations database). Until a time whereby an IT solution can be found to link all three systems, the Approvals and Monitoring department will take over responsibility for the information in LISA. This will hopefully help ensure information is consistent and accurate and entered into LISA in a timely manner. In 2007-2008, there will be a period of training for staff in the Approvals and Monitoring department, followed by periods of data verification and assimilation, before incorporating the updating of future information in LISA into our main operational processes.

3 Withdrawing approval

The Council need to withdraw approval from a number of programmes which are either no longer running or have been superseded by new programmes to ensure that all new graduates meet the standards of proficiency. The Health Professions Order allows the register of approved programmes to include a part which lists programmes which are no longer approved, together with a record of the periods in respect of which they were approved. The Approvals and Monitoring department need to complete their current review of information handed over from predecessor bodies, including Privy Council and professional body records, to establish a definite list of historical programmes, before this project can begin.

4 Visitors' reports

The Approvals and Monitoring department aim to produce a new style visitors report and move the responsibility of drafting them in-house (i.e. from visitors to education officers). It is hoped that this new system will help increase the consistency between reports and improve their helpfulness in terms of communicating information to a wide range of audiences (e.g. prospective students, registrants, education providers and committee members). Training for education officers in report writing will be carried out in 2007-2008 and the visit schedule in the 2007-2008 academic year planned to allow time for this new task.

5 Conditions catalogue

In 2006-2007, the Approvals and Monitoring department produced their first annual report. The current approvals and monitoring database does not have the capacity to record the number and type of conditions, recommendations and commendations a programme may receive through the approvals process. To allow a more detailed analysis of trends in the next annual report, the department needs to devise an IT solution to allow them to record and report on this type of information. The department intend to produce a new catalogue to support this.

6 Advertising protocol

In 2006-2007, the Approvals and Monitoring department produced a protocol to ensure that education providers had guidelines to assist them when advertising their programmes. This was circulated to all education providers and published online. In 2007-2008, the department intends to monitor the effectiveness of this mailing and contact education providers who continue to

advertise in a misleading manner. This preventive work will hopefully help reduce the correspondence received from prospective students, registrants and employees seeking clarification on whether we approve a programme, or not.

7 Professional body programmes

The Council need to visit the two programmes which the biomedical science and clinical science professional bodies run in, to ensure that all graduates meet our standards of proficiency. These programmes have never been visited by the HPC due to the atypical nature of their delivery and resourcing levels. The Approvals and Monitoring department intend to research these programmes and recommend a model for approval, based on the standard approval process. It is likely that adaptations may need to be made to the standard documentation, agenda and visitor panel. The department are aiming to visit these programmes during the 2007-2008 academic year.

8 IHCD paramedic programmes

The Council need to visit all IHCD programmes (paramedic training run in ambulance trusts) to ensure that all graduates meet our standards of proficiency. These programmes have never been visited by the HPC, due to the atypical nature of their delivery and more recently, due to the uncertainty in terms of their future role in paramedic education in the UK. All IHCD programmes were subject to annual monitoring during the last academic year.

The Approvals and Monitoring department intend to complete their current 'information gathering' exercise and recommend a model and timescale for approval of all IHCD programmes. The department are aiming to visit these programmes during the 2007-2008 academic year.

9 Entitlements approvals and monitoring

The Approvals and Monitoring department, in conjunction with the Policy and Standards department, aim to review the approval and monitoring processes of post-registration entitlements in supplementary prescribing, prescription only medicine and local anaesthetics, to ensure they are fit for purpose and not overly burdensome for education providers. In 2007-2008, the department will oversee proposed changes to how the HPC approve entitlements modules, which are part of approved pre-registration programmes and how the HPC deal with entitlement programmes approved historically by predecessor bodies. The department is also likely to assist in the PLG and consultation work on new post registration standards and oversee the HPC consideration of approval

2008-2009 will see the implementation of changes at the operational level, including

- creating new forms/reports;
- briefing education officers;
- briefing and training visitors;
- briefing education providers and relevant stakeholders;
- designing and producing new publications; and

- updating the website.

10 Minor/major change process

The department intend to comprehensively review the process during 2007-2008, based on the experiences of running it for the first time. At this stage, it is anticipated that substantial changes may need to be made to fix common misunderstandings made by education providers and visitors as well as burdensome overlaps with the approval process. relationship with the approval process, to ensure a closer alignment with our standards and a clearer and easier to understand process

The review will include many aspects, particularly the following:

- review of feedback from visitors, education providers and committee members;
- analysis of the number and trends of past submissions;
- review of the original Key Decisions document (mostly relating to cyclical reviews);
- revisit the underlying principles of risk based regulation and 'light touch' approval; and
- review of the role of our standards of education and training and standards of proficiency in the process.

11 Result of current consultation on the standards of proficiency

The Policy and Standards department is currently overseeing the consultation on the standards of proficiency. It is assumed that results of this consultation will be considered by Council in mid 2007, with the publication of appropriately revised standards soon thereafter.

The Approvals and Monitoring department intend to assess the impact of changes to these standards on their processes and determine how education providers should inform the HPC that their approved programmes continue to meet these standards. The department also need to implement changes at the operational level, including;

- updating relevant forms/reports;
- briefing education officers;
- briefing visitors;
- updating publications; and
- updating website.

12 Result of current standards of education and training 6.7.5 consultation

The Policy and Standards department is currently overseeing the consultation on the standard of education and training 6.7.5. It is assumed that results of this consultation will be considered by Council in mid 2007, with the publication of an appropriately revised standard soon thereafter.

The Approvals and Monitoring department plan to communicate the revised standard to education providers and explain how they should inform the HPC

that their approved programmes continue to meet this standard. The department also need to implement changes at the operational level, including;

- updating relevant forms/reports;
- briefing education officers;
- briefing visitors;
- updating publications; and
- updating website.

13 Complaint procedure about an approved programme

The Approvals and Monitoring department plan to assist the Policy and Standards department, in producing a robust procedure which allows the HPC to receive and consider a complaint about an approved programme. These complaints may come in from a wide range of sources (e.g. students, graduates, registrants, employees, education providers and colleagues in the Registrations department). There is currently no procedure to deal with complaints and the departments wish to formulise a fair, consistent and easily accessible procedure.

The procedure will consider and take into account:

- the standards of education and training; the standards of proficiency and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics;
- the legal obligations under the Health Professions Order, Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act;
- the information obtained from the approvals and monitoring processes;
- the linkage between the complaint and the approvals and monitoring processes;
- the role of visitors and the role of committees;
- the development of forms and brochures for potential complaints;
- the briefing of education officers;
- the briefing of visitors; and
- the publicising of the new procedure.

14 Overseas programme approval

The department intend to investigate the possibility of UK education providers delivering both entire programmes overseas (through collaborative provision or partnership agreements) and placement components and the potential impact of this the current approval process. We have received indications that some UK education providers are looking to deliver programmes or placements outside the UK. The department hope to work proactively to consider the legal and financial implications of approving programmes delivered outside the UK.

2008 - 2009

2007 - 2008 will primarily be a year where the department continues to operate and embed our main processes. We hope to fine tune the processes and supporting activities to ensure a set of robust and rigorous procedures, which can be rolled out to new professions successfully in future years.

Building on this consolidation, we envisage that 2008 - 2009 will be a year of growth as we consider the implications of new professions onto the register and likely introduction of revalidation and the links to the approval and monitoring of post-registration qualifications. We hope to adopt a proactive approach in terms of communicating with new education providers and stakeholders, prioritising presentations and the distribution of publications so the requirements of our approvals and monitoring processes are clear and accessible from the outset.

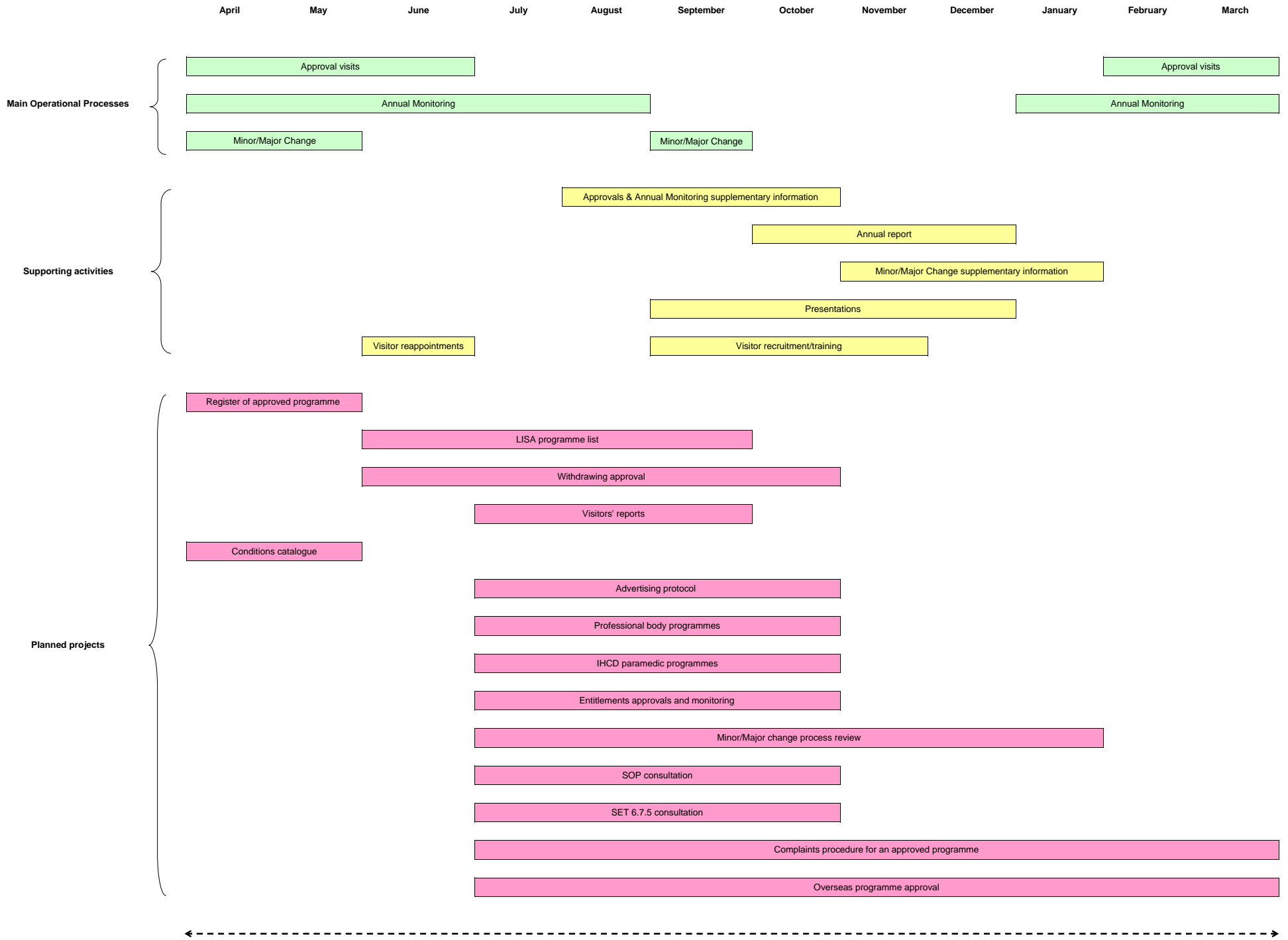
A number of enhancement led projects are also likely to take place in 2008 - 2009. Possible areas include (i) developing a mechanism to record and monitor student cohort size (ii) developing means to allow an open and transparent flow of information between the approval and monitoring processes (iii) evaluating feedback from education providers on a national scale (iv) participating in the HPC's equality and diversity scheme.

APPROVALS AND MONITORING CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Diagram one shows the peak activities during 2007 - 2008 and diagram two provides detailed information on the activities of each operation, activity and project.

Annex 1

	April	May	June	July	August	September
Main Operational Processes						
Approvals	15 visits Post & Pre visit work	15 visits Post & Pre visit work	15 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning Review process	0 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning Review process	5 visits Post & Pre visit work Forward planning
Annual Monitoring	10 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	40 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	10 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	5 submissions Assessment Day Post & pre assessment day work	0 submissions Assessments by correspondence Review process	0 submissions Forward planning Review process
Minor/Major Change	10 submissions Post & pre assessment work	10 submissions Post & pre assessment work	6 submissions Post & pre assessment work	6 submissions Post & pre assessment work	6 submissions Post & pre assessment work	10 submissions Post & pre assessment work
Supporting activities						
Publications						
Approvals Supplementary Information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft for 07/08, if necessary	Reprint, if necessary
Annual Monitoring Supplementary Information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft for 07/08, if necessary	Reprint
Minor/Major Change Supplementary Information	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity
SETs guidance	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Review & redraft SET 6.7.5, if necessary	Reprint
Annual Report	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Preparation for report (statistics)
Website	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity
Presentations	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Forward planning	Forward planning	Forward planning
Visitor recruitment/training	No planned activity	No planned activity	1 assessment day (130 submissions)	Follow up work	Advertise vacant positions	Recruit/Select vacant positions
Database	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity	Ongoing activity
Committee work	Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 0 meetings Finances & Resources Committee	Prepare papers for 2 meetings Attend 1 meeting Council Education & Training Panel	Prepare papers for 3 meetings Attend 2 meetings Finances & Resources Committee Education & Training Committee Education & Training Panel	Prepare papers for 3 meetings Attend 1 meeting Council Finances & Resources Committee Education & Training Panel	Prepare papers for 1 meeting Attend 1 meeting Education & Training Panel	Prepare papers for 4 meetings Attend 2 meetings Council Finances & Resources Committee Education & Training Panel Education & Training Committee
Liaison with stakeholders	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month	Ongoing activity Approximately 40 contacts per month
Planned projects						
Register of approved programme	Medium level activity	Completion	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity
LISA programme list	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Completion
Withdrawing approval	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
Visitors' reports	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	High level activity	High level activity	High level activity
Conditions catalogue	High level activity	High level activity	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process	Incorporated into operational process
Advertising protocol	Low level activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	High level activity	High level activity	Medium level activity
Professional body programmes	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
IHCD paramedic programmes	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
Entitlements approvals and monitoring	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
Minor/Major change process review	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
SOP consultation	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
SET 6.7.5 consultation	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity	Medium level activity
Complaints procedure for an approved programme	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity
Overseas programme approval	No planned activity	No planned activity	No planned activity	Low level activity	Low level activity	Low level activity



←----->
Ongoing activities - website, database, liaison with stakeholders and committee work

Communications Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Jacqueline Ladds

April 2007

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Introduction

The communication workplan for 2007 - 2008 details our main areas of work and sets out how we will work towards achieving the objectives of the communications strategy.

The communications department is both proactive and reactive in its work and requirements may change, particularly in light of business needs. Significant issues may arise, for example the operational impact of the Government's White Paper, issued in February 2007, which outlines the future of healthcare regulation. The department will need to be flexible in the delivery of its workplan in order to respond accordingly.

This document

This document is divided into several sections. It details our resources, the communications tools we will use and how our activities link to the communication objectives set out in the communication strategy.

Resources

The communications department consists of seven employees as follows:

Jacqueline Ladds	Director of Communications
Sarah Giles	Team Administrator
Thomas Heiser	Events Manager
Victoria Nash	Communications Manager
Tony Glazier	Web Manager
Philippa Richardson	Publications Manager
Vacancy	Public Affairs Manager

The Director of Communications is responsible for the overall management of the team, the day to day running of the department, the development of the strategy and workplan and the development of new projects.

The Team Administrator provides support to the department across all its activities, particularly press, events and publications and responding to requests for information and the co-ordination of the student talks programme.

The Events Manager organises all the HPC's internal and external events, particularly the Listening Events and Annual Meeting as well as our attendance at exhibitions and co-ordination of the external presentation and talks programme.

The Communication Manager leads on our public facing campaigns, press and media activity and the development of the internal communications function.

The Web Manager is responsible for maintaining and developing the HPC website, the HPcheck microsite as well as the Council extranet and employee intranet.

The Publications Manager leads on all aspects of the publications process, including the visual identity and house style, provides support to departments in the production of publications and produces the registrant facing In Focus newsletter.

The Public Affairs Manager is responsible for developing communications with government and co-ordinating stakeholder communications.

Communication activities in 2007 - 2008

There are eight main areas of work undertaken within the Communications Department. The following paragraphs summarise the headline activity for the year.

We will continue our proactive approach when communicating with the public through **campaigns** with the main objective of raising awareness of the HPC and the importance of checking a health professional is registered. In 2007 – 2008 our headline activities will be to continue to promote HPcheck to the public through media and advertising campaigns and continued promotion of the “Be sure I’m registered” initiative to registrants, encouraging them to use the logo across all applications.

The **media** is an important tool and we will continue to promote our work through the national, regional and professional media, maximising opportunities to promote the HPC and our public protection role. In 2007 – 2008 our headline activities will be to appoint a media agency to work with us to increase coverage about the HPC in the press and develop a contacts programme to build relationships with key journalists, continued promotion of our public protection role through the regional media by issuing news releases based on the Fitness to Practise hearings and continued promotion of our role to the professional press.

The **web** is an important method of providing comprehensive information to all our audiences in a cost effective and efficient way. In 2007 – 2008 our main projects will be to further expand website content in line with departmental and organisational need, enhance the website and extranet in line with the refreshed visual identity, review and develop the intranet, and undertake market testing to identify improvements in line with user requirements.

The **publications** we produce provide an important source of information to all our audiences and in 2007 – 2008 our main activities will be to review and develop our public facing literature ensuring as wide a distribution as possible, develop an information pack for prospective registrants, continue to produce In Focus, provide detailed guidance on visual identity and house style, and provide support to departments across all publications.

Events will continue to be an opportunity for us to engage with all our audiences and provide opportunities to listen and seek their views. In 2007 – 2008 our focus will be to continue to host Listening Events across the UK, exhibit at a range of conferences and identify new opportunities, research and devise events for stakeholder

audiences, including employers and parliamentarians, seek to increase speaking opportunities at key conferences, and organise all employee events.

Employees play an active role in getting messages to our audiences and should be considered as ambassadors for the HPC. Our key aim in 2007 – 2008 will be to review and develop the intranet, continue to organise all employee events and activities, develop strategic all employee briefings, and develop an **internal communications** programme based on the recommendations of the 2006 review.

In carrying out our UK wide role we work closely with a number of other organisations, including professional bodies, government, employers and patient and consumer groups. We have already established good working relationships and in 2007 – 2008 the focus of our **public affairs** activities will be to research key parliamentary contacts and networks and build relationships through face to face meetings and briefings, produce and disseminate information to all constituency MPs and their offices to ensure they are informed of our public protection role, and build a co-ordinated approach to stakeholder activities, focusing on employers and professional bodies through the development of issue specific events, targeted briefings and the development of a stakeholder newsletter.

We will continue to support organisation-wide **projects** by delivering effective communication plans and activities for projects which may be major areas of change or development for the organisation. Projects in 2007 – 2008 which will require communications input include Continuing Professional Development; the regulation of new professions and the recommendations arising from the review of non medical healthcare regulation.

A communications plan has been produced for the communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrants and employers which includes the delivery of UK wide presentations, the use of the newsletter, press and web activities. We anticipate a number of new professions to join the HPC Register this year, in particular Applied Psychologists (approx 14,000) and the Hearing Aid Council (approx 1,300). Communication with employers, professional bodies and members of the new profession will be key and activities will include proactive press to professional media, the use of the website and the production and dissemination of appropriate publications to the new professions.

Achieving the communication objectives in 2007 - 2008

We have identified five communication objectives in the strategy. In 2007 – 2008 we will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

Communication Objective 1:

To raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences, we will

- maximise the opportunities to increase coverage about the HPC in the national, regional, professional and consumer press

- enhance and extend the house style and visual identity across all literature
- seek to increase opportunities for talks, presentations and exhibitions and
- continue the ongoing development and improvement of our web presence.

Communication Objective 2:

To extend our reach to the public enabling them to easily access information about the HPC, we will

- organise public awareness campaigns
- develop public information literature and its dissemination
- showcase the work of the HPC to MPs, their researchers and constituency offices
- continue to develop our patient and public involvement activities
- and map consumer associations, patient groups and referrers and develop organisation wide channels of communication.

Communication Objective 3

To influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders, we will

- identify key parliamentarians and build relationships
- undertake market research and opinion polling
- map stakeholder audiences and develop organisation wide channels of communications (articles, e-bulletin, events)
- and respond to recommendations resulting from the review of non-medical healthcare regulation.

Communication Objective 4

To engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them, we will

- develop the content and increase the distribution of *In Focus*
- encourage use of “Check I am registered” logo
- continue the student talks programme
- develop information packs for prospective registrants
- support the regulation of new professions to the HPC Register
- support the communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrants and employers
- continue to host Listening Events across the UK
- support the communication of revised standards and guidance
- and play a key role in the production of all registrant facing brochures and literature.

Communication Objective 5

To further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation, we will

- develop mechanisms including strategic all employee briefings, Chief Executive led strategic briefings, ad hoc briefings on specific issues, consistent team briefing and all employee events
- and review and develop the intranet.

2008 – 2009

2007 – 2008 will primarily be a year where we continue to undertake some of our more established activities, particularly web, campaigns and publications, but it will also be an opportunity to undertake some groundwork, developing and establishing organisation-wide channels of communication, particularly in public affairs and stakeholder communications as well as developing an internal communications function and building our media presence.

In 2008 – 2009 we will build on this work and our activities will be informed by the opinion polling we will have undertaken in the autumn of 2007 and the evaluation of the 2007 – 2008 workplan. A key area of activity will be the Partners and the establishment of other channels we may have developed through 2007 – 2008.

Appendix 1:
Communications Department Activities Table 2007- 2008

The table below sets out the communications department's day to day activities in the delivery of the communication strategy and its objectives.

1 Campaigns

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audience	Timescale	Lead
To appoint an agency to work with us on visuals, messaging and channels for the public campaigns	Development of strong identity and visuals which promote positive image of the HPC	Write brief, organise selection process, hold interviews/presentations, appoint and manage agency(s)	2	Public	April 2007	VN
To run public campaigns which promote the importance of checking a health professional is registered	Promotion of public protection role Reinforce "check" message, focused, cost effective way of reaching the public	Research, write briefs, set objectives, identify and secure partner(s), agree visuals and methods, project manage, evaluation	2	Public	August 2007 December 2007	VN
To ensure registrants have continued access to the "Check I am registered" logo through all media	Engaging with registrants and working with them to promote public awareness	Maintain access through website, at events, in newsletter, through renewals	4	Registrants	Ongoing	VN/SG
To continue advertising through ongoing channels, eg Yell.com	Continued reinforcement of public protection role		2	Public	Ongoing	VN
To ensure all campaigns are researched, targeted, measurable and cost effective	Transparency and accountability	Set objectives, appoint agency, agree methodology	2/4	Public/Registrants	Ongoing	VN

2 Media

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective(s)	Audience	Timescale	Lead
To promote the HPC to the national media, consumer and professional press and provide support for public campaigns	Increased level of coverage across these media channels Promotion of public protection role	Appoint agency(s) Identify programme of work	1, 2 and 3	Public Stakeholder	April 2007	VN
To continue to promote the Fitness to Practise hearings to the regional media	Increased level of coverage in regional media and increased promotion of public protection role	Weekly alerts Issue releases Number of articles	2	Public	Ongoing	VN/SG
To ensure senior management and Council members are equipped to deal with media interviews through adequate training and briefing	Provide relevant media training as appropriate	Identify need Source training Provide briefing materials for interviews	1 and 2	All	Annually	VN
To take a proactive approach to media relations by working with departments and developing relations with key journalists	Coverage reflects better understanding of issues by journalists and supports our leading regulator role	Identify key journalists, organise press events and 1to1 meetings, identify news/stories, write articles, issue releases	1	All	Ongoing	VN
To continue to communicate HPC's work and activities to the professional press	Improved understanding of what we require of registrants and increased level of coverage	With depts identify news/stories Issue releases, write articles	3 and 4	Stakeholders Registrants	Ongoing	VN
To continue to provide the infrastructure to manage the media ensuring an accurate and consistent approach, promoting the HPC whilst satisfying the information requirements of the audience.	Consistency of messages Strong infrastructure to support all our media work	Subscribe to press cuttings, media disk Log press calls Maintain accurate contacts database		All	Ongoing	VN/SG

3 Web

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audience	Timescale	Lead
To develop the intranet (in line with the internal communications workplan) ensuring it is up to date and an accessible information tool for all staff	Improved internal communication Provide information which enables employees to deal efficiently and effectively with enquiries	Research audience needs Write technical brief Appoint agency Project manage Pilot/test/evaluate	5	Employees	December 2007	TG
To enhance the website and extranet in line with the refreshed visual identity	Increased accessibility Promote a professional and positive image of the HPC	Write technical brief Appoint agency Project manage Pilot/test any changes Implement/launch	1	All	July 2007	TG
To market research the website to ensure it is accessible and relevant to all our audiences and make recommendations for further expansion and development	Provide opportunity for feedback and improvement to the site Increased understanding of the HPC and transparency	Agree objectives, appoint agency, agree methodology and timeframe, undertake testing and identify actions to take forward, develop ideas and prioritise	1	All	From October 2007	TG
To take a proactive approach to developing the website content by working with departments to support their requirements and identify opportunities for development, for example departmental sections, CPD pages, media and events section, new professions	Increased understanding of the HPC and transparency	Meet with departments Ascertain requirements Develop ideas, proposals Write guidance/process for content management Cost and prioritise	1	All	Ongoing	TG
To provide statistics and reports which will inform activities and strategies for development	Value for money	Agree requirements Produce regular reports for planning and reporting	1	All	Ongoing	TG

4 Publications

Activities	Key Deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audience	Timescale	Lead
To ensure the consistent application of the house style and visual identity across all publications and literature	Promote a professional and positive image of the HPC	Promote across organisation, process on intranet Phased implementation	1	All	Ongoing	PR
To manage the publications process and support departments in the production of publications and literature which satisfy the aims and objectives of the HPC eg Complaints Leaflet, Standards of Proficiency, Disabled Guide	Present a positive image of the HPC and understanding of its role	Liaise with departments Manage process, advise on content, edit, proof, gain feedback from public/patients where relevant	3 and 4	Registrants Stakeholders	Ongoing	PR/depts
To produce the HPC's annual reports ensuring they are relevant and widely disseminated, including corporate annual report, FTP and Education annual reports	Increased transparency and accountability and improved profile with stakeholders	Work with relevant departments Manage processes Agree distribution	1	All	Annually	PR/depts
To communicate with registrants through the newsletter <i>In focus</i> , developing its content and increasing its circulation	Increased distribution Better informed registrants	Obtain feedback, review design and content Identify opportunities to increase distribution	4	Registrants	Six times a year	PR/SG
To produce and disseminate public information leaflet which communicates HPC's role in protecting the public	Easier access to HPC information Increased awareness and understanding of HPC and its role	Review literature Identify new channels of distribution, gain feedback from public/patients	2	Public	From April	PR/SG
To ensure conformance with Welsh Language scheme and availability of publications in large print, Braille etc	Increased accessibility	Identify requirements	1	All	Ongoing	PR
To research and plan new publications and literature including a pack for prospective registrants and information for new registrants	Improved understanding of HPC requirements of registrants	Work with registrations Identify needs of audience Develop ideas	4	Registrants	Research and develop ideas	PR/SG
To research and plan a stakeholder bulletin to keep relevant stakeholder audiences informed on the HPC and its activities (in line with public affairs workplan)	Improved understanding of HPC's role	Work with PAM	3	Stakeholder	Research and develop ideas	PAM/PR

5 Events

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audiences	Timescale	Lead
To continue to take part in trade and professional exhibitions by taking stands, research new opportunities and ways of encouraging visitors	Communication of messages Opportunity to listen to feedback and raise HPC profile and present positive image	Evaluate current activity Research new opportunities Make recommendations Source and implement	3 and 4	Stakeholders Registrants	6 per year	TH
To organise Listening Events across the country giving registrants the opportunity to hear about the HPC's activities and provide feedback	Opportunity to listen to feedback Improved understanding of the HPC's role and activities	Review presentation Source panel, venues, issue invitations, produce evaluation reports	4	Registrants	8 per year	TH/SG
To co-ordinate HPC's external talks programme, research and increase opportunities and ensure key messages are communicated appropriately and provide support and materials to presenters	Increased profile Improved understanding of the HPC's role and activities	Map current activity Research new opportunities Source and implement Devise tracking and feedback mechanism	1	All	Ongoing	TH/SG/depts
To research and plan for appropriate events (in line with the public affairs workplan) which provide opportunities to engage with stakeholders, eg employers/professional bodies on specific issues	Opportunity to communicate key issues to stakeholder audiences beyond key messages, eg learning from Fitness to Practise, Policy issues	Discuss with FTP, Policy Research and develop ideas Make recommendations	3	Stakeholders	January 2008	TH/PAM
To continue to organise the HPC's annual meeting and provide support to departments on other corporate events where appropriate (eg launch of disabled person's guide, education roadshows)	Increased accountability and transparency	Set date for annual meeting, organise invites, speakers, format etc Meet departments to determine requirements	1	All	September 2007 Ongoing	TH/depts
To organise all employee events (in line with the internal communications workplan)	Improved internal communications and understanding of the HPC's strategic aims and direction	Set dates, book venues Agree format, speakers, issue invitations Evaluate	5	Employees	4-6 All Staff Summer bbq Christmas dinner All employee (in May 2007)	TH/SG

6 Internal Communications

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audiences	Timescale	Lead
To continue to organise and develop all employee briefings, CEO led strategic briefings and ad hoc briefings on specific issues	Improved understanding of HPC's ongoing work and activities and the direction the Council is taking	Agree purpose/format Set dates Evaluate	5	Employees	4-6 All Staff Ad hoc briefings as required	TH/VN/ Jane T
To develop the intranet (in line with the web workplan) ensuring it is up to date, business led and an accessible information tool for all staff	Improved internal communication Provide information which enables employees to deal efficiently and effectively with enquiries	Research audience needs Write technical brief Appoint agency Project manage Pilot/test/evaluate	5	Employees	By December 2007	TG
To plan and develop employee events (in line with the events workplan) including social events	Improved internal communications Improved understanding of the HPC's strategic aims and direction	Set dates, book venues Agree format, speakers, issues invitations Evaluate	5	Employees	Summer bbq Christmas dinner	TH/SG
To plan and develop the annual all employee awayday	Improved internal communications Improved understanding of the HPC's strategic aims and direction	Set dates, book venue Agree format, speakers, issues invitations Evaluate	5	Employees	May 2007	TH
To develop additional mechanisms which ensure that every employee has an understanding of the HPC's aims and direction and that information about the HPC and departments can be best shared	Improved internal communications and enhanced understanding of HPC's aims and objectives	Comms training for managers Develop minis Induction process Consistent tam briefing	5	Employees	From April	VN/JAL

7 Public Affairs

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audience	Timescale	Lead
To identify key parliamentary contacts (eg Health Select Committee, opposition ministers, key think tanks) across the home countries and research and develop channels of communication to ensure this group is fully aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation.	Improved understanding of the HPC's role in healthcare regulation	Work with Policy Research contacts and ideas Develop contact programme	3	Stakeholder	From May 2007	PAM
To showcase to constituency MPs and their offices HPC's role in protecting the public through literature/roadshow	Raised awareness and improved signposting of our public protection role	Research ideas/plans Set date Develop literature Organise roadshow	2 and 3	Public Stakeholder	From September 2007	PAM/TH
To undertake an audit of key stakeholder audiences and develop a database of key contacts	Improved understanding of HPC's role	Mapping exercise	2 and 3	Public Stakeholder		PAM
Research opportunities and devise tools (articles, events, newsletter) designed to keep key stakeholder audiences informed and engaged with the HPC across all activities and on specific issues	Promote the HPC's key messages to defined audiences Improved understanding of HPC's role eg learning from Fitness to Practise	Research ideas, discuss with FTP/Policy Develop outline and content for newsletter Develop ideas for events	3	Stakeholder	Research and develop ideas	PAM/TH/PR
To continue to develop patient and public involvement activities through involvement in the joint health regulator's group and by researching new projects and activities	Improved access to the public Accessibility and accountability	Undertake audit Make recommendations for future activities Attend Group Meetings, participate in action plan	2	Public	Ongoing	JAL
To undertake opinion polling into the perceptions, knowledge and understanding of the HPC with key audiences (public, registrants, stakeholders)	Opportunity to gain understanding of how the HPC is perceived and inform direction of communication strategies	Organise process, appoint agency and develop key questions Disseminate information	1	All	September 2007	JAL

8 Projects

Activities	Key deliverables	Milestones	Communication objective	Audience	Timescale	Lead
Continuing Professional Development	Communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrant and employers	Write communication plan, timetable, use of media, newsletter, presentations, evaluate	3 and 4	Employees Registrant Employers Stakeholders	Ongoing	JAL
New Professions	Communication of registration requirements	Write plan, timetable, production of publications, use of web, newsletters, events	3 and 4	Employers Registrants Stakeholders	Dependant on White Paper timetable	JAL

Finance & Facilities Management
Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Simon Leicester

February 2007

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Introduction

The Finance & Facilities Management departments

In February 2006, the Director of Finance assumed responsibility for the Finance and Office Services departments. The Office Services dept was renamed the Facilities Management dept to better reflect the range of services provided.

The Finance department's main responsibilities are:

- To monitor the financial well-being of HPC and advise the Council and Committees of the need for adjustments to the Business Plan and/or Strategy in a timely manner,
- To generate the statutory financial statements, monthly management accounts and the financial sections of the HPC Annual Report,
- To provide financial forecasting and analysis to support the Council and Committees in developing strategy and policy,
- To maintain good internal financial control and risk management,
- To collect income and make payments,
- To ensure LISA records are accurate for financial transactions,
- To liaise with external suppliers; bankers, auditors, financial software companies, HMRC, insurance brokers, travel agencies, investment funds managers and pension managers.

The Facilities Management department's main responsibilities are:

- To provide Office Services to internal clients; catering, reception, building maintenance, stationery and post room;
- To provide Facilities Management services relating to office and function space planning & development, including building refurbishment, health & safety compliance and business continuity.

This document

This work plan is underpinned by the Council strategy, and details how the department will grow, embed itself in HPC and in the wider financial reporting and facilities compliance arena, and assist the Council in preparing for any changes ahead in the regulation of healthcare professionals.

The nature of the issues that the Finance and Facilities Management departments deal with are such that work undertaken will comprise both planned projects and also work which arises as a result of changes to the external environment, such as changes in legislation, changes to the professions, and other developments that are often unpredictable. In allocating resources, this ability to respond to the external environment is an important factor.

Priorities 2007 - 2008

The priorities identified in the HPC strategy (HPC – The Next Three Years, published in March 2006) are to *Improve* and to *Influence and Promote*.

The main opportunities for the Finance and Facilities Management departments are in *Improvement* i.e. improve HPC's ability to manage increasing demand for its services by assisting in the redesign of the organisation. Opportunities arise in progressing process automation projects such as Mid Cycle Lapsing, Computerised Purchase Ordering and in improving internal controls e.g. the Lisa Access Rights project. Cross-training of dept employees will reduce person-cover risk. Continuing to build close working relationships with other departments and suppliers will streamline some processes and aid timely reporting.

Improving the timeliness, transparency and accuracy of financial reporting and forecasting will aid decision-making about managing the increasing demand for HPC's services.

Implementing the project to refurbish 22-26 Stannary St will enable additional demand for HPC onsite accommodation to be met.

Resources

The 07/08 Finance dept budget and work plan assume a team of seven Finance employees including the Director of Finance. The work plan assumes an Operating budget of £485,000 and Capital budget (projects) of £54,000. At February 2007, there is a team of six permanent employees with regular use of any temp staff and overtime claims to ensure growing workloads can be handled.

The 07/08 Facilities Management dept budget and work plan assume a team of six employees including the Facilities Manager. The work plan assumes an Operating budget of £1,023,000 and Capital budget (22/26 Stannary St project, CCTV¹ and 22/26 Stannary Street office furniture) of £1,698,000.

When both departments are taken together, the capital and operating spend account for 22% of HPC's overall capital and operating budget. The employees account for 12% of HPC's total permanent employee number.

¹ Closed circuit television monitoring of the external entrance to Park House.

HPC Strategy: Improve

Introduction

The HPC operates within a changing environment, as a result of many factors which include changes to legislation, to professions, and to best practice. Changes in the operating environment also impact the number and levels of risk that are faced by the organisation.

Environmental change creates opportunities to better deploy resources, become more flexible, more innovative and improve service quality. Some changes can be best effected via "leap-forward" projects, while others involve continuous incremental improvement.

In order to improve, there needs to be a sound understanding of the current position, the skills and competencies of existing resources, the organisational priorities and some cohesive planning on how to improve. Financial and non-financial indicators are useful tools in monitoring progress and planning. Improvements to financial policies, procedures and the Risk Register are similarly useful in assisting risk and change management.

It follows that any improvements that can be made to the accuracy, timeliness and transparency of the reporting will likely assist decision makers in making operational improvements, to better meet HPC's objectives.

Aim

The Council aims to review its standards, guidance and policies, to consult with stakeholders, to gain feedback, and to make improvements to ensure that these continue to reflect the Council's purpose and principles.

The following part of the work plan details the projects that will be resourced over the coming financial year towards meeting this aim.

Projects for 2007 - 2008

1. 22-26 Stannary Street Building Project

The 22-26 Stannary St premises were purchased in May 2005 and adjoin 20 Stannary Street premises currently owned and occupied by HPC.

After detailed planning in conjunction with an architect and quantity surveyor, £1.6M will be spent refurbishing the 22-26 Stannary St premises. The project is planned to be implemented during the period May to November 2007 inclusive. Once completed, the Registrations dept will move to the first floor of 22-26 Stannary St. The ground floor will be used to conduct Fitness To Practise hearings and hold Council or Committee meetings, as required. The remaining Park House and 20 Stannary Street premises will then be "restacked" to house other employees in an optimal manner.

This project links to Risk 15.3 “Capital Project Cost Over-runs” in the Risk Register which is rated medium significance and probability.

2. Fee Change Project

HPC is entirely reliant on funding from Registrant fees to meet its objectives. HPC’s fees have remained unchanged since July 2003, while Registrant volumes, FTP cases and cost inflation have steadily risen. HPC is limited in the types of fees it is permitted to charge for, to cover services provided.

Following stakeholder consultation from November 2006 to February 2007, we are in the process of increasing the fees, with effect from June 2007. This is a high profile and complex project, involving most departments of HPC, two key suppliers and the Department of Health, as well as Fee consultation feedback from stakeholders. The project completion date is June 2007. The intention is to revisit fee levels every two years after that date and propose suitable adjustments, after considering stakeholder feedback, forecast changes in the HPC cost structure, forecast changes in Registrant volumes and changes in HPC’s objectives over time.

Other than ongoing employee time, all other fee project costs were incurred in the year ending 31st March 2007.

This project links to Risk 8.2 “Fee change processes not operational by June 2007” in the Risk Register which is rated high significance and medium probability.

3. Change in LISA Access Rights Project

This project is designed to tighten up the internal financial controls relating to who is authorised to action Refund, Reverse and Reject transactions² in LISA.

At present there are five LISA “roles”, namely Registration Officer, Registration Manager, Financial Officer, Legal Officer and Clerical Support. There are existing employees and part leavers (temps and permanent employees) operating in a wide variety of departments who were issued with access rights that were wider than they should be using and this project would modify LISA access rights to correct that problem in future. The benefit of the project is in improving internal controls and reducing subsequent rework by the Finance department. This access rights issue was identified by PKF in January in their internal audit of the Finance dept.

The approved project budget for 07/08 is £35,000. This mostly relates to LISA software modifications to be performed by an external company. The likely completion date is November 2007.

² “Refund” transactions relate to refunding a Registrant fee overpayment or refund of an unnecessary payment. “Reverse” transactions are to reverse the fee charges put on a Registrant’s account. “Reject” transactions are to correct a misposting of a Registrant payment put to the wrong Registrant account, or cover a Bank rejection of a direct debit transaction.

This project links to Risks 5.3, 10.8 and 11.8 in the Risk Register which are rated high, medium, low significance and low, low, low probability respectively.

4. Replacement of Finance System/Computerised Purchase Ordering

HPC has been using a DOS-based financial reporting system SAGE Line 100 since April 2002. SAGE Line 100 is essentially a small company system with limited functionality. Replacing the existing Finance System with an MS Windows-based system capable of providing additional functionality e.g. more automated month-end reporting, faster updates and more flexible ad hoc queries, is desirable and arguably long-overdue.

HPC has also been using manual, pre-numbered purchase order books, and reliant on manual sign-off by signatories to procure many of its supplies. With steadily rising transaction volumes and an increase in the number of purchase order/invoice signatories to 27, there is a need to redesign the procurement process to take advantage of time-saving opportunities through increased automation and increased system integration. An ISO quality audit performed on the Finance department in late 2006 also highlighted opportunities for improvement in computerising the purchase order process.

A replacement or upgrade to the existing SAGE system may need to “parallel run” with the prevailing system for the two to three months of its implementation, to ensure accurate and timely reporting is achieved. The evaluation work will likely take place in the period July to October 2007, in order for the replacement/upgraded system to go live before the start of the subsequent financial year.

Careful consideration will need to be given to the Finance System’s ongoing interfaces with LISA (preserving internal control, timeliness and accuracy). Note that the SAGE Payroll system is completely stand-alone, so not impacted by the SAGE Line 100 replacement/upgrade.

Careful thought will need to be given on how to best redesign existing processes. The 07/08 project budget is £19,000.

This project links to Risk 15.10 “Unauthorised payments to organisations” in the Risk Register which is rated low significance and low probability.

Other Initiatives

1. Enhanced Project Reporting

In late 2006, the Finance and Resources Committee approved the adoption of enhanced project reporting to commence from April 2007. This initiative is designed to integrate financial reporting with project status reporting and improve the transparency of actual project spending against budget (opex and capex) at HPC. The project cost is zero. The implementation date is 1st April 2007.

This project links to Risks 15.2 and 15.3 in the Risk Register which are rated medium, medium significance and low, medium probability respectively.

2. Pension scheme implementation

Following correspondence received from HPC's existing pension provider in late 2006, a review was undertaken of the best approach going forward for the provision of an HPC pension scheme to eligible employees. There are a number of considerations including; pension needs, likely pension performance, pension administration costs, legal obligations and legacy pension costs that may be incurred, depending on HPC's chosen course of action.

These will be worked through by the Council and the Executive in 2007, in consultation with external experts (legal and actuarial advisors) who are able to provide the appropriate guidance. On current estimates, the new scheme is expected to be operating from 1st May 2007. The implementation cost is approx £20k.

This project links to Risks 16.2 and 16.3 in the Risk Register which are rated medium, low significance and medium, medium probability respectively.

3. Five Year Plan, Income Model update and Annual Budget

Equally as valuable as reporting progress to date in the monthly management accounts is to provide a forecasting service of the financial implications of HPC's activities.

The Finance dept produced an updated Five Year Plan in August of 2005 and 2006 and are planning to update this again in about August 2007. To date, the Five Year Plan has been produced "top down" but as part of continuous improvement, the Finance Dept plans to generate the next version "bottom up" by dept.

The Five Year Plan lists the financial projections of income and cost, key assumptions, Capital Expenditure plan and Cash Flow projections. It also includes headcount projections by department, Registrant volumes by profession including new professions, and Registrant volumes by type (International, UK Graduate Registrants etc).

The Five Year Plan links the overall HPC strategy (big and over the long term) with the Annual Budget relating to the work plans of each dept over the forthcoming financial year. A key benefit of producing an updated Five Year Plan is as a background document in preparing a fee rise (price-setting).

A key input into both the Annual Budget and Five Year Plan is the Registrant Income Model. This model identifies accrued income in the forthcoming financial year by profession, by fee type, by fee level (before and after any fee rise occurring in the financial year). A key input into the Registrant Income Model itself is materially accurate Registrant volume-forecasting. This volume forecasting responsibility has been assumed by the Policy and Standards dept in 2007.

The Annual Budget will be created and will go through a series of review iterations during the period October 2007 to March 2008. The final step is to gain approval from Council in their March 2008 meeting, pre-dating the start of the Budget year.

This project links to Risks 15.1, 15.2 and 15.9 in the Risk Register which are rated low, medium, low significance and medium, low, low probability respectively.

4. Improved Person Cover via greater cross-training and documentation

To date, because of the small complement of employees working in the Finance and Facilities Management depts and challenging workloads handled, there has been a limited degree of person-cover in the respective depts. This included having no inhouse backup resource trained to perform core functions such as running the employee payroll function or manning the reception desk.

Recent and ongoing agreed changes in each person's responsibilities have reduced the risk that core activities will not be continued seamlessly, should the primary person be absent. Creating & updating role documentation, and automating further parts of some processes also act to reduce the risk. This work will continue in 2007. The completion date for this is 31st March 2008.

This initiative links to Risks 11.1, 11.4 and 11.6 in the Risk Register which are rated medium, low, low significance and low, medium, medium probability respectively.

5. Improved Health and Safety (H&S) legislative compliance

In April 2006, a paper was presented to the Finance and Resources Committee to note, outlining the broad Health and Safety Issues facing HPC. Seven facilities-related H&S issues were identified and six people-related H&S issues were identified, impacting visitors, employees, contractors, Council members and Partners.

A firm of H&S consultants, Lawrence Webster Forrest (LWF) was then appointed to oversee the development of a comprehensive set of H&S policies for HPC and to advise on their implementation in the budget year commencing April 2007. The ongoing LWF service also includes them advising HPC of legislative changes requiring compliance in this area, including disability access to premises.

Health and Safety issues were also identified in four parts of the Risk Register, namely;

- H&S of Council members,
- H&S of Partners,
- H&S of Employees,
- Employee/Partner physical assault by Hearing attendees

The risk mitigations are a continuing action in 2007 for the respective Risk owners and ensuring adequate insurance cover is an ongoing action for the Director of Finance.

This initiative links to Risks 4.9, 6.3, 11.5 and 13.6 in the Risk Register which are rated low, low, low, high significance and low, low, low, medium probability respectively.

6. Close the CPSM Pension Scheme

Action any outstanding steps to close the old CPSM employee pension scheme that are within our power to action. At the time of writing, we are waiting on final scheme valuation information from the pension administrator, Capita Hartshead before this can be achieved.

7. Funding for New Professions

Obtain Department of Health funding for taking on the regulation of any new health professions. For example to cover the costs relating to clearing any legacy Fitness to Practise cases for those professions.

8. Deregister the company 22/26 Stannary Street Limited for VAT purposes.

At the time of purchase of Purbrook and Eyres Ltd, the company purchased was registered for VAT purposes. The company name was changed shortly thereafter to 22/26 Stannary Street Limited. The action to deregister the company has been outsourced to HPC's tax advisors, Baker Tilly, but the company cannot be VAT deregistered until at least £250,000 net of VAT input tax has accumulated. This will likely occur once the 22-26 Stannary Street project is mostly completed. Likely implementation date December 2007. Cost approx £3k.

2008 – 2009

Implement the new Finance System

To go live from 1st April 2008. See section Four under "Projects for 2007-2008" for details.

Fee Change Project

Conduct fee costing and pricing analysis in anticipation of a fee rise to go live in June 2009. The project time end to end may be as much as 10 months. The costing analysis will likely be outsourced.

Automated refunds project

Automate the current process for generating Registrant refunds.

Mezzanine Refurbishment

To "glass in" the Mezzanine area of 20 Stannary St, to provide employee confidential meeting room space.

22/26 Stannary Street - Phase Two Project

Build further accommodation for HPC employees on top of the existing building. At the time of writing, this is pending planning approval.

Fitness to Practise Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Kelly Johnson

March 2007

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Introduction

This document

This document sets out the priorities for the financial year April 2007-2008 and addresses how the Fitness to Practise department will grow, develop, improve and progress. It provides a basis against which the work of the Fitness to Practise department can be planned and measured.

The Fitness to Practise department, due to the nature of its work, will also have to manage high profile cases which attract media interest and allegations which may require an immediate interim order. The fitness to practise annual report(s) provide historic details. It is important that departmental planning allows for timely responses to unpredictable situations when they arise. Unpredictable situations include CHRE referrals to the High Court and appeals against both registration appeals and fitness to practise decisions.

The focus in 2007-2008 will be to improve and develop existing processes and ensure that the department achieves best practise. However, this document will also need to be reviewed to take into account the requirements of the White Paper and we await the publication of detailed implementation plans by the Department of Health.

The Fitness to Practise department work plan reflects not only the strategy of the practice committees but also operational requirements and improvements necessary to run the fitness to practise process and also those processes which lie outside the work of the practice committees.

Resources

The fitness to practise department (as at 31st March 2007) consists of 14 employees

Kelly Johnson	Director of Fitness to Practise
Eve Seall	Fitness to Practise Manager
Merle McKinley McNair	PA to the Director of Fitness to Practise
Sabrina Adams	Case Manager
Mick Calligy	Case Manager
Nick Grassby	Case Manager
Zoe Maguire	Case Manager
John Lucarotti	Case Manager
Ciara O'Dwyer	Case Manager (from 30th April 2007)
Simon Thompson	Case Officer
Gemma Lee	Case Officer
Victoria Adams	Hearings Officer
James Bryant	Hearings Officer
Vacancy	Hearings Officer
Emma Bowman	Team Administrator

There are currently two temporary staff working within the fitness to practise department.

Recruitment in 2007/2008

It is expected that the following new positions will be recruited for in 2007-2008:

- Six Case Managers (including 3 senior case managers)
- 1 Hearings Officer
- 1 Administrator

By the end of 2007 it is anticipated that there will be 23 employees within the fitness to practise department and we will be based on the second and third floors of Park House.

Financial

There is a fitness to practise budget of approximately £3,542,000 in 2007-2008. This is an increase of approximately 37% from 2006-2007. This budget is based on an estimated 468 new allegations being received in 2007-2008, 405 cases which will require instruction over the course of the financial year, 202 full cases heard by panels comprising of 316 days of hearings, 90 Article 30 review cases and 48 interim order panels. It is anticipated that there will be 375 days of hearing. It is also projected that there will be 12 days of registration appeals panels, 350 new health and character declarations and approximately 250 new complaints about protection of title. The budget estimate also includes CHRE and registrant appeals to the High Court. The budget is also predicated on fitness to practise case managers presenting interim orders, article 30 review hearings and some registration appeals.

The budget is broken down in the following way:

Budget Line	Total
Payroll	£632,000
Fares and Subsistence	£49,000
Property Services (Security)	£2,520
Office Services	£190,990
Communications	£14,500
Partners	£765,560
Projects	£10,000
Specific Department Costs (Legal Services, Insurance, Training and Transcripts)	£1,875,000

Ensuring fitness to practise has the resources (financial, employee and IT systems) is key to planning in the years ahead.

Responsibilities

The Director of Fitness to Practise is responsible for the overall management of the team, the development and implementation of the strategy and work plan and the development and management of new projects. The Director of Fitness to Practise also has specific responsibilities as set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

The Fitness to Practise Manager is responsible for the day-to-day running of the department which includes case and hearing allocation, case tracking, weekly planning (including reviewing statistics and implementing the rota) and reviewing service level standards.

Each Case Manager has a case load for which they are responsible for the investigation of allegations - including vulnerable witness assessments and taking witness statements, preparing and presenting cases at investigating panels. They are also responsible for the presentation of interim orders and the management of a case load post the case to answer stage. One case manager is also responsible for the management of a registration appeals case load. Case Managers have also begun to present registration appeals before registration appeals panels.

Case Officers are responsible for investigating complaints about misuse of title, preparing cases for registration panels and a small fitness to practise case load. Their fitness to practise case load consists of conviction cases, simple misconduct and incorrect entries.

Hearings Officers are responsible for arranging all fitness to practise hearings including review of orders and interim orders. They also act as clerk to the tribunal. They undertake all follow-up work after a hearing and some elements of HPC's witness support provisions. It is anticipated there will be approximately 375 days of hearing in 2007-2008. This includes registration appeals, interim order panels and review hearings.

The Team Administrator provides support to the department across all of its activities. This includes hearing preparation, some elements of the witness support provisions and maintenance of the fitness to practise alerts system. She also undertakes research as required by the Director and Fitness to Practise Manager.

The PA to the Director of Fitness to Practise undertakes all diary management and secretarial duties for the Director. She is also responsible for the logging and tracking of all invoices to ensure that costs billed were incurred.

The Director is currently undertaking a review of the structure of the fitness to practise department so as to ensure that resources are managed to their best effect. A key challenge in 2007-2008 is to ensure that resources are managed appropriately and effectively.

Fitness to Practise Activities 2007-2008

There are four main processes which generate the majority of the department's work. The following paragraphs summarise this work and the supporting activity to ensure this work is done. Fitness to Practise department activity for 2007-2008 is also summarised here.

1. Fitness to Practise Allegations and Hearings Management

Management of fitness to practise allegations and hearings will continue to be the biggest area of the department's work. In 2007-2008 approximately 700 cases will require attention and management. This includes interim orders, hearings, investigating allegations and Article 30 review cases. We are expecting 375 days of hearings. Key areas of work in this area include the improvement of existing processes, improving accessibility and communication, reducing reliance on external lawyers, ensuring consistency in decision making, reviewing all existing material, equality and diversity requirements, trends analysis, the production of the fitness to practise annual report and risk management.

It is also important to ensure that resources are effectively managed so as to ensure the increased demands on the department match the capacity within the department. This includes ensuring employees are appropriately trained and resources are accurately predicted.

2. Health and Character Declarations

The process by which HPC manages health and character declarations on admission, readmission and renewal to the register and self-referrals by registrants was approved by the Education and Training Committee in June 2005. We anticipate that HPC will receive approximately 250 declarations in 2007-2008 with the busiest points in the summer months as new graduates apply for registration and around the renewal cycle. By June 2007 the process will have been in existence for two years. This is a key opportunity to review the processes that are in place to manage this process and the decisions that have been taken by registration panels. The review of decisions will also aid in the development of guidance for education providers and other stakeholders in this process. We will work with policy and standards department on this piece of work. It is also expected that the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Acts will be implemented by Autumn 2008. The requirements of this Act will need to be considered in any review of both this and the fitness to practise process.

3. Prosecution of Offences

Article 39 of the Health Professions Order 2001 sets out offences that can be prosecuted under that order. The offences identified there include:

- Misuse of title
- Fraudulently procuring an entry in to the register
- Failure to provide documents or to attend a hearing.

The Council approved its policy in relation to prosecutions in March 2005. It provides that before a matter can be prosecuted a number of steps have to be taken – including initial letters explaining the process and cease and desist notifications. It also provides that the public interest and evidential tests have to be met before a case can be prosecuted. Since the closure of the register to the 12 original professions in July 2005 653 complaints have been received about the misuse of title - mainly in the area of chiropody and podiatry. It is anticipated that a review of the prosecutions policy and procedures will begin in July 2007. This is a key point as by that stage the policy would have been in operation for two years. Areas to consider include the provisions of the Enterprise Act.

4. Registration Appeals

The management of the registration appeals case load is the other key area of work in the fitness to practise department area. It is important to continue to ensure that this process is efficient and effective, ensuring documents are properly managed and where appropriate, cases are presented by case managers. The review of the process will also take into account any revisions to the processes that are necessitated when HPC begins auditing the CPD profiles of its registrants.

Other Activities

There are a number of other activities which support the processes operated by the Fitness to Practise department. The following paragraphs summarise these activities.

Publications

A number of publications are produced by the fitness to practise team – ranging from the fitness to practise annual report and brochures explaining the processes, through to practice notes on sanctions, interim orders and allegations, and other documents such as those explaining the registration appeals process. A review of the fitness to practise brochures will take place in April 2007 and the annual report covering 2007-2008 will be published in September 2007. The indicative sanctions policy will also be reviewed in May 2007.

Website

The department is responsible for information provided online regarding fitness to practise hearings as well as the information online about the fitness to practise and protection of title processes.

Panel recruitment, selection and training

In 2007-2008 the department will work with the Partner Manager in the process to reappoint panel members, legal assessors and panel chairs. A close eye will need to be kept on the number of partners so as to ensure that there are enough individuals to sit on HPC panels. Two review days will take place for Legal Assessors and Panel chairs. These review days are used to update legal assessors and panel chairs on regulatory law updates, provide feedback on CHRE learning points and look at ways to improve decision making.

Information Technology

In 2006-2007 the department worked with the IT department on the implementation of the Fitness to Practise database. This is a lotus notes database designed to log, track and provide reports on all fitness to practise cases. Work continues in 2007 – 2008 on refinements and enhancements and developments to the reporting capability of the database. Other databases have been designed and developed by the Fitness to Practise team – including the registration appeals, health and character and prosecution of offences databases, and most recently, a database to store witness support information. This area of work is linked to the improvements and developments that are planned in the witness support programme. Work continues in improving the reporting capabilities and usefulness of all databases used by the fitness to practise team.

Committee Work

The fitness to practise department works with a number of committees – including the three fitness to practice committees on fitness to practise issues and the Education and Training Committee with regards to the health and character process. In 2007-2008 we plan to review the statistics and information that is provided to the practice committees so as to ensure that the information that is provided is meaningful and useful

Liaison with stakeholders

We will continue to work with all stakeholders to improve understanding and accessibility and feedback trends that have arisen out of fitness to practise cases. We will work with the communications department in relation to providing information to employers and other key stakeholders. The Director of Fitness to Practise also sits on the FTP managers forum operated by CHRE and attends learning points meetings.

Achieving the Fitness to Practise Department Objectives 2007-2008

We have identified a number of objectives that will require action and completion in 2007-2008. We will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

Fitness to Practise Objective 1 - Accessibility, Communication and Information Provision

A key area of work for the fitness to practise department is ensuring that its policies, procedures and decisions are communicated in a clear, open and transparent fashion. To this end we will:

- produce the Fitness to Practise annual report – including analysis of statistics, decision making and case studies;
- undertake an audit against our existing practices and procedures as part of the Equality and Diversity project and implement recommendations that arise out of this review;
- review the Equal Treatment Practice note;
- collect, collate and review demographic data from those involved in the fitness to practise process;
- contribute to the CHRE working group on common datasets;
- review the brochures produced to explain the fitness to practise process;
- implement standard of acceptance for allegations;
- implement Case Directions;
- refine and further develop the process for taking complaints over the telephone;
- review and develop the witness support process;
- provide feedback and learning points from fitness to practise cases (linked to the trends analysis);
- review all documentation produced by the fitness to practise department;
- work with the communications department to provide key messages from the work of the fitness to practise department (including employer events and a greater contribution to the HPC newsletter);and
- review the provisions of the Data Protection and Freedom of information acts as they apply to the fitness to practise area.

Fitness to Practise Objective 2 –Decision Making

In order to ensure that decision making is consistent and effective we will undertake the following activities:

- feedback learning points from CHRE learning points meetings to those involved in the fitness to practise process;
- undertake a trends analysis of fitness to practise and health and character decisions;
- review and develop the indicative sanctions note;
- closely monitor updates in regulatory law;
- review days for legal assessors and panel chairs

Fitness to Practise Objective 3 – Processes and Procedures

In order to ensure that the processes in place are working to their best effect we will:

- review the Health and Character process (including Bichard recommendations);
- review Prosecution of Offences procedure;
- review and develop the process through which registration appeals are managed and presented (including CPD appeals);
- continue the review of the fitness to practise process – including the development of processes to dispose of case via consent (subject to approval by the health and conduct and competence committees);
- further develop how a case load is managed and implement risk assessment;
- work with the registrations department with regards to checking fraudulent applications; and
- ensure the department is equipped for any impact CPD audits will have on the fitness to practise department.

Fitness to Practise Objective 4 - Resources

To ensure that resources are used to their best effect we will:

- review the structure of the fitness to practise department;
- reduce reliance on external lawyers (including taking witness statements and the presentation of a variety of cases);
- ensure appropriate training and guidance material is provided to the fitness to practise team;
- undertake a whole scale review of the statistics that are produced by the fitness to practise team in order to further aid the day-to-day management of the department;
- refine and further develop service level standards;
- undertake risk assessment for fitness to practise cases;
- develop the reporting and usage capabilities of databases and systems used by the fitness to practise department;
- work with the partners team on the process to reappoint and train panel members;
- review how hearings are arranged and fixed (including the use of external venues);
- move to two floors in Park House when the building work is complete;
- ensure budgetary controls are in place to ensure the proper management of the fitness to practise budget;
- develop and further refine the model of investigation (including the further development of particulars) and implement risk assessment for fitness to practise cases;
- develop systems for operational forecasting; and
- review the watchlist.

Fitness to Practise Objective 5 - Risk Management

The Fitness to Practise department manages a number of risks in relation to its functions. The key areas of risk in the fitness to practise area are as follows:

- legal cost over-runs;
- legal challenge to HPC operations;
- exceptional tribunal costs;
- witness non-attendance;
- physical assault by hearing attendees; and
- registration appeals.

We implement the appropriate measures and steps to ensure that these risks are appropriately mitigated against. They will include:

- Service level agreements with key suppliers
- Costs per case information for fitness to practise case

An internal audit was conducted on the Fitness to Practise department by PKF (HPC's internal auditors). The audit rated the processes operated by the department as sound. Work will continue in ensuring the department meets best practice in this area.

2008 – 2009

In 2008-2009 we will continue to build on and improve the work and processes that have begun previously and embed best practice within the department.

Appendix 1:

Fitness to Practise Activities Table 2007- 2008

The table below sets out the fitness to practise department's timetable in achieving the tasks set out in the work plan above.

Also provided is the fitness to practise forecast for 2007-2008.

1 Accessibility, Communication and Information Provision

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Fitness to Practise Annual Report	Requirement of the Order	Employee Time Fitness to Practise Database (accurate statistics)	Improve Influence Promote	January 2008	April 2008	KJ/ES
Equality and Diversity Audit and implementation of recommendations	Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	May 2007	September 2007 (for audit) Ongoing for implementation of recommendations	FTP Team
Equal Treatment practice note	Ensure document is relevant and up to date	Legislative developments Day-to-day operations Policy and Standards	Improve	August 2007	September 2007 (to practice committees)	KJ
Collect, collate and review demographic data	To effectively monitor and audit processes	Day-to-day operations IT (to make necessary changes to systems) Response from complainants and registrants	Improve	April 2007	Ongoing	KJ/ES/EB
CHRE Common Dataset working group	To ensure consistency across regulation	Day-to-day operations CHRE President	Improve Influence Promote	February 2007	Final meeting scheduled in June 2007	CHRE

Brochures	To ensure accessibility of material provided to complainants and registrants Best Practice	Day-to-day operations Communications (particularly publications manager) Policy and Standards (Temporary Registration)	Improve Influence Promote	April 2007	May 2007	KJ
Standard of Acceptance for Allegations – including complaints over the telephone Write guidance for FTP team	Best Practice Improve accessibility	Day-to-day operations Policy and Standards (Language Line)	Improve	April 2007	Ongoing	KJ initially then FTP team
Implement Case Directions – including communicating these to all those involved	Best Practice Fairness in proceedings	Day-to-day operations	Improve	April 2007	Ongoing	KJ ES Fitness to Practise Team
Witness Support review and refinement	Best practice Fairness	Day-to-day operations	Improve Promote	Collation of questionnaires began in October 2007	Paper to Practice Committees September 2007	SA ES EB
Trends Analysis and Feedback from Messages	Consistency Reduce number of cases	Day-to-day operations Communications Department	Improve Influence Promote	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Communication with Employers	Stakeholder engagement	Day-to-day operations Communications Department	Improve Influence Promote	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ Communications

2 Decision Making

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
CHRE learning points	Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Trends Analysis in Fitness to Practise and Health and Character processes, and in equality and diversity as it relates to FTP	Improved consistency Feedback to stakeholders Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	April	Ongoing (analysis of Paramedic cases by September 2007)	KJ
Review Indicative Sanctions Note Updates in regulatory law	Regulatory Law updates frequent Best practice	CHRE	Improve Influence	May 2007	July 2007	KJ
Review days for legal assessors and panel chairs	Dissemination of information Improved decision Making Best Practice	HR (Partners)	Improve Influence Promote	June 2007	Further review day December 2007	KJ ES Yasmin Hussain

3 Processes and Procedures

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Review Health and Character Process and provide guidance as necessary	Process in place for two years Recommendations of Bichard	Day-to-day operations Policy and Standards White Paper	Improve Influence Promote	Workplan to ETC by June 2007	March 2008	KJ ST ES Michael Guthrie
Review Prosecution of Offences	Process in place for two years	Day-to-day operations	Improve	July 2007	March 2008	KJ ES ST
Registration Appeals –including preparation and presentation	Best practice Management of resources effectively Impact of CPD	Day-to-day operations	Improve	August 2007	Ongoing	KJ ES MC
Review of FTP Processes (including consent)	Best practice	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ ES

4 Resources

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Fitness to Practise Structure	Effective management of resources	Human Resources	Improve	April 2007	Ongoing	KJ
Reduction in reliance on external lawyers	Effective management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Training FTP Team	Effective management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ
Review of Statistics	Effective management of resources Role of FTP Committees	Day-to-day operations	Improve Influence	April 2007	May 2007	KJ ES
Service Level Standards	Management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	ES
Risk Assessment	Effective management of cases		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	Case Managers ES
Information Technology	Essential for management of process		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	ES
Partners Reappointment	Essential to the process	Human Resources (Partners)	Improve	April 2007	July 2007	KJ YH
Arrangements for hearing fixing	Effective management of resources	Day-to-day operations	Improve	April 2007	Ongoing	ES
Model of Investigation and particulars	Improves decision making Requirements of the order	Day-to-day operations	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ ES Case Managers
Operational Forecasting	All rationale set out above		Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	KJ

5 Risk Management

Activities	Rationale	Dependencies/Other Departments involvement	HPC Objective	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Risk Management	Risk Management	All	Improve	Ongoing	Ongoing	All

Human Resources Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Larissa Foster

March 2007

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Introduction

The Human Resources Department has been in existence since HPC was first established. However, the past year has seen an expansion of the work performed by the Department. During the financial year April 2006 – March 2007, the Partner management function was added to the Department. Partner management responsibilities will therefore be incorporated into the Human Resources workplan for the first time this year.

Work throughout the past year in relation to the employee management function centred around the introduction, strengthening and embedding of relatively newly introduced generalist human resources procedures and policies at HPC. The Partner management work performed was more reactive. The reappointments process involved the expiration of 385 Partner agreements during 2006 and with a resulting 81 Partners not reappointed to their previous Partner roles.

This document

This document explains the work priorities for the financial year April 2007 – March 2008. It addresses how the Human Resources Department will progress over the next year to both improve and embed generalist processes for employee management at HPC. The aim is also to increase the accountability of overall Partner management through the reappointments process, and clearer Partner management policies and procedures.

It should be noted that the Human Resources Department does not manage any of the human resources related functions which apply to Council (such as recruitment of Council members) and that this work is delivered by the Secretariat.

Resources

The Human Resources Department consists of four employees as follows:

Larissa Foster	Director of Human Resources
Kelly Webster	Human Resources Manager
Charlotte Urwin	Human Resources Team Administrator
Yasmin Hussain	Partner Manager

At the current time, there is also a Partner Administrator (Simon Wood) engaged on a 12 month contract basis. There are currently no plans to increase the Department with any additional team members.

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for the overall management of the team, the day to day running of the Department, the development of the strategy and the workplan and the development and management of new projects. Many of the day to day tasks such as interviewing (particularly for higher level posts), disciplinary and incapability meetings and other employee relations matters are undertaken by this post holder and/or shared with the Human Resources Manager.

The Team Administrator provides administrative support in relation to the employee management functions (not the Partner functions). This primarily involves co-ordinating the paperwork associated with advertising and interviewing for new posts, and dealing with correspondence. The Administrator also maintains the human resources databases and filing systems.

The Human Resources Manager is responsible for the whole range of generalist human resources tasks. These include interviewing, inductions, management of sick leave across the organisation, development and implementation of human resources policies and procedures, and advising managers and employees on human resources issues.

The Partner Manager provides a service to the Partners of HPC. Her activities incorporate the day to day management of Partner issues such as recruitment and reappointments processes, resolving Partner complaints, administering Partner expense matters, and assisting Department heads with the training of new and existing Partners.

The Partner Administrator (who is engaged on a temporary basis) has been employed recently to assist with the correspondence and contract administration around the Partner reappointments process, as well as assisting with general Partner queries.

Human Resources activities in 2007 - 2008

There are 8 main areas of work undertaken within the Human Resources area. The following paragraphs summarise the headline employee and Partner activity for the year.

Employees

Recruitment, selection and induction will remain the key focus for the Human Resources Department in 2007. Employee numbers now total 89 and despite a low staff turnover figure (an average of 2.4% over the past twelve month period) replacement of ad hoc positions as they arise and the filling of newly approved posts in the budget remains a key activity for the Department.

The newly approved posts in the budget this year consist of 19 (including 6 temporary posts) in total;

- senior Education Officer (1), Approvals and Monitoring Department
- Team Leader (1), Customer Services Manager (1), and temporary Registration Officers (6) at renewals time, Registrations Departments
- Case Managers (6), Hearings Officer (1) and Administrator (1), Fitness to Practise Department, and
- Policy Officer (1) and Administrator (1), Policy and Standards Department.

Maintenance of the **Human Resources database (Professional Personnel)** will continue to be a priority. This is an opportunity to generate and analyse statistics such as equality and diversity, track successful methods of advertising, and maintain

electronic records for employees. A key aim in 2007-2008 will be to develop the intranet function of Professional Personnel so that employees can access their details and electronic records.

The **Employee Handbook** is an important method of providing policy information to our employees in an expeditious way. In 2007-2008 one of our main projects is to review and develop our Handbook (which is now 4 years old) to ensure that it reflects current legislation, future legislative changes, and departmental and organisational needs. This will require consultation with employees.

Support and training for managers and employees will continue to be a major factor for the Department in the coming year. Last year saw a strong focus on managerial training however this year will see an increase in employee training (diversity and equality training, project management training, financial skills training for the middle management layer). There will also be ongoing support and on-the-job training provided to assist Managers in implementing policies (for example, those around sickness review meetings, and incapability/incapacity meetings). Through support and training, it is hoped that the unique hard working, innovative and happy work culture at HPC can be maintained.

Last year also saw a number of challenging employee relations issues arise which are impossible to anticipate or predict. It is crucial that the Department be able to redirect its activities to address such situations as necessary, and provide the support to Managers early on in the process so that if any matter results in a tribunal hearing, HPC is well able to defend its position.

Partners

The **reappointments process** will be undertaken once again this year in order to address the issue of 310 contracts expiring at various dates throughout 2007, and the fact that Partner numbers are still over-recruited due to over-recruitment several years ago. We aim to improve the process from last year by developing more stringent criteria and providing Partners with a greater level of information about the process. This is a time consuming exercise involving significant input from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. It is the hope that, pending the outcome of the process this June, we may then have Partner numbers stabilised.

Partner recruitment for new posts this year will involve the recruiting of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Assessors. At this stage, we are awaiting direction from relevant Department heads on the number of CPD Partners and types of skills required. We aim to firstly utilise our existing pool of experienced Partners to fulfil our requirements, and only advertise externally if need be, however, an accountable and transparent recruitment and selection process will still need to be undertaken. Recruitment for appropriate Partners when professions such as the Applied Psychologists and the Hearing Aid Council come on board will also be a major action. However we are currently not able to predict when this will occur.

An area for development is the **Partner Handbook**. There are a number of Partner policies which exist or are practised currently but are not yet reflected in a comprehensive Handbook which is available on our website for Partners to access.

This year will see the development of a Handbook to reflect existing policies and practices.

Employees and Partners

We will continue to support organisation-wide **projects** by providing Human Resources support and advice for projects which may be major areas of development for the organisation. Projects in 2007-2008 which will require Human Resources input include CPD, Equality and Diversity, increased staffing should HPC regulate new professions this year, and Partner training.

The nature of the issues that any Human Resources Department manages will be subject to any “crisis” situations which may occur as a result of unpredictable changes in the work environment. It is important that Departmental planning allows for timely response to such unpredictable situations, and that the workplan incorporates an ability to respond to external factors. In particular, recognition must be given to the impact of the **White Paper**, which for the Human Resources Department will involve potential employee and Partner recruitment and training issues.

Budget Management

This year will see the Department manage both the Human Resources general budget and the Partner budget. The general Human Resources budget totals £366,785. Headline areas of the budget consist of £35,000 for organisation-wide training, £20,000 allocated to legal expenses associated with employment related matters, and £92,000 budgeted for organisational recruitment.

The Partner budget of £146,436 largely consists of provisions for Partner recruitment and training. A sum of £73,600 has been allocated to cover recruitment and training of CPD Assessors and refresher training for Partners working within the Fitness to Practise Partner roles.

Achieving the Human Resources Objectives in 2007 - 2008

We have identified nine objectives in the strategy. In 2007-2008 we will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

Human Resources (employees) Objective 1:

To increase the level of customer service from Human Resources to employees and Managers we will:

- develop the intranet function of the human resources database (Professional Personnel) which will enable employees to view all of their own information including documents attached to their personnel file through a confidential log-on
- roll out the system which allows employees to submit leave forms and Managers to authorise these electronically
- conduct training for all employees on this service and

- allow employees to change their personal and payroll details on-line

The timescale for this objective is September 2007

Human Resources (employees) Objective 2:

To provide a clearer understanding of entitlements, compliance with legislative requirements, and improve existing processes for employees and Managers we will:

- undertake a review of the Employee Handbook (in particular, of the disciplinary, incapability and safety policies)
- consult with employees about any significant changes or adjustments and
- roll out any revised changes where necessary.

The timescale for this objective is July - September 2007

Human Resources (employees) Objective 3:

To improve our recruitment and selection processes we will:

- undertake an audit against our existing practices and procedures as part of the Equality and Diversity project from June – December
- trial numerical and written skills testing in the recruitment of Registrations Officers for the Registrations Department
- enter all new applicants on the recruitment section of Professional Personnel and generate statistics for analysis on successful methods of recruitment and equality and diversity.

The timescale for this is December 2008

Human Resources (employees) Objective 4:

To improve the level of training and support offered to employees which will maintain our loyal, hard working culture we will:

- expand the range of organisational training offered to include areas such as finance and project management training for middle managers
- offer communications training to senior management
- train all employees on equality and diversity issues
- investigate possibilities of developing 360 degree feedback as part of the performance review system and
- support employees through the changing of the pension scheme.

The timescale for this is January 2008

Human Resources (employees) Objective 5:

To meet our legislative obligations in relation to Human Resources practices we will:

- closely monitor employee numbers as the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004 are likely to apply to HPC for the first time and
- when HPC employee numbers reach 100 (and have averaged this over a 12 month period) we are obliged to begin negotiating an information and consultation agreement which we will begin researching this year.

The timescale for this will be ongoing dependent on employee numbers.

Human Resources (employees) Objective 6:

To assist other Departments and Committees in managing processes which impact all employees we will:

- work with the Finance Department to manage the pension scheme transfer in relation to employee relations aspects
- ensure that all legal obligations to employees throughout the pension scheme transfer are adhered to and delivered in a timely manner
- work with the Finance Department to administer the annual pay review and provide associated pay policy papers to the relevant Committee
- advise Registrations Departments on the implementation of their planned restructure, and
- work with the Communications Department to implement any employee related aspects of the internal communications strategy.

The timescales for this support will be ongoing and dependent on the timescales defined by the relevant departments.

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 7:

To resolve the issues of over recruited Partners and agreements expiring at different times throughout the year we will:

- write to all Partners with expiring Partner agreements from January to June 2007 to extend their agreements to July 2007
- invite all Partners with expiring agreements in 2007 to reapply for their roles
- undertake a second reappointments process
- utilise a representative from the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments to advise on the selection process
- ensure that all Partner agreements will now expire together in July 2008 and
- analyse numbers of Partners for 2008 and ensure that we are ready to renew the Partner contracts for a two year period.

The timescale for this is July 2007

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 8:

To recruit, select and train the numbers and types of partners required for HPC to perform its functions we will:

- liaise with the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments on the best method(s) of recruitment for CPD Partners
- work with the CPD project team to organise role briefs and advertising and organise the appropriate interview panels, having Partners in place by June 2008
- work with the necessary Department heads when two new professions (Applied Psychologists and the Hearing Aid Council) join HPC to recruit the appropriate Partners required
- provide ongoing new Partner and refresher Partner training as required and
- begin the process of training all Partners in Equality and Diversity issues.

The timescale for this is March 2008

Human Resources (Partners) Objective 9:

To ensure development of improved practices in relation to our Partners we will:

- develop a Partner Handbook reflecting existing practices and procedures
- ensure that areas such as recruitment, expenses, code of conduct and complaints procedures are covered
- place this on the Internet for a cost effective, easy to access mechanism for all Partners to view and
- increase the Partner performance review system to all Visitors and then for other Partner roles.

The timescale for this is March 2008

2008 - 2009

2008 – 2009 will be a year in which we continue to undertake our established activities, but also strive to improve and embed best practice procedures within these processes. It is an opportunity to roll out practices which are new for HPC, improve on our current services to employees (development of the employee Intranet function) and to create more appropriate policies and procedures where they do not currently exist (Partner Handbook). Some of our work will continue to be reactive (recruitment of CPD Partners) however we will be better organised with this than external events have allowed us to be previously.

In 2008 – 2009 we will build on this year's work as we continue to plan better in relation to our Partners (prepare for all contracts expiring in July 2008 and the roll out of CPD) and for employee matters such as the obligations under the Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004 which may apply to HPC for the first time in this period.

Human Resources activities in the past year 2006 - 2007

It would be useful to review the activities contained in the work plan which was submitted one year ago as part of the background which has formed the basis of this new workplan. Five major projects for 2006- 2007 were proposed at the time and were completed as follows:

1. Training Needs Analysis

A training needs analysis was conducted for the first time at HPC in March 2006 following the annual performance review process. A training plan for the year was developed and completed courses were recorded on the Human Resources Information System. Along with individual training for employees, all Managers received training in Interview Techniques, Equality and Diversity, Managing Performance and Disciplinary Issues, conducting Performance Reviews (new Managers only) and Finance for non-Finance Managers training. Training evaluation forms were completed for all training.

The training needs analysis was a success, created an audit trail, and will now be completed automatically following the performance reviews which are conducted in February each year.

2. Recruitment Strategies

The Human Resources Department worked to fill 17 new vacancies throughout 2006/2007 as well as replacing ad hoc positions when people resigned. The recruitment process was vastly improved by Professional Personnel being developed to enable recording of application forms and all correspondence in relation to the recruitment and selection process on this database.

The aforementioned training for Managers in relation to interview techniques, and equality and diversity has led to significant improvements in the way people interview and write position descriptions (competency based). The final aim of this objective was to develop a criminal record checking policy for applicable employees (those who deal with vulnerable adults). This is currently already being implemented for new starters and will be implemented for existing employees within the next month.

3. Developing the Human Resources Information System (Professional Personnel)

The work plan for 2006 – 2007 committed the Human Resources team to developing the training module, annual leave module, recruitment module, diversity module and intranet function for employees.

All of these modules have been developed and are currently being utilised however the Intranet function (the final component) has been delayed due to time currently being taken on other emergency matters such as the pension issues. It has also proven to be a longer job for IT than initially anticipated and therefore will be delayed until August 2007.

4. Employment Contracts

Following approval of new employment contracts for employees by the Finance and Resources Committee in late 2005, and introduction of these contracts for all new employees, the Human Resources Department committed to rolling these contracts out for existing employees in September 2006. This was completed in November 2006 as the consultation period was longer than the Department had anticipated. All employees are now signed onto the new employment contracts.

5. Exit Interviews and Statutory Grievance Procedures

Exit interviews at the HPC have now been successfully running for two years. These are confidential interviews, conducted on a voluntary basis only, and only disclosed in a summary form to the Executive Management Team. Employees have recently been given the option during the interview to choose whether the report can be shown to their Manager or the next Manager in the hierarchy, in an attempt to make the results of the interviews more useful and actionable. Due to the low turnover at HPC (average of 2.4% over the past 12 months) the findings are compiled in April each year and presented to EMT at the EMT Away Day in June. As yet, no statutory grievance procedures have needed to be invoked as a result of the interviews however the Human Resources Department is keeping a critical eye on the interview responses to ensure that if they happen, concerns are actioned appropriately.

Trends so far have shown that people have remained at HPC for the benefits (annual leave, pension scheme, culture) however have tended to move on due to the fact that it is a small company and some people have wanted further challenges or have gained higher level posts elsewhere.

In addition to these activities, an **internal audit** was conducted of the Human Resources Department by PKF Auditors (this did not audit the Partner aspects of the Department). The audit was positive with only one action recommended for the Department (one document was missing from one employee's file, and this has now been rectified).

Risk Management

The Human Resources department manage risks within the HR department, and throughout the company in relation to overall employee management.

Key areas are recruitment and health and safety for both employees and Partners. On the employee risk management area, issues such as turnover, skills development, managing employee performance matters and ensuring compliance with employment legislation including managing any litigation.

See the appendix below for details.

Appendix: risks managed by the Human Resources department (employees)

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2007	Probability Feb 2007
11.1	Loss of key HPC employees (person cover risk)	President, Chief Executive and EMT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Committee Chairmen cover for President loss, Present and EMT cover for CE loss until interim appointment made, middle managers or CE cover for EMT members until interim appointment made, cross training and process documentation				
11.2	High turnover of employees	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations Remuneration and HR Strategy, Training and support, regular performance reviews, exit interviews analysis, monitoring of turnover trends				
11.3	Inability to recruit suitable employees	Director of HR	Low	Medium
Mitigations HR Strategy and adequate resourcing of the Department, careful specification of recruitment adverts and interview panel selection, planning time of year to advertise for peak periods				
11.4	Lack of technical and managerial skills to deliver the strategy	Chief Executive	Low	Medium
Mitigations HR strategy and goals and objectives (but in the skills vs staff up-skilling on the job versus training), training needs analysis and trading delivery				
11.5	Health and Safety of Employees	HR Director and Facilities Manager	Low	Low

Mitigations Health and Safety Training, policies and procedures, Health and Safety assessments (Lawrence, Webster Forest. Restricted access to the building site 22/26 Stannary Street				
11.6	High sick leave levels	EMT	Low	Medium
Mitigations Adequate staff (volume and type), return to work interviews and sick leave “trigger” monitoring, regular progress review, incapability/incapacity meetings				
11.7	Employee and ex-employee litigation	Director of HR	Low	High
Mitigations Regular one to one session between Manager and employee and regular performance reviews, HR legislation and HR disciplinary policies carried out correctly, compromise agreements if necessary				
11.8	Employer/employee inappropriate behaviour	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations Whistle blowing policy, other HR policies and procedures, employee assistance programme				
11.9	Non compliance with employment legislation	Director of HR	Low	Low
Mitigations HR Strategy, legislation updates and legal advice, HR policies and Manager training				

Appendix: risks managed by the Human Resources department (Partners)

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2007	Probability Feb 2007
6.1	Inability to recruit and/or retain suitable Partners	Partner Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations Sound recruitment strategy, training, HR Strategy – appropriate compensation strategy in place				
6.2	Incorrect interpretation of law resulting in CHRE review	Director FTP and Director of Operations (Visitors)	Low	Low
Mitigations Training, legal assessors advice availability				
6.3	Health and Safety of Partners	Partner Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations Personal injury and travel insurance, liability insurance, road safety policy for vehicle drivers, restricted access to the building site 22/26 Stannary Street				

Information Technology Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Roy Dunn

March 2007

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Introduction

The IT department maintains and develops the technology and information used by HPC and its stakeholders to assist HPC departments to carry out their functions.

This document

This document has been drafted to set out work priorities for the financial year April 2007 – March 2008, and to provide a basis against which the work of the Information Technology department can be planned and measured. This document is underpinned by the Council's strategic intent, and details how the IT department will continue to develop, to build the Council's ability to cope with scalability and in the wider arena, business resilience in preparing for the changes ahead in the regulation of healthcare professionals.

The nature of the work that Information Technology deal with are such that it will comprise both planned projects, and also work which arises as a result of changes to the external environment, such as changes in legislation, changes to the professions, and other developments that are often unpredictable. Further, there is an element of effort involved in "keeping the lights on". Hence, in allocating resources, maintaining the ability to respond to changes in the internal and external environment are important factors.

The White Paper published in February 2007, "Trust, Assurance and Safety-The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st century" places additional requirements on HPC's systems to regulate more professions, more registrants, and gather additional information on those persons. This is mainly addressed as "scalability" within this document.

Resources

The IT department currently consists of 5 employees:

Roy Dunn	Director of Information Technology
Rick Welsby	Back Office Systems Administrator
Tyrone Goulbourne	Network and Desktop Support
Craig Kjelvei	Systems Support Analyst
Tom Berrie	Information Services Manager

The Director of Information Technology is responsible for the overall management of the IT team and the hardware, software and data resources used by HPC in its day to day operation. IT strategy is documented, and developed with departmental colleagues in response to known and predicted business needs, legislation and IT governance requirements. A significant amount of

project related work is carried out over the year. Some helpdesk and reporting requirements are satisfied as time allows.

The Back Office Systems Administrator is responsible for maintaining and developing the Lotus Notes environment, covering e-mail, Fitness to Practise systems, Freedom of Information and other HPC wide databases. A significant amount of project work will be undertaken as HPC requirements are finalised. This will include some LISA registrations related work such as CPD.

The Network and Desktop Support is responsible for maintaining the desktop base that each user requires for their day to day work, the servers and backups configuration, and the day to day LISA support tickets. Some bespoke reports are created on demand. LISA related project work is undertaken as required. Some bespoke database work is undertaken on demand.

The Systems Support Analyst is responsible for servicing many of the Helpdesk tickets, building new machines and installing software. Some smaller IT project work will be scheduled. Helpdesk workload in IT is influenced by HPC wide IT skills.

The Information Services Manager is responsible for the collation of monthly management reports, maintaining, documenting and developing the hardcopy archive; assisting in the creation of a document, records and content management strategy. Freedom of Information and Subject Access requests are also serviced when allocated via the appropriate tracking databases.

The percentage of time allocated to each of the key functions of the IT department and allocated to employees are as follows.

		Roy	Tyrone	Rick	Craig
QTR1	Support	10%	20%	20%	70%
Apr-Jun	IT Projects	50%	30%	30%	20%
	HPC Projects	40%	50%	50%	10%
QTR2	Support	10%	20%	20%	70%
Jul-Sep	IT Projects	40%	30%	30%	20%
	HPC Projects	50%	50%	50%	10%
QTR3	Support	10%	50%	50%	60%
Oct-Dec	IT Projects	30%	40%	40%	30%
	HPC Projects	60%	10%	10%	10%
QTR4	Support	10%	50%	50%	60%
Jan-Mar	IT Projects	30%	40%	40%	30%
	HPC Projects	60%	10%	10%	10%

Tom Berrie's tasks are not broken down in the same way as this does not accurately describe the nature of his work.

Business Aims of the IT function – what we do

- Support HPC's business processes including the 4 core regulator functions of maintain and publish a register, approve and monitor education provision, provide a Fitness to Practise process, and communicate with stakeholders
- Share common information throughout the organisation wherever possible, recording all contacts to the person or organisations database
- Base its activities around the "Center for Information Systems Research" IT management model as promoted by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US and IT Service Management Forums/Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)
- Maintain scalability in internal and external provision of services
- Provide value for money
- Allow HPC to be as open and transparent as possible
- Maintain appropriate security measures and IT governance throughout the organisation

If Council amends the Strategic Intent there may be changes to the IT Strategy in the short, medium or long term, plus changes to underlying architecture, and infrastructure to support these aims.

Scalability of HPC functions – key strategic imperative for IT

As a modern regulator and a modern business HPC uses technology to provide control of workflow, resilience, and increasingly scalability.

To help the long term development of the business functions of HPC we must increasingly use on-line internet based, or possible mobile telephony based systems to allow direct input of applicant and registrant data into the core back end systems, with appropriate validation in place.

Technology solutions are more cost effective and scaleable within HPC's financial resources.

Wherever paper forms are currently used, or would be used in future, an on-line version should be provided also, allowing the "customers" direct input to be captured to the production or intermediate systems. This will save data input resource within HPC, and allow faster turn around times at times of heavy workload.

Thus HPC will encourage the take up of on-line applications, on-line renewals and the use of the HPC Authentication model as these systems are developed and rolled out.

This will impact registrations and communications functions.

Where HPC uses xml to populate systems, and where suppliers or stakeholders find it difficult to supply data in the required format, the IT department will determine if it is cost effective to offer a data translation service from MS Excel spreadsheets or other easy to use data sources.

Achieving the Information Technology Objectives in 2007-2008

Information Technology Objective 1:

Business as usual objectives include:

- operate within the IT budget
- develop a workplan (this document) outlining key activities within the year
- update the Disaster Recovery plan format (August 2007)

Information Technology Objective 2:

New Professions acquisition:

- develop the requirements and technology to allow HPC's IT department to import new profession contact details to the LISA registrations system without incurring additional costs from Digital Steps, unless the new profession has additional characteristics not currently used. This should be developed in time for any new professions resulting from the White Paper published in February 2007, "Trust, Assurance and Safety-The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st century"

Information Technology Objective 3:

Continuing Professional Development technology built within allocated budget (£80,000).

- deliver a collection of systems or functionalities to allow registration departments to track registrants through the CPD process. Delivery of basic systems is by 31st March 2008, although additional automation may be required in the following year.

Information Technology Objective 4:

Professional Qualifications Directive 2005/36

- deliver the appropriate technology solution based on recently published guidelines by October 2007, at a cost of up to £40,000

HPC Key Projects

HPC IT are providing two types of business application, those where the process is closely defined by legislation (Health Professions Order 2001); and those where the outcomes are predictable, but the day to day operation are less well defined.

Where the exact business requirements are less well defined, HPC will develop in house process specific applications on a robust platform such as Lotus Notes/ Domino, where requirements can be refined over time, and modifications made relatively cheaply. An internal Notes resource will be required in house to maintain and develop these systems. Some specific Notes applications may be required to be built by contractors to our specification where time pressure does not allow them to be built in house. External support for Notes developments will be arranged.

Major developments will be carried out by external contracting organisations, under the close guidance of the user departments and the IT function.

Major projects 2006-7-8

2006-7 projects ending

- LISA Fee Rise project implemented and testing
- LISA Authentication & Online contact management testing
- LISA Renewals refresh collecting additional information testing
- LISA Intermediate lapsing testing
- LISA (Trust) Bulk register look up testing

2007-8 projects continuing or commencing

- CPD under development when specified (whole of 2007-8) (Major Projects) (£80,000)
- application Server upgrade (summer 2007) (Solaris Stream) (nominally £30,000)
- Professional Qualifications Directive (live Oct 07) (Major Projects) (£40,000)
- acquisition of new professions generic systems (Major Projects)
- LISA Access rights for financial functions (Jul 07 – Jan 08) (Major Projects) (£35,000)
- Finance System upgrade (Apr 07 – Nov 07) (Major Projects) (£19,000)
- Equality and Diversity – some work may be undertaken to allow capture of additional demographic detail for registrants and applicants as required in the White Paper

“Major Project” requirements analysis will be initiated by the Project Management function at HPC.

All functionality that can be provided to registrants, applicants, education providers and employers online will be developed over the medium to long term to ensure data input at HPC is kept to a minimum. This will usually be via the provision of on-line services. Address change, registration renewal, modification or up date of payment details, application data entry and submission of graduate pass-lists from HPC approved courses will be supported with appropriate levels of authentication and validation.

Registrations and Applications

The existing LISA registrations system has been in place since July 2003, and provides the workflow and publication of data pertaining to the register of those HPC professions able to work in the UK. Additional functionality has been added on an almost continuous basis as processes have been rolled out.

The LISA registrations system will be maintained with appropriate upgrades of hardware, or software to maintain suitably rapid functionality. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The upgrade of the application server is part of this improvement process.

In late summer 2007 the LISA application environment will be migrated to a new application server and operating system version by Digital Steps. This will be carried out within the new LISA Support agreement. Extensive testing will be required by the IT and user departments.

This will become an annual upgrade offering some additional functionality, over and above the HPC defined new functionality.

Although the existing LISA system file server (Krusty) is currently operating efficiently and shows no signs of failure, it is now 4 years old. It would be prudent to plan to replace the hardware within a maximum of 2 years, and ideally early in the 2008-9 budget year. Costs for hardware are generally falling but £30,000 capex should be planned for.

LISA training, testing and Lotus Notes migration (Solaris Work Stream)

A Sun Solaris low range server will be purchased early in the financial year to assist in three projects, and ultimately be retained in the final role.

Over the period April 2007 to June 2007 the server will host a version of the latest production LISA Application. This will facilitate the testing of upgraded ICR renewals process software, and enable registrations officer training with the latest complete version of LISA.

The migration of LISA from using Borland Application Server to the equivalent Sun Application Server will take place over the summer with a requirement for rigorous testing. This task will ultimately enable the upgrade of the base software of LISA. This will be the first major operating system level upgrade since LISA was built in 2003. The end point for the Application Server migration must be timed to fit in with a small quiet period in late summer early autumn prior to the Occupational Therapist renewal window.

Following roll out of the Application server to the live environment, a Lotus Notes test environment will be built for a migration from version 6.5.4 to version 7.0.1 or

later. In future Lotus Notes will be permanently hosted on this new server speeding up LISA and Lotus Notes in the process.

Services Provided to HPC by Information Technology

IT Infrastructure

IT Infrastructure covers the range of software, PC and Servers; network cabling and wireless based systems and telephones including Automated Call Distributor (ACD). HPC does not align itself with a particular brand or provider for services or hardware/software, but follows a best of breed approach. We use that which is most appropriate to our requirements.

Where software versions migrate beyond the currently used version at HPC, we will evaluate the risks of not migrating to the latest version, or migrating to the current penultimate version. If sufficient benefit is gained by migration we will upgrade to the latest version after an appropriate period of usage in industry. Where vendor support for a product is not guaranteed, we will evaluate in light of current stability vs. risks of new versions and any intrinsic issues we may face with that new version.

The latest offerings from Microsoft, namely Vista operating system and Office 2007 will be evaluated within IT prior to rollout to users.

Software audit will be carried out periodically by an external contractor to ensure HPC maintains an adequate number of software licences, thus fulfilling our legal obligations for software licensing. This will take place on a quarterly basis, in January, April, July and October.

A Configuration Management Database, a collection of all, hardware, software, IT skills and services will be developed gradually as time allows. This is one of the first stages to implementing IT Service Management, (ITIL), an internationally recognised IT management standard.

Web and internet security - outsourced

A managed service provides the greatest security for small to medium sized organisations unable to finance highly trained IT security specialists.

This provides a managed firewall, a web content filtering service, an anti-virus service for inbound and outbound e-mail, and integrated VPN security for those employees working offsite. Star Internet and Message Labs provide this service.

This will continue to be the preferred solution for HPC.

Penetration testing and PCI testing - outsourced

The HPC network is indirectly linked to the internet, behind a series of robust security appliances and policies. As our internet site provides the only route to examine the HPC register, it must be intrinsically secure at all times.

To prove that the on-line register does not form a route to misappropriate information an annual penetration test will be carried out by an external contractor, of known ability and trustworthiness. National Computer Centre (NCC) provides this service.

This will be supplemented by further quarterly specific tests to prove that Payment Card Industry (PCI) credit card standards are adhered to even if our organisation is currently just below the threshold where these tests become mandatory. Cost with the penetration testing is in the order of £20,000 per year.

Provision of e-mail services, web chat technologies

E-mail traffic is routed via our Internet Service Provider Star Internet. E-mail provision is via Lotus Notes v 6.5.4. A migration to v7.1 is planned with the "Application Server" testing server providing the new location for this software, once the testing and training is complete. Application Server migration is projected for completion in late Summer 2007. Therefore migration occurs after this point.

All web chat sessions are recorded to back up and this service is currently only provided to those departments where managers have opted in to usage.

At some time in the future we will evaluate the benefit of securely archiving all e-mail and messaging traffic to a "write once, read many" storage device. There is currently no legislative requirement to do this, but it is becoming accepted practice in commercial organisations.

Disaster Recovery and Data Back up

Data from the LISA registrations system is specifically replicated overnight to servers off site in a secured server farm maintained by our ISP, Star Internet. The timing of the LISA backup must be managed to allow backup to be completed before any batch processes are run, creating an easier fall back position, than if the processes were either part complete or fully complete.

Lotus Notes data, and therefore the systems therein are replicated every 15 minutes to the same server farm throughout the day and night.

HPC internally backup all data overnight to server directories that are then backed up to corporate scale tape solutions. The current tape system is reaching the end of its life, and the data volume requires three tapes per back up session. Upgrade to the latest tape technology will allow these data to be backed up to

just a single tape. It is envisaged that this upgrade will take place early in the new financial year.

Month end tapes will continue to be stored off site by Recall in an underground bunker. Daily tapes sets are taken off site by IT staff. However, it should be noted that in the past secure backup repositories have themselves been destroyed by fire.

These two data solutions provide two different functions.

Tape Back up provides a medium to long term copy of HPC data at a specific point in time. Restoration of data is possible from either the months daily tapes or the month end back up sets. The daily tapes are overwritten on an ongoing basis the following month. Only the Month End tapes are retained as a permanent record.

The data replicated to our ISP is designed to be rapidly accessible should we invoke our Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity plans. This should negate the requirement for reference to back up tapes.

All of these data can be accessed by VPN solutions from either HPC laptops with 3G cards, or more usually a PC environment set up in our back up office location at the supplier NDR's site in Uxbridge.

Annual tests of the DR/BC solution will take place.

This will include loading of the latest information from the LISA production application and registration system

If part or all of the Disaster Recovery plan is invoked for any reason throughout the financial year, this will be included as part of the annual testing of the plan.

Assisting the management of electronically archived files

A Google search appliance will be purchased and installed to the HPC network environment to aid user searching across the network. This will enhance the use of existing or old electronic documents and files, where the creators of the content have left the organisation. The appliance costs approximately £2000. Purchase will be delayed slightly to ensure we obtain the maximum specification for the money.

A Sharepoint application test will be carried out to determine if a non Lotus Notes solution is capable of fulfilling some of HPC's document management issues.

Software testing for future systems

HPC currently uses a combination of Microsoft Office 2003 or 2000; Microsoft XP or 2000 desktop operating system. However these technologies are being replaced by Microsoft over 2007, and some may reach end of life within a few

years. HPC IT must therefore investigate how these new technologies will behave with HPC's particular applications such as the FTP system (APU), Education Approvals & Annual monitoring systems (SELMA), plus Digital Steps LISA registration system.

To this end the IT department will provision a test environment separate from the main HPC network, using any spare PC's and a file server.

Information Services

Freedom of Information & Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests

A bespoke development in Lotus Notes already provides the workflow and calendaring for Freedom of Information requests. This system will be duplicated and modified to manage Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The HPC and CPSM paper archive held offsite will continue to be evaluated and scanned to disk if of significance, or destroyed if out of retention.

Bespoke reports will be created as required, and a programme of demographic information developed over the coming year in conjunction with a LISA development to capture such data.

IT Training across HPC

The IT customer service survey will be used to evaluate the required training outside the Performance Review System over February March. This will result in a set of courses required to assist HPC's IT users carryout their tasks most efficiently with the resources provided.

IT will source bulk training contracts as in 2006-7 via the supplier QA-IQ

Summary of IT strategy

IT Direction

- Increasingly online with authentication
- Decreasing hardcopy
- IT Process flows mapped to ISO9001:2000 standard published on HPC intranet
- Evaluate implementation options for ITIL standard service support
- Security aiming for ISO27001; annual penetration testing and remedial work
- Avoid blind technology alleys

Innovation

- Working remotely via VPN from encrypted laptops or desktop machines
- Dual channel secure document delivery system – [opportunistic development]

- Increase on-line usage for HPC processes and communication
- Build test environment for Windows VISTA O/S and Office 2007 for evaluation

Company

- 120 users, with full Microsoft Office, and Power users up to 20% of total
- PC estate approximately half of workforce; laptops for management team and mobile or remote workers
- Long term home workers to be provided with PC's that are encrypted

Software

- MS Office 2003
- MS XP O/S where possible
- Crystal Reports 10
- MS Project
- Lotus Notes 6.5.4 > 7.1 migration

LISA live (Production) system

- Solaris v8.5 >10
- Apache v1.1.37
- 10Mb & 2Mb assured separation leased line connection
- Java v1.3.1_04
- Java Webstart v1.0.1_02
- Oracle 9i
- BES v5.2 > Sun Application server v (latest stable version)

Hardware

- Sun V880 Server with twin Ultrasparc III processors 2Gb RAM, multi Tb storage
- Wintel Pentium desktop computers
- Toshiba laptops
- Mitel IP telephony in house (Voice over IP)

Archive voice if business requires

Information

- Publish to the web unless confidential
- Document control enhanced
- Controlled directory structures for doc mgmt in short term
- Invest in Google appliance for HPC wide searching of repository

Data

- Replicated off site to DR server farm, nightly with function specific servers for remote operation
- Tape back ups nightly, monthly stored off site with vendor. Improved tape capacity to be rolled out.

IT governance

- MIT/CISR IT Governance model
- Programme Management
- Prioritisation of Helpdesk tickets by business priority
- ITIL Service Management – Foundation level qualified minimum
- IT Software asset management via external contractors
- Penetration testing via external contractors

Risk management

The IT department manage risks within the IT department, and throughout the company.

Key areas are IT security, covering access to HPC data, on mobile workers laptop computers, appropriate ring fencing of IT systems so that only the required employees/contractors have access to data, using best of breed technologies to monitor and constrain the types of data query allowed against the HPC online register.

HPC's disaster recovery plan covers a range of scenarios. However, advice from experienced experts in the field including Chief Fire Officers, Chief Police Officers and military specialists indicate in reality the plan is often used piecemeal during a real crisis. Not every scenario can be planned for, nor should be planned for.

See the appendix below for details.

Appendix: Risks managed by the Information Technology Department

Risk		Risk Owner	Significance Feb 2007	Probability Feb 2007
2.1	Inability to occupy premises or use interior equipment	Facilities Manager & Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Invoke DR Plan				
2.2	Rapid increase in registrant numbers	Chief Exec, Director of Operations, Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Scaleable IT systems/registration				
2.5	Public Transport disruption	Facilities Manager & Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigation Invoke DR Plan				
5.1	Software Virus damage	Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations Firewalls and anti-virus SW checks, appropriate policies and procedures, penetration testing				
5.2	Technology obsolescence (HW or SW)	Director of IT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Open system IT strategy, future proofing and LISA upgrade/development plan				
5.3	IT fraud or error	Director of IT	Medium	Low
Mitigations Adequate access control procedures maintained. System audit trails, automated password enforcement, penetration testing and backs on and off site				

10.2	LISA registration system failure	Director of Operations/ Director of IT	Low	Low
Mitigations IT strategy, support and development/refresh programme				
15.12	Unauthorised removal of assets (custody issue). Unauthorised access to HPC data via stolen hardware.	Director of IT/Facilities Manager	Low	Low
Mitigations IT asset labelling and logging, issuance to employees. Encryption of all HPC IT assets with personal data stored (laptops/PCs)				

Policy & Standards Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Rachel Tripp

May 2007

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Introduction

This document

This document has been drafted to set out work priorities for the financial year 2007 - 2008, and to provide a basis against which the work of the Policy & Standards department can be planned and measured. This document is underpinned by the Council's strategy, and details how the Policy department will continue to develop, to build on its work in embedding itself within HPC and in the wider policy arena, and assist the Council in preparing for the changes ahead in the regulation of healthcare professionals.

The nature of the issues that Policy & Standards deal with are such that work undertaken will comprise both planned projects, and also work which arises as a result of external factors, such as changes in legislation, changes to the professions, and other developments that are often unpredictable. Hence, in allocating resources, maintaining the ability to respond to the external environment is an important factor. To this end, the following projects are highlighted as those which could potentially be moved into next financial year, depending on external pressures, and particularly on the priorities identified by the White Paper implementation plan:

- The consultation review project;
- The experience of lay complainants;
- The Partners Code of Conduct; and
- Drawing on best practice from education providers.

A further opportunity to re-schedule work is that the workplan for the review of the Standards of Education and Training could be adjusted to allow for further White Paper work during the review period.

In order to keep the Council updated on any changes, the work plan will be updated in six months and will be brought back to the Council in December 2007.

The Policy & Standards department

This represents the department's second full financial year of activity, and sees Policy moving forward in a number of areas, particularly in the light of the numerous developments in the regulatory arena.

The Policy & Standards department's main responsibilities are:

- assisting the Council in developing strategy and policy;
- assisting the Council in setting and reviewing standards;
- assisting the Council in drafting guidance;
- supporting professional liaison groups;
- running consultations;
- managing the new professions, or 'aspirant groups' process;

- liaising with the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence on their annual performance review, and other cross-regulatory projects; and
- ensuring consistency of approach across all HPC departments.

Resourcing

The Policy department currently consists of four employees. The 2007-08 budget further allows for an administrator to support the team (this position will be recruited for once desk space allows).

Aims

The HPC, through the work of its Policy & Standards department, aims:

Improve:

- To respond to the recommendations of the White Paper, including, where appropriate, sharing information about best practice and participating in working groups, and also engaging with the issues raised in order to implement improvements to regulation.
- To review its standards, guidance and policies, including engaging with and consulting stakeholders, to gain feedback, and to make improvements to ensure that these continue to reflect the Council's purpose and principles.
- To collect information gathered and to analyse this information, and act upon it appropriately. This could include, for example, making the information available publicly, including to other potentially interested stakeholders, feeding this information into the Communications strategy, and / or making changes to processes where appropriate.
- To engage with and consult with stakeholders, and take account of their input in its work, to ensure that HPC's work is informed by the wider healthcare and regulatory landscape, and that our knowledge of multi-professional regulation can be shared.
- To continue to improve the way that healthcare professionals are regulated, by developing new guidance, new processes, or new requirements where appropriate.

Influence and promote:

- To build on its growing reputation as a respected voice within the policy arena of the regulation of healthcare professionals and other healthcare workers, and to use this reputation to pro-actively influence the external agenda, in the interests of protecting the public.

Trust, assurance and safety: the regulation of health professionals in the 21st century

Introduction

The government published the above White Paper, on February 21st 2007. This paper was the result of Chief Medical Officer's review of medical regulation, the parallel review of non-medical regulation (sometimes also called the 'Foster review') and the resulting consultation. The paper sets out the government's vision and priorities for how the regulation of health care professionals should work in the future, in order to respond to increasing expectations of the public and other stakeholders.

A vital part of the work of the Policy & Standards department is therefore to respond to the issues raised in the White Paper, and to respond appropriately in a way which reflects the government's, and also the Council's, priorities. It is anticipated that the Department of Health may publish its implementation plan in June 2007, and this part of the workplan will need to be revised in the light of this.

In order to facilitate discussion, the immediate issues raised in the White Paper are here placed in an approximate order of priority. (The topics below are those which have been initially identified as those likely to require some kind of work during this financial year.)

1. Revalidation

The White Paper, 'Trust, Assurance and Safety: The regulation of health care professionals in the 21st century' says on page 6 that there will be, 'new arrangements to ensure that ... [non-medical health professionals] also have the opportunity to demonstrate their continuing fitness to practise through appropriate revalidation arrangements. The Department will discuss with each profession and its regulator the most appropriate arrangements.'

The Council raised a number of concerns and issues about revalidation in its response to the 'Foster review'. The Council may therefore wish to initiate a piece of work to look into revalidation, or perhaps more appropriately to look into the broader issue of ongoing fitness to practise, or ongoing competence. It may be appropriate to set up a PLG to look at the context, both nationally and internationally, to make recommendations to the Council. The timetable for this potential project will be determined by the implementation plan.

2. Post-registration qualifications

The Council currently approves post-registration qualifications in local analgesia and prescription-only medicine for chiropodists and podiatrists, and also approves courses in supplementary prescribing for chiropodists and podiatrists, physiotherapists and radiographers.

The Education and Training committee has agreed that in future those prescription-only medicine modules which are already form part of an HPC approved programme, can be approved by a paper-exercise run in a similar way to our Annual monitoring process.

The Education and Training committee will need to further consider how to approach other post-registration qualifications, particularly since the White Paper recommends that regulators should mark the Register to show specialisms where appropriate. (Article 19 (6) of the Health Professions Order already allows the Council to annotate additional qualifications.)

It may be appropriate to set up a discussion meeting with the professional bodies and other stakeholders, to look at the initial work on criteria that the Council suggested as part of its response to the Foster review. The results of this discussion meeting, plus further research, could form the basis of a consultation document on post-registration qualifications. This may also be an appropriate time for the Council to review further how it currently approves all post-registration qualifications, including supplementary prescribing.

This piece of work will need to have close links with any work the Council undertakes around revalidation, and any decisions to annotate the Register any further will directly impact this work. Work on post-registration qualifications is also related to the Council's thoughts about the future shape of the work-force, with increased numbers of associate level, and advanced level practitioners, and how regulation may need to change to take account of this.

Timetable

A paper on this topic will be presented to the Education and Training committee in September 2007.

3. Equality and diversity

The Council has agreed a workplan for this project, which details, amongst other areas, how it will go about:

- reviewing its processes;
- taking action based on these reviews;
- establishing an employee diversity group;
- collecting data on registrants; and
- publishing its equality scheme.

The Policy & Standards department is providing the project lead for this important part of the Council's work. This involves working with the employee working group, liaising with departments about their work and their processes, and writing the Equality Scheme. This project was already identified as a priority for this year, and this is now confirmed by the fact that the White Paper, on page 68, recommends that regulators should report annually to Parliament on, 'equality issues relevant to regulation within its profession; analyses of any trends in ethnicity in its fitness to practise proceedings; and

an account of action taken to ensure fairness in the way that regulatory action is conducted.'

4. Health and character

The White Paper discusses the need for regulators to look at the good character of applicants, and suggests work to be carried out by CHRE on a common definition of good character.

In order to feed useful information into this project, and also in order to improve our processes, the Policy & Standards department will work with Fitness to Practise (FTP) on their review of the first two years of operating the health and character declarations process. Depending on the outcome of this review, it is planned that Policy could then work with FTP on drafting adapted processes, and particularly on producing guidance for interested stakeholders in this area, which could include education providers, who often contact HPC with queries, for example, about students with convictions.

Timetable

The FTP review of health and character cases is planned to begin in June 2007. Any work coming out of that review could then be brought to the Education and Training committee in December 2007.

5. Registration of students

The White Paper says, 'The Government believes that each regulator should consider this issue on the basis of the risk presented to patients by trainees and students in particular professions. The Department will ask the regulators to report back with proposals by January 2008.'

The Education and Training committee has already discussed a paper which presented the context, and has agreed that based on current information, it believes the registration of students would be a disproportionate reaction to the risk to the public. Policy will do further work on this topic, which could include holding a discussion meeting with stakeholders (including education providers, visitors and students), gathering information from education providers and other regulators, and/or analysis of fitness to practise cases.

Timetable

The nature of any work required will be informed by the publication of the Department of Health's implementation plan for the White Paper.

6. Complementary and Alternative Medicine

The White Paper also mentions the Steering Group which is looking at the statutory regulation of acupuncture, herbal medicine, and traditional Chinese medicine. The Director of Policy & Standards is a member of this working group, and other members of the Executive have been invited to attend meetings in order to present on various issues, including multi-professional regulation, and the relationship between the regulator and professional bodies. The Steering Group is expected to report this year, with recommendations on regulation for these groups.

7. The regulation of support workers

Page 86 of the White Paper discusses the regulation of healthcare support workers, and in particular the Scottish pilot project to implement employer-led regulation. The HPC Director of Operations is part of the Steering Group on this project, and the Council will wish to stay informed on the outcomes of this project.

The White Paper also says that the government, 'will consider whether there is sufficient demand for the introduction of statutory regulation for any assistant practitioner roles at levels 3 and 4 on the Skills for Health Career Framework.'

This is in accordance with the Council's view that some form of statutory regulation is necessary for these groups, in the interests of public safety. Further work on this topic may be necessary, the timing of which will depend on the implementation plan.

8. Working groups

The Council will wish to be involved in the various pieces of work to implement the recommendations from the White Paper, particularly the various working groups that will be set up, including groups on new professions, and revalidation. As with the other areas from the White Paper, more detail on this area will be forthcoming once the implementation plan has been published.

HPC strategy: Improve

Introduction

The HPC operates within a constantly changing environment. How we register health professionals continues to develop as a result of external factors (including changes to the Health Professions Order, or to other legislation, changes to the professions, to best practice, or to stakeholders' evolving needs and expectations) or internal factors (including internal reviews, audits and other quality improvement measures).

An important part of the Council's work in this area is therefore to keep its standards, guidance and policies under regular review, ensuring that we react proportionately and appropriately to feedback, and take account of the views of those who are using the standards. In addition to this area of review and improvement, the Council will also wish to consider entirely new pieces of work, where these may contribute to effective regulation, in line with its guiding principles.

Projects for 2007 – 2008

1. Standards

The Council's standards workplan sets out the standards that the Council determines, the legal background for each, and the Council's aim in setting standards. It then goes on to detail a timetable for standards review, and scope for further work and development of the standards function.

The full standards workplan can be found on the Council website here:
www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/100017D6council_meeting_20061214_enclosure06.pdf

The main items of work which come under the area of standards are detailed below:

1. a) Standards of Education and Training review

As part of this workplan, the Council has agreed that it will review the Standards of Education and Training during this financial year. This review will be led by a professional liaison group (PLG) which may have representation from education providers, professional bodies, and other relevant stakeholders.

Timetable

A workplan for this review was agreed by the Education and Training committee in March 2007. The first meeting of the PLG is planned for September 2007.

1. b) Standards of conduct, performance and ethics supplementary information

The standards workplan also says that in order to improve understanding of the standards, we will develop the standards section of the HPC website. This could include producing an online 'bank' of information on a small number of topics. Such information could be produced where a topic is not substantive enough to merit formal guidance being produced (see the consultation on confidentiality guidance, below). This would also recognise the important role of professional bodies and other organisations in publishing guidance and information to assist registrants in meeting the standards, and could signpost this information where available.

Timetable

This approach was agreed by the Conduct and Competence committee in January 2007, and the following topics were agreed as those which could be covered initially:

- conflicts of interest (including gifts);
- medicines and prescribing;
- reporting concerns;
- child protection; and
- consent.

The Executive will work on collating this information with a view to publication online by September 2007.

2. New professions

The White Paper places an emphasis on the regulation of new groups which is in line with the Council's commitment to extend regulation to currently unregulated groups, in order to better protect the public.

The Council's new professions process has been in place since 2003, and to date the Council has recommended that nine additional groups should be regulated. The progress of these groups onto the Register has been delayed by the slow progress of the legislative and parliamentary process, in part because of the review and the White Paper, which included looking at the regulation of currently unregulated professions.

Given the current emphasis on this topic, this financial year is an appropriate time for the Council to review its process. This review could include:

- taking a more proactive approach to groups that have not approached the Council to make an application;
- considering issues around 'distributed regulation', including liaising with other regulators;
- considering issues around 'emerging roles' (for example surgical care practitioners), which may present different regulatory issues for the Council;
- reviewing the application form and guidance notes;
- reviewing the new professions criteria;

- actively following up previous contacts with aspirant groups, to determine whether they are planning an application, or whether they wish to explore other queries regarding regulation in more detail.

Timetable

A paper on new professions will be taken to the Council in December 2007.

3. Standards of Proficiency for new professions

If further professions are brought onto the Register, then the HPC will need to establish Standards of Proficiency for these new groups, and consult on them. Careful liaison and work with stakeholders in all four home countries will be particularly important to ensure that any standards determined are appropriate across the UK.

The White Paper identifies psychologists, psychotherapists and counsellors, and healthcare scientists as the professions that are the highest priority for regulation. In addition, the Hearing Aid Council (HAC) is due to be abolished by the Department of Trade and Industry, and it is probable that the hearing aid dispensers they regulate would then become part of HPC. We are working with the Department of Health and the HAC to plan for this transfer, which seems likely to take place in the financial year 2008 – 2009.

Timetable

This will be determined by the legislative timetable for the regulation of any new groups, which is expected to be published on June 5th 2007. However, in order to facilitate good resource planning, a professional liaison group to establish Standards of Proficiency for one new group is planned for this financial year.

4. The experience of lay complainants

The public are a crucial stakeholder for all regulators. The main ways in which members of the public may interact with us is when they check our online register, or if they make a complaint to us about their health professional. This second group are potentially an important source of information about HPC, about how we work, and also a source of ideas about how we could improve.

We will run a project to investigate whether we can learn from the perceptions of members of the public who have complained to us (including those whose complaint reached a public hearing, and those whose complaints were determined to have ‘no case to answer’) to ask for their feedback and ideas about the HPC, about their expectations of us, how they heard of us, their experiences of being part of the fitness to practise process, and how they feel we could improve in the future. This piece of work will be undertaken in partnership with the Fitness to Practise department, and in conjunction with the work planned by FTP on reviewing the witness support programme.

Timetable

Once the Communications department has undertaken its audit of PPI activities, a scoping paper for this piece of work will go to the practice

committees in September 2007. Depending on the input of the practice committees, it could then be presented to the Council in December 2007.

5. Consultation

Since its first public consultation in 2002, the HPC has consulted on nearly 20 issues, from rule changes, to standards reviews, to guidance documents.

This project is to review how we consult with our stakeholders, including reviewing our consultation list, the use of consultation events, responses received, and whether there is best practice in this area that we could learn from.

Timetable

A paper reviewing our consultation process, with recommendations on any necessary changes, will be taken to the Communications committee in October 2007.

6. Continuing professional development operational project

Policy & Standards will continue to feed into the operational project to prepare for CPD audits, providing information to the Project Manager, and working with other members of the Executive (particularly Operations and Communications) on further processes and work needed to support the audits.

Timetable

The first CPD audits will begin in July 2008.

7. Complaints process for approved courses

The Policy & Standards team plans to work in conjunction with the Education department to establish a process to assist the Education and Training committee in dealing with complaints about approved courses. Such a system would need to balance the requirement that the Committee only approve those programmes which meet the HPC's standards, with an opportunity for the education provider to respond to information received, and also with a process so that complaints which do not call into question a programme's approved status can be properly dismissed.

Timetable

An initial paper outlining options to establish a process will be brought to the Education and Training Committee in June 2007.

8. Registrant numbers and forecasting

Forecasting how future registrant numbers may change has historically been undertaken by the finance department, as part of the budget planning process. In order to recognise the increasing complexity of assumptions effecting future registrant numbers, the Policy & Standards team will work with colleagues in Registration, Finance, Fitness to Practise and other departments to produce a piece of work which pulls together information about all the areas that affect the number of registrants. This will be combined

in order to make more robust predictions of how the numbers of registered health professionals may change in the future. These figures can then be used internally, used for comparisons with data held by the Department of Health and the National Audit Office, and also circulated externally where other stakeholders may find them useful.

Timetable

This project will be brought to the Finance and Resources committee in July 2007, so that the results can form part of the budget-planning process for the financial year 2008 – 2009.

9. Partners' Code of Conduct

The Policy & Standards department will work with the Human Resources department to establish a code of conduct for partners. It is likely that this will draw on the information already developed for the Council members' Code of Conduct. This would then have the potential to feed into the Partners recruitment process, and performance management process.

Timetable

A paper on the code of conduct will go to the practice committees and the Education and Training committee for discussion in September, and is then expected to be brought to Council in December 2007.

10. CHRE performance review

Every year, the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence reviews the performance of all nine health regulators. This process involves submitting a report to CHRE, attending initial meetings, and follow-up meetings, providing additional information as required, and approving the final report(s).

Timetable

The performance review for the financial year 2007 – 2008, if similar to that of last year, will involve submitting the initial report to CHRE in January 2008, with the results of the review being published in April 2008.

Ongoing projects

Many projects undertaken in Policy & Standards will run over more than one financial year. Below is an update of projects which are ongoing from last financial year:

1. Review of the Standards of Proficiency

The Council has completed its review of the Standards of Proficiency for the original 12 professions. The results of this review were agreed for consultation at the Council meeting of 6th July 2006.

Suggested changes to the generic and profession-specific standards went out for consultation from October 2006 until early February 2007. An analysis of the results of the consultation, together with final recommendations for necessary amendments or changes, will be brought to the Council in May 2007.

If the changes are agreed by Council, Policy will then work with colleagues in those departments that use the standards, and also with Communications, on communicating the changes to the standards, and how the revised standards can be implemented while still ensuring the smooth running of the operational processes that depend on them.

2. Standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners

The standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners (ODPs) were published in July 2004. The standards stayed the same during the two year grandparenting period which ended on 17th October 2006. (The views of ODP stakeholders, including the Association of Operating Department Practitioners were taken into account during the recent review in considering whether changes were necessary to the generic standards.)

The Education and Training committee agreed a workplan for reviewing the Operating Department Practitioners' standards at their meeting in September 2006. In line with this, a meeting was scheduled for February to review the profession-specific elements of the ODPs standards of proficiency. Unfortunately this meeting had to be cancelled, and an alternative date will now be found for this.

Timetable

This meeting has now been re-scheduled for June 2007, and a paper on the ODPs profession-specific standards will then go to Education and Training committee in September 2007.

3. Review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics

The Council has now completed its review of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, which included an initial 'mini consultation' period, discussion meetings with professional bodies and patient groups, several rounds of discussion with the Practice Committees, and discussion at the

Council awayday. The results of the review were agreed by the Council in March 2007. This will now be the subject of a consultation.

Timetable

This consultation will take place from May – July 2007. The results will be analysed and brought to Council in September 2007.

4. Guidance on the standards of conduct, performance and ethics

The issue of developing further guidance on the standards of conduct, performance and ethics has been considered by the practice committees, who recommended that HPC should draft guidance on confidentiality. This guidance has been agreed by the Council and will be consulted on with the suggested revisions for the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Timetable

This consultation will take place from May – July 2007. The results will be analysed and brought to Council in September 2007.

5. Health, disability and registration

The Council has published two documents which deal with the subject of health, disability and registration:

- a disabled person's guide to becoming a health professional; and
- information about the health reference.

These documents are currently available online, and the lay-out is being co-ordinated by the Communications department. The Policy & Standards department will continue to be involved in other activities to implement the guidance in the documents, including briefing other departments and working with external stakeholders to increase awareness of our work in this area. To support the latter, Policy & Standards are planning to work with the Events Manager on a stakeholder event around the Council's guidance, to be held in 2007.

6. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Further information about the Council's CPD standards has been published online, and sent out to all registrants.

Sample profiles for nine professions have been published online, and work on other professions' draft profiles (in partnership with the professional bodies) is ongoing. The Council remains committed to publishing example profiles for every profession on the Register, and will continue to work with the professional bodies to ensure that this is achieved as soon as possible.

7. Grandparenting review

The review of the grandparenting process for the original twelve professions has been drafted, and a first draft has been seen by the Education and Training committee. This review will be in a paper to the Council in May 2007, and if approved, could be published thereafter.

8. The Council's requirement for external examiners

In 2006, the Council consulted on a change to its requirement for external examiners. The Education and Training committee agreed in March, in line with feedback received from the consultation, to recommend to the Council that the new standard 6.7.5 should require assessment regulations to 'clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner from the relevant part of the Register, unless other arrangements are agreed.'

Timetable

The Education and Training Committee has recommended to the Council that this standard should be changed. If the Council agree this decision at their meeting in May 2007, then Policy will assist the Education team in rolling out this change.

2008 – 2010

The Policy department will continue to be involved in the final planning stages for the first CPD audits in July 2008.

CPD analysis

After these audits have been completed, it is expected that Policy will work with colleagues in Operations to analyse the results of the audits, to assist in refining processes and information as appropriate, and to bring to the Council's attention any early emerging trends.

The White Paper

It is expected that the work of Policy & Standards from 2008 – 2010 will be heavily influenced by the publication of the implementation plan from the White Paper. In particular, the Council may wish to undertake further work on the area of revalidation (see the separate section on the White Paper, on page 4 of this document).

Another important factor that will have a bearing on the Council's future work is the changing nature of the workforce. As changes are made to workforce numbers, roles, and how healthcare is delivered, the Council will need to consider how regulation can adapt to ensure that the public is protected, and that regulation continues to be sufficiently flexible so as not to impede local developments in service delivery. In particular, planned increases to the number of associate level practitioners, to the number of advanced level practitioners, and the increase in team-based healthcare delivery could effect how healthcare professionals are regulated in the future.

HPC strategy: Influence and promote

Introduction

In July 2007, the Council will have been operating under its new legislation for four years, in addition to its experience in operating in shadow form during 2002.

The Council wishes to continue to use this experience of regulation in order to positively influence the policy agenda in the regulation of healthcare professionals, in line with its objective of protecting the public, and its guiding principles.

This part of the document details the specific work that will be done over the coming financial year towards meeting this aim, and shows how this work will be built upon thereafter.

Projects for 2006 - 2007

1. Drawing on best practice from education providers

The Policy department will work with the Education department to draw out elements of best practice from pre-registration education. The precise nature of these will be determined by analysis of information obtained from visits, but could include issues such as:

- patient public involvement in curriculum design or delivery;
- inter-professional learning;
- teaching of professional ethics and regulation; or
- e-learning.

2. Government, including four UK departments of health

The Council took a decision in December 2006 not to establish a separate Scottish Office for the HPC at this time, but instead to work on improving links between HPC and various stakeholder organisations in the home countries: Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The Policy & Standards department will continue to work with the Chief Executive, and the Communications department (and particularly the Public Affairs Manager, when appointed) to ensure a consistent, and strategic approach to stakeholder relationships. In particular, HPC will continue to meet regularly with government representatives from the four home countries, benefiting from Council members' contacts and expertise where appropriate.

3. European Union

2007 is the year in which the Professional Qualifications Directive will be passed into UK law. This will affect the legal framework for how HPC assesses EEA applicants to the Register, and in particular provides for temporary registration, and the possibility of the establishment of 'Common Platforms'.

In order to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by European developments, the Policy & Standards team will:

- continue membership of the Alliance of UK Health Regulators in Europe (AURE), as an effective way of making shared UK regulatory issues heard in Europe;
- liaise with colleagues in Operations, including Registration and Project Management, regarding setting up systems for temporary registration by October 2007;
- continue to implement and review the recommendations from the European conference on Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders, October 2005. This includes working with colleagues in European competent authorities around implementing the next steps of the consensus, which includes a possible Memorandum of Understanding between regulators ; and
- continue ongoing updating and development of www.healthregulation.org as a worldwide resource for all regulators to enable effective sharing of information, particularly around fitness to practise.

4. Consultation responses

The Policy department will continue to build on its work in responding to other organisation's consultation responses, including ensuring that HPC is on more consultation lists, and widening its scope in responding not only to consultations that are directly concerned with health professionals' regulation, but also bringing this expertise to consultations on issues related to health, consumer issues, and regulation more broadly.

2008 - 2010

As outlined in the previous workplan, 2006 - 2007 was primarily a year of ground-work: making contacts - particularly within the wider policy arena, building knowledge, continuing to gain input and ideas from stakeholders and feeding these into the appropriate parts of the organisation.

Following the important work undertaken by the Council in establishing its detailed response to the Foster review, the Council can now begin to build on the position it established through further work on some of the key issues identified:

- devolution and UK-wide regulation;
- the future development of pre-registration education;
- revalidation;
- post-registration qualifications;
- regulation of aspirant groups, potentially including complementary and alternative medicine, counsellors and psychotherapists, and further healthcare scientists; and
- the regulation of healthcare support workers.

In addition, last year's workplan determined that the financial year 2008 – 2009 would be an appropriate time to review the Council's activities in this area, to establish what has worked well, and what areas could be improved.

Risk management

Managing risks is also a vital part of the Policy & Standards work over the coming year. The main risks that are owned by the department are:

12.1 Incorrect process followed to establish standards/guidance/policy (ie: no relevant Council decision)

12.2 Inappropriate standards/guidance published eg: standards are set at inappropriate level, are too confusing or are conflicting

12.3 Changing/evolving legal advice rendering previous work inappropriate.

12.4 Inadequate preparation for a change in legislation (Health Professions Order, or other legislation affecting HPC)

In summary, however, it should be noted that although it's separately dealt with here, risk management is in fact embedded into much of the workplan for this coming year. For example:

Resourcing

Increasing the number of employees, particularly those with good previous experience, increases the capacity of the department, and also helps to manage all the relevant risks in Policy, but particularly risks 12.3 and 12.4

Networking and engagement

Making good contacts with external organisations not only feeds into the Council's overall aim to influence and promote, but also helps to manage risk 12.4

Quality management

Working with the Quality Manager, particularly around internal audits, not only links with the Council's aim to improve, by keeping ISO registration, but also helps to manage risk 12.1

Projects

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Claire Phillips

March 2007

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Introduction

Financial year 2007/8 will be the first year in which:

- There has been a dedicated Major Projects manager
- The new HPC project planning process has been implemented
- The new HPC project management methodology has been used.

The aims of the above are to ensure that:

- Projects are effectively planned and budgeted
- That the amount of work undertaken is set at a conservatively achievable level
- That the focus of all projects is to deliver results within reasonable budget and time constraints

The effective implementation of the above will result in improved resource deployment, a more controlled environment around projects and clearer communications around project status.

To this end, a list of prospective major projects was compiled in November 2006. The list was reviewed and discussed by all stakeholders and was limited to a realistic number. Initial technology requirements were gathered during December and quotes were obtained. The list was then realigned according to budget constraints by the stakeholders and the Executive and was finalised in January 07. Projects will now be undertaken between April 2007 and March 2008.

This document

This document provides a summary of the projects that will be undertaken this year. The dates indicated are provisional dates driven by resource constraints (both internal and external), legislative deadlines and business need.

The timelines of those projects with a technology aspect have been estimated based on initial requirements and therefore may be subject to change once further analysis has been completed.

Should further legislation or business need require a change in the timetable or for an additional project to be added, the project planning process will be followed and the portfolio and / or timeline altered accordingly.

Resources

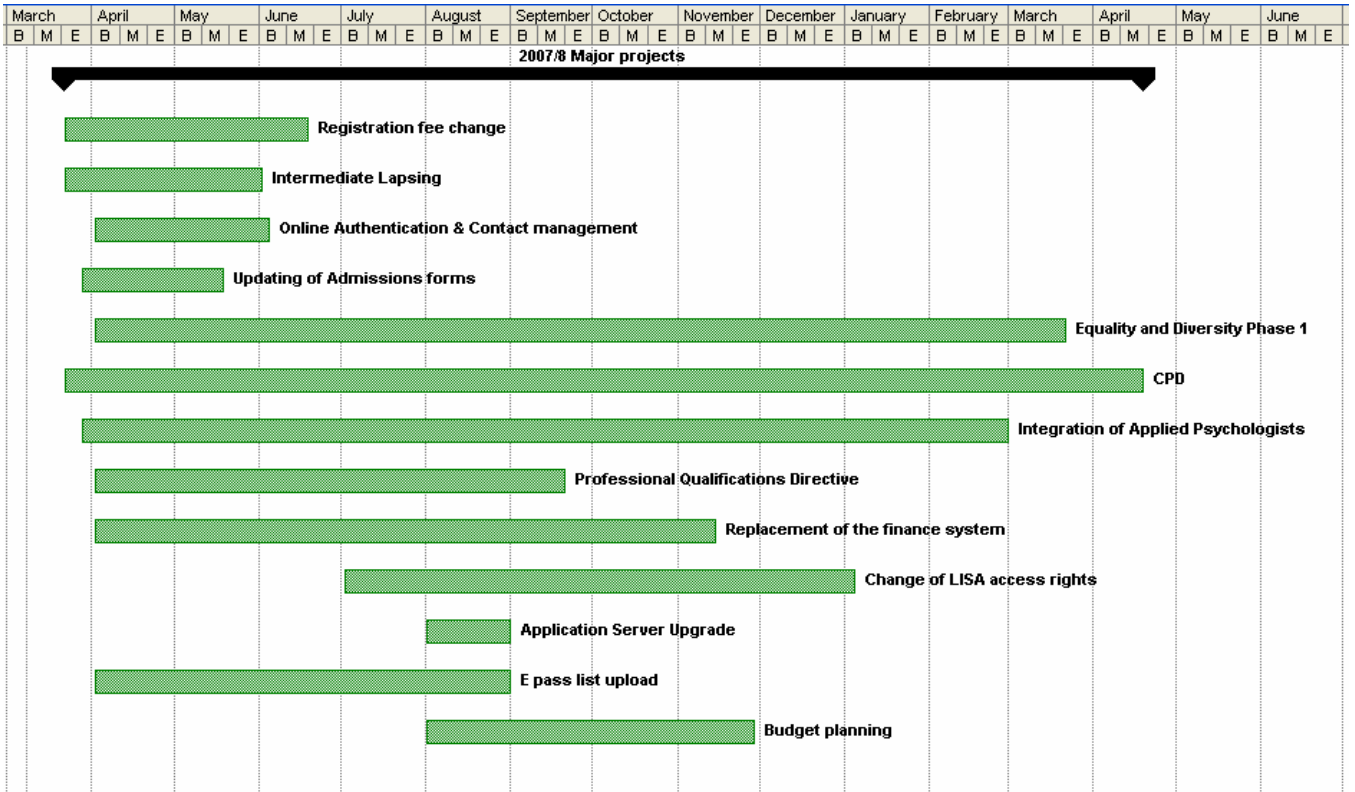
All capital expenditure is noted in the table below and projects will be run using existing human resources within the organisation.

Appendix 1: Project timeline

Project Number	Project name	Summary	Owning Department	Departments impacted	Timeline	Capital expenditure 07/08	Risk register reference
MP 7	Registration fee change	Implementation of updated fee structure	Finance	Finance, Registrations, IT	2 nd Apr – 18 th June	None – operational implementation of technology build that will be completed in the 06/07 financial year	8.2
MP 11	Intermediate lapsing	Registration system (LISA) development to ensure that non-paying registrants are notified and lapsed during the professional cycle as appropriate	Finance	Finance, IT	2 nd Apr – 1 st June	None – operational implementation of technology build that will be completed in the 06/07 financial year	
MP 14	Online Authentication & Contact management	Web based application that will allow registrants to update their personal details online. LISA development to allow registrations officers to authenticate a caller before updating personal details	Registrations	Registrations, IT	2 nd Apr – 4 th June	None – operational implementation of technology build that will be completed in the 06/07 financial year	
MP 13	Updating of admissions forms	Revision and rollout of all admissions forms (UK & International)	Registrations	Registrations	2 nd Apr – 18 th May	None	
MP 5	Equality & Diversity Phase 1	Creation and implementation of an HPC specific Equality and Diversity scheme. Phase 1 centres on the Fitness to Practise, HR and Partners departments	All	All	2 nd Apr – 21 st Mar	None	
MP 2	Continuing Professional Development	Implementation of processes to audit & track registrants' evidence of	Registrations	Registrations, Fitness to Practise,	2 nd Apr to 31 st Mar	£80,000	8.1

Project Number	Project name	Summary	Owning Department	Departments impacted	Timeline	Capital expenditure 07/08	Risk register reference
		CPD.		Communications, Partners, IT, Policy			
MP 3	Integration of Aspirant Group 1 – Applied Psychologists	On-boarding of the Applied Psychologists	Registrations	Registrations, Fitness to Practise, Communications, Partners, IT, Approvals & Monitoring, Secretariat, Policy	28 th Mar to 29 th Feb Dates provisional – to be confirmed when legislation is finalised	None	14.4 & 8.4
MP 26	Professional Qualifications Directive	Project to allow for temporary registrations	Registrations	Registrations, Communications, IT, Policy	2 nd Apr to 20 th Sept	£40,000	8.3
MP 27	Replacement of the finance system	Replacement of SAGE	Finance	Finance	2 nd Apr to 14 th Nov	£19,000	
MP 28	Change of LISA access rights	Full review and implementation of revised access rights for LISA	Finance	Finance, Registrations, IT	2 nd Jul to 4 th Jan	£35,000	
MP 25	Application Server upgrade	Migration of LISA from using Borland application Server to the equivalent Sun Application Server	IT	IT	1 st Aug to 31 st Aug	£30,000	
MP 17	E pass list upload	LISA enhancement to allow the electronic verification of educational institution passlists	Registrations	Registrations, IT	2 nd Apr to 31 st Aug	None – operational implementation of technology build that will be completed in the 06/07 financial year	

Appendix 2: Project Gantt Chart



Registration Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Richard Houghton

February 2007

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Introduction

Providing a high level of customer service is crucial to the long term success of the Health Professions Council (HPC) and demonstrates our commitment to all of our stakeholders - registrants, members of the public, our employees, our suppliers and the elected members of our Council. As the standard of customer service increases in other service sectors such as financial services, telecommunications, local government, retail and leisure so does the service quality expectations of their customers. Similarly, HPC's "customers" will continue to have higher expectations of their own customer service experience which includes having a wider range of service delivery options, with customers wanting more choice of how they interact with us. We have also increased their expectations by recommending an increase to registration fees starting with the next professional cycle. Coupled with this increased expectation of service delivery is an increase in registrant number growth. Registrant numbers have increased at an average rate of 5% per year over the last 5 years and with the probable regulation of new professions such as applied psychologists the demand for these services will increase.

It is clear that we need to continue to develop our customer service delivery strategy that is based on the present and future needs and expectations of stakeholders. It is also important to maintain the positive, pride of workmanship, feeling of community, enjoyable and fun working environment that exists at HPC as customer satisfaction generally moves in the same direction as employee satisfaction.

Much has already been achieved. The employment of a senior customer service expert has had a visible and continuous impact on service delivery. The beginning of a formal industry recognised customer service training programme for registration officers allows individual employees to have their personal commitment to our customers recognised in the form of a formal qualification and this is just beginning to bear fruit. As is the professional contact centre management training for middle managers which will provide commercial best practice service delivery skills. The cross pollination of skills between the two registrations departments will assist in the load balancing of the work and will assist us in having the right number of skilled people in place at the right times to serve customers, at service level and with quality. This will also provide a one-stop shop to customers and reduce the need for 'hand-offs'.

The 2007 - 2008 registrations workplan builds on these achievements. Employing the best people in a good working environment and supporting them with ongoing training, reliable equipment and up to date systems. Recognising individuals and teams by promoting from within wherever possible and encouraging everyone to enjoy rewarding careers and provide job satisfaction. The relocation of the registrations area onto one floor will bring new challenges but also new benefits. The investment in some technologies to reflect business rules and processes will speed up processing and improve job satisfaction.

It is important to remember that it is the continuation of a journey in registrations.

This document

This document proposes registration's work priorities for the financial year April 2007 – March 2008. The registrations department is both proactive and reactive in its work so the requirements may change, particularly in light of business needs. Issues may arise, for example regulation of new professions and the outcome and impact of the review of non-medical health regulation. **The department will therefore need to be flexible in the delivery of its workplan in order to respond accordingly.**

Resources

The draft financial budget currently assumes a team of 37 registration employees and a budget of £2,150,000. This workplan is drafted on these assumptions with budget levels set in conjunction with our operational plans. The following paragraphs summarise the headline activity that has been prioritised to deliver the six objectives detailed below. The prioritisation is based on how important the development is in terms of improving our key processes and achieving our goals together with the resource requirement to complete the task.

Achieving objectives in 2007–2008

The registration department's workplan for 2007– 2008 details our main areas of work and sets out how we will work towards achieving our objectives.

The registration department's objectives 2007– 2008:

1. Manage business as usual activities within agreed service levels
2. Improve quality of service delivery
3. Improve capacity planning
4. Re-organisation of the registration team
5. Employee development
6. Manage projects within agreed timescales

Annex 1 includes details of delivery dates and responsibilities.

Registration objective 1 - Manage business as usual activities within agreed service levels

We will continue to deliver strong performance against our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), listed below:

Process	Target
UK applications and readmissions	10 days processing
International/EEA applications	Processed within 3 months of receipt of all documents
Renewals batch letters sent on-time.	Renewal notice sent not less than 3 months before publicly published renewal dates. Final renewal notice sent not less than 1 month before publicly published renewal dates
Renewal cycle batch processing	Complete renewal (lapsing) process run within 5 days of publicly published dates
Written complaints	18 days response
Emails	5 days response
Telephone call answering	80% of calls answered within 30 seconds

Also, a major impact on our workload this year will be the nine professions that will be renewing their registration as detailed below:

- Orthoptists 1 June 2007 to 31 August 2007
- Paramedics 1 June 2007 to 31 August 2007
- Clinical Scientists 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007
- Prosthetists and Orthotists 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007
- Speech and Language Therapists 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007
- Occupational Therapists 1 July 2007 to 30 September 2007
- Biomedical Scientists 1 September 2007 to 30 November 2007

- Radiographers
- Physiotherapists

1 December 2007 to 28 February 2008

1 February 2008 to 30 April 2008

Registration objective 2 - Improve quality of service delivery

The service sector in which the Health Professions Council (HPC) operates is the fastest growing segment of the economy resulting in intense competition and enhanced service offerings. This has led to higher expectations regarding service quality. However, quality is a difficult concept to measure when applied to services such as those provided by HPC. Unlike products, services are intangible with aspects that are difficult to identify and name let alone quantify. Services are also heterogeneous and difficult to standardise in that the same service may be delivered differently when delivered by different employees. We need to take steps by firstly purchasing a call recording solution so that we can monitor telephone calls and then improve the quality of service that is provided.

Registration objective 3 - Improve capacity planning

The registration department depends on having adequate numbers of quality trained employees on hand to deliver the expected level and quality of service to deliver optimal results. That means we must pay strict attention to absenteeism, late arrivals, early departures, personal time off, sickness absence, and holidays. The registrations team often get sudden and unplanned demand spikes and we need to explore the possibility of introducing professional capacity planning software to accurately forecast workload, eliminate guess work from the scheduling process and fully exploit the benefits of workforce management. An effective workforce management solution will enable us to use our historical business information effectively to optimise the workforce to ensure that scheduled employees are in the 'right place at the right time' and also identify if there are sufficient employees to meet our service levels.

Registration objective 4 - Re-organisation of the registration team

The new structure will move the registrations team into a team based environment, with a view to improving performance. The department will consist of 3 teams with 2 teams trained to action Renewals, UK and International queries but the teams' priority will be to provide front line customer service delivery and handle the more complex queries. The third team will process data entry tasks.

Effective supervision is key to contact centre management and each team will be managed by a customer services manager who will deliver the organisation's instructions and carry out business policies and relay back to senior management what is happening and what needs to be done to meet our goals. Good supervision will reward our investment in staffing, training and the proposed new centre. Poor supervision breaks them and that is why it is imperative we recruit the right people into the new customer services manager and vacant team leader positions. The customer services managers will need to monitor and effectively grade employees' performance.

In view of the team size and the customer services managers' responsibilities to attend meetings, contribute to various projects etc as a result of the wide scope of their role they each need to be supported by a team leader. The team leader will answer escalated calls, generate reports, deliver real-time adherence management, monitor calls, perform controls and checks and a variety of other tasks that will relieve the customer services managers, so that they can focus on their people management responsibilities.

The new structure of the department will ensure we deliver our agreed commitments to Council:

- Processing times decrease as employee skill increases
- Service quality increased
- Greater flexibility to demand
- Capacity increase
- Registration officer numbers remain the same

Registration objective 5 - Employee development

Our employee development policy needs to aim to ensure that we place the right people in the right role, and we invest in their recruitment, training and development. We need to identify our skills shortages not only based on our current workload but our forecasted activity and build a comprehensive training plan for the year. We have already begun cross training the registration officers across the 2 departments in each others department tasks. The training requirements identified will be met either internally or externally by delivering appropriate training. We have already made significant progress in this area with all employees within the registration team commencing an Institute of Customer Services (ICS) training programme. Also, the customer services managers are currently undertaking a professional certificate in contact centre management and strategy, which is an internationally recognised BTEC qualification.

Registration objective 6 - Manage projects within agreed timescales

The environment within which HPC operates is not static, but is instead changing as a result of many factors which include changes to legislation, to professions and to best practice. The following part of this document details the projects that will be resourced over the coming financial year towards meeting this aim:

- **Updating of admissions forms** - All admission forms and guidance notes to be updated and include continuing professional development (CPD)/return to practise information.
- **Epass list uploader** - LISA enhancement to allow electronic verification of pass lists.

- **Certificates review** – Review and re-design of the registration certificate.
- **Introduce call recording solution** - Registration telephone calls to be recorded for the purposes of monitoring and training.
- **Relocate to Stannary Street** - Refurbishment of Stannary Street.
- **Equality and diversity** - Revision of equality and diversity policies to ensure HPC is positively promoting an equal and diverse society.
- **Professional qualifications directive** - Project to implement European directive 2005/36/EC.
- **CPD** - Implementation of processes to audit and track registrants' evidence of CPD.
- **On-line LISA authentication** - Allow registrants to update personal details online.
- **Improve identity checks** – Review of the application process to identify improvements that will reduce the risk of exposure to identity theft.
- **Registration fee change** – Realignment of registration fee charges.

Appendix 1: Registration department activities table 2007–2008

The table below sets out the registration department's day to day activities in the delivery of the registration objectives.

Objective	Activity	Mitigate Risk Register Item	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Manage business as usual activities within agreed service levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage service delivery processes within service levels 	10.1	1 April 2007	Ongoing	RH
Improve quality of service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce quality checks 	10.1	1 March 2007	Ongoing	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce call monitoring 	10.1	4 September 2007	30 November 2007	MP/CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider introducing customer satisfaction surveys 	10.1	2 February 2008	31 March 2008	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce regular coaching sessions 	10.1	3 July 2007	Ongoing	MP/CH
Improve capacity planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the possibility of introducing a capacity planning process to accurately forecast workload 	10.1	1 October 2007	31 March 2008	RH
Re-organisation of the registration team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure the registrations team 	10.5	3 May 2007	31 December 2007	RH

Objective	Activity	Mitigate Risk Register Item	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Employee development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce professional recruitment ability tests 	10.1	3 March 2007	30 May 2007	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Services Managers complete professional contact centre qualification 	10.1	1 October 2006	30 June 2007	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All registration employees to gain accredited customer service qualification 	10.1	1 February 2007	30 April 2007	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify technical training requirements and implement long term training plan 	10.1	1 June 2007	Ongoing	MP/CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design registration officer training manual 	10.1	1 March 2007	22 October 2007	MP/CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross train all registration officers 	10.1	1 February 2007	Ongoing	MP/CH
Manage projects within agreed timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating admissions forms - All admission forms and guidance notes to be updated and to include CPD and return to practise information. 	10.3	20 October 2006	18 May 2007	MP/CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Epass list uploader - Electronic verification of passlists. 	2.2	2005	31 August 2007	CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certificates review – Review and re-design of the registration certificate. 		1 May 2007	31 July 2007	CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce call recording solution - Calls to be recorded for monitoring and training. 	10.1	4 September 2007	30 November 2007	RH

Objective	Activity	Mitigate Risk Register Item	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Manage projects within agreed timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate to Stannary Street - Refurbishment of Stannary Street. 	2.6	2005	31 December 2007	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality and diversity - Revision of equality and diversity policies to ensure the HPC is positively promoting an equal and diverse society. 		1 October 2006	Ongoing	MP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional qualifications directive - Project to implement European directive 2005/35/EC. 	8.3	2 April 2007	20 September 2007	MP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPD - Implementation of processes to audit and track registrants' evidence of CPD. 	8.1	2 April 2007	18 April 2008	RH/CH/ MP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line LISA authentication - LISA development to allow registrants to update personal details online. 	10.1	2005	4 June 2007	CH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve identity checks - Review of the application process to identify improvements that will reduce the risk of exposure to identity theft. 	10.3	18 September 2006	30 June 2007	RH
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration fee change. Realignment of registration fee charges. 	8.2	22 March 2007	18 June 2007	RH

Key

RH-Richard Houghton

MP-Mark Potter

CH-Claire Harkin

Secretariat Department

2007 – 2008 Work Plan

Niamh O'Sullivan

May 2007

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Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Introduction

The HPC Secretariat was established in January 2004. Its role is to support the Council, committees and profession liaison groups of the HPC so that they are carry out their governance role effectively. The Secretariat works closely with the President, Chairmen and members of Council and with members of the Executive in providing this support.

Main Areas of Responsibility

The Secretariat main areas of responsibility are:

- (i) Provision of support, and implementation of best practice in relation to support, of Council and Committees
- (ii) Implementation of governance processes and procedures which have been agreed by Council
- (iii) Work with Council and Committees in review and updating of standing orders and related documents
- (iv) Organisation of induction and on-going training of members as agreed with the President and members
- (v) Provision of information for members in the form of a members' information pack and members' extranet
- (vi) Design of members' self-assessment system for agreement by Council, organisation of members performance reviews and implementation of required follow-up
- (vii) Work with the Electoral Reform Services in the management of the annual elections
- (viii) Work with the Appointments Commission and the HPC President in the management of the recruitment process for the appointment of lay members
- (ix) Organisation of annual meeting and Council away day
- (x) Preparation of timetable for, and drafting content of, annual report
- (xi) Drafting policies and procedures in relation to the Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Act

This document

This document: This document sets out the Secretariat workplan for the year 2007/2008. However, as explained below, it should be noted that the workload of the Secretariat over the coming year will be impacted by the timetable for the implementation of the governance changes proposed in the White Paper.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Resources

The Secretariat consists of four employees as follows;

Colin Bendall	Secretary to Committees
Sophie Butcher	Secretary to Committees
Niamh O'Sullivan	Secretary to Council
Alison Roberts	Team Administrator

Secretary to Committees

The support of Committees is divided between two committee secretaries. The distribution of some of the other activities undertaken by the Secretariat, i.e. organisation of members' induction and training, performance review etc, between the two posts recognises the fact that the workload in support of some committees is higher than that for others.

Secretary to Council

The Secretary to Council is responsible for the management of the department. The Secretary provides support to the Council. A major part of this work involves drafting governance policies and processes for agreement by Council.

Team Administrator

The team administrator provides administrative support for the department and organises the Council away day and annual meeting. She also works with the finance department in the administration of members' claims.

Secretariat Activities 2007 – 2008

Support for Council and Committees

The provision of secretariat support for Council and its Committees will continue to be the main focus of the Secretariat's activities. Currently the Secretariat supports the Council, four statutory committees and three non-statutory committees.

Following a Council decision in March 2007 the Secretariat will take over provision of Secretariat support for the Chairs Liaison Group and will also support the three Professional Liaison Groups which are due to be set up this year.

The Secretariat will also work with the President to review the format of Council agendas and meetings to ensure that these allow the Council to engage in strategic planning and to make best use of members' time.

The timescale for completion of this objective is ongoing

This activity links to risks 1.1, 4.1 and 4.3 of the risk register.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Members' Training

Since the inception of the Council all members have taken part in a series of induction days. The Secretariat will continue to organise induction days for new members following election and appointment.

The Secretariat has worked with the HPC Parliamentary Agent to provide members and the executive with training on the Council's responsibilities under the Health Professions Order 2001. Similar training sessions will be organised for new members of Council and the Executive over the autumn of 2007.

In line with the equality and diversity project plan, training on equality and diversity issues has been planned for 9 July 2007 and has been offered to all members.

The Secretariat will work with the Audit Committee in organising an annual training session for the Committee and also in sourcing other training in line with the Committee's needs.

Following analysis of the members' self-assessment reviews further training will be offered to individual members as required.

This activity links to risks 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6 of the risk register.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – July – December 2007

Provision of Information for Members

A members' information pack was first produced in February 2004. Since that date it has been updated on an annual basis and the content has expanded considerably year on year. Members were issued with updates for the pack in March of this year and planning is already underway for next year's version. The Secretariat plans to undertake a review of the information pack which will involve gaining feedback from members on how they use the pack and how this could be amended or expanded to meet their needs.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Feedback regarding the pack and suggested amendments will be given consideration in the production of the update.

This activity links to risk 4.1 and 4.5 of the risk register.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – February 2008.

Members' Extranet

During the past year the Secretariat has established a members' extranet. This is accessible to all Council and non-Council Committee members and some members of the Executive. All updated Council policies are available on the extranet. There is also a news section and an information board. Progress in encouraging members to use the extranet is proceeding steadily. It is envisaged that in 2007-2008 the Secretariat will undertake further work in promoting this facility and will gather feedback from members on how they use the site and what they wish the site to contain. Following this the content will be expanded in line with users' needs.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – August 2007 - ongoing

This activity links to risks 4.5 of the risk register.

Members' Self-Assessment System

Over the course of the past year the Secretariat has worked with the President and the Council in the design and implementation of a competency based self-assessment system. Telephone and face-to-face interviews have been organised with the President for all members. The Secretariat will be working with the President to evaluate the system. As agreed by Council the results of the evaluation will be fed back to Council at the away day in October.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – October 2007

This activity links to risks 4.5 and 4.6 of the risk register.

Members' Skills Audit

In March 2007 the Council agreed to undertake an audit of members' skills in relation to their work on the Council. The Secretariat will work with the President in administering the skills audit and preparing a database of the results. Further work in this area will be undertaken when the White Paper proposals are implemented.

The timescale for completion of this objective is May 2007 and ongoing

This activity links to risks 4.3, 4.5 and 4.10 of the risk register.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Regulators' Governance Group

Over the past year the Secretary to Council has taken the lead in working with other regulators in setting up a governance group to compare processes and discuss issues of common interest. The group met for the first time in July 2006. To date there have been 3 meetings. There are currently 15 members. A group emailing system has also been established and members meet on an individual basis from time-to-time. The Secretary to Council will take the lead over the coming year in expanding the membership of the group and also in organising further meetings.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – ongoing.

This activity links to risk 4.1 of the risk register.

Impact of the White Paper

The White Paper, Trust, Assurance and Safety – The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century has proposed a number of changes in the governance arrangements of the 9 health regulators. These proposed changes include smaller Councils which will be appointed by the Appointments Commission. It is also proposed that registrant members will no longer have alternates. The changes will require a Section 60 Order and amendments to the relevant rules. The Secretariat will work with the HPC Parliamentary Agent and the Department of Health to ensure that the new rules are agreed by Council and delivered to the Privy Council according to an agreed timetable.

Currently the Secretariat works with the Electoral Reform Services (ERS) to organise and run the series of annual elections. It would appear from the current timetable for the implementation of the changes proposed in the White Paper that it is unlikely that there will be elections in the spring of 2008 and that in the future all members will be appointed. The Secretariat will work with the President and the Appointments Commission in the appointments and reappointments process.

The timescale for completion of this objective is – tba

This activity links to risks 4.10 of the risk register.

Document Retention, Freedom of Information and Data Protection

During the past year the Secretariat has established a searchable electronic storage facility for the retention of Council and Committee papers. All Council and Committee papers are uploaded onto the system. The Secretariat is working with the Information Technology Department to enable all members of the Executive to have access to this facility.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

The Secretariat has assumed responsibility for recording and ensuring that requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) are actioned within the timetable set out in the HPC FOI publication scheme. The Secretariat will be carrying out a review of the HPCs policies relating to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 to ensure that these are in line with best practice.

The timescale for completion of this objective is April 2008.

Review of Standing Orders and Related Documents

Since its inception in April 2002 the Council has agreed a number of governance documents. These are updated as required. The Secretariat will work with the President, the Council and the Executive in ensuring that these documents are kept up to date and that they continue to be fit for purpose.

This activity links to risks 4.3 of the risk register.

The timescale for completion of this objective is ongoing.

Privy Council – Relationship Management

During the past year the Secretary to Council has become responsible for the management of the HPC's relationship with the Privy Council Office and also the management of processes associated with changes to the Health Professions Order 2001, the Rules and other related legislation. Over the coming year this work will involve working with the HPC Parliamentary agent and the Department of Health on the Section 60 Order relating to the regulation of the Applied Psychologists and also working on charges to legislation following adoption of the EU new general directive.

In order for the Health Professions Council to carry out its functions effectively it has become apparent that it will be necessary to amend certain sections of the Health Professions Order 2001 and the related rules. Over the coming year the Secretariat will take the lead in raising the profile of this future project among members of Council and the Executive. The Secretariat will create a central database which will record all the amendments needed and will facilitate discussions between the Executive and the Department of Health regarding a timetable for the implementation of these amendments.

The timescale for completion of this objective is July 2007 – April 2008

This activity links to risk 14.4 of the risk register.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Team Development

The Secretariat is a small department which provides a wide range of services to Council and Committee members and the executive. Team members undertake relevant training in order to maintain and improve the quality and the range of services provided. As part of the annual performance and development review system a programme of development which is tailored to the specific requirements of each team members' role is agreed. For the coming year the following has been put in place;

Colin Bendall – Secretary to Committees

Support in attending courses outside of work time in order to undertake the qualifying exams for membership of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA).

Sophie Butcher – Secretary to Committees

Training in relation to Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

Niamh O'Sullivan – Secretary to Council

Completion of process for becoming a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators

Alison Roberts- Team Administrator

Training in advanced excel and use of databases.

The timescale for completion of this objective is ongoing.

This activity links to risk 14.4 of the risk register.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Appendix 1: Achieving Secretariat Objectives in 2007-2008

Objective	Activity	Risk Register Item	Start Date	Completion Date	Lead
Facilitate the governance role of Council and Committees	Provision of support the Council, Committees, Chairmen's Liaison Group and PLGs	1.1 4.1 4.3	April 2007	Ongoing	Team
Members' Development & Training	Provision of induction and Health Professions Order Training for new members Provision of equality and diversity training for all members Updating members' information pack Review and promotion of members' extranet Review of members' competency based self-assessment system currently being piloted Co-ordination of members' skills audit	4.3 4.5 4.6 4.1 4.5 4.5 4.5 4.6 4.3 4.5 4.10	June 2007	Ongoing	SB ¹ SB SB SB NO'S/ SB NO'S/ AR
Sharing of governance information among regulators	Organisation of email contact and meetings of governance leads from regulators,	4.1	Ongoing	Ongoing	NO'S

¹ Sophie Butcher

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Ensure an effective appointments process for Council members	Work with the President and the Appointments Commission in the appointments and re-appointments process	4.10	Ongoing	Ongoing	NO'S
Ensure that HPC's FOI and Data Protection policies are in line with best practice	Review of HPC's policies relating to FOI and Data Protection		July 2007	April 2008	NO'S/ SB
Ensure standing orders etc are up-to-date and in line with best practice	Work with President to ensure that documents are amended as required	4.3	April 2007	Ongoing	NO'S ²
Relationship with Privy Council	Management of amendments to legislation	14.4	July 2007	April 2008	NO'S
Team Development	Put in place a personal training programme for each team member	14.4	April 2007	April 2008	Team

² Niamh O'Sullivan

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2007-05-22	a	SEC	AGD	Secretariat Workplan	Final DD: None	Public RD: None