

Health Professions Council – 3 October 2007

Revised Standing Orders for the Education and Training Committee

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The current standing orders for the Education and Training Committee state that the quorum for an ordinary or special meeting shall be ‘not less than half of the members of the Committee for the time being and of the members which constitute that quorum at three must be lay members’.

The meeting of the Education and Training Committee held on 27 September 2007 was in-quorate because fewer than three lay members were present. As a result of this the Committee was unable to make any decisions at the meeting. Decisions were circulated for electronic approval after the meeting.

At the meeting it was suggested that the quorum should be amended and that the requirement for a minimum number of lay members to be present at the meeting should be omitted. It is proposed that Standing Order 12 (1) should be amended as follows;

Quorum

12. The quorum at a meeting of the Committee shall be:

- (1) at an Ordinary Meeting or Special meeting, not less than half the members of the Committee for the time being.

Decision

The Council is requested to approve the above amendment to the Standing Orders of the Education and Training Committee.

Background information

none

Resource implications

none

Financial implications

none

Appendices

Copy of Standing Orders with amendments attached.

Date of paper

27 September 2007

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HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Education and Training Committee

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders, together with the provisions of the Health Professions Order 2001 (the 2001 Order), establish the basic rules about how the Education and Training Committee conducts its proceedings.

Paragraph 17 of Schedule 1 to the 2001 Order requires certain matters to be provided for in the Standing Orders and appropriate provisions to deal with those matters have been incorporated.

Unless the context otherwise requires, terms used in the Standing Orders have the same meaning as in the 2001 Order.

Where a procedural point arises which is not covered by either the Standing Orders or the 2001 Order, the common law rules concerning the conduct of meetings will apply.

Education and Training Committee

1. The Council shall appoint not more than 24 members to the Education and Training Committee (the Committee) but subject to the following:-
 - (1) at least one member of the Committee must be a member of Council;
 - (2) the members shall include at least one member from each Part of the Register and the number of members from each Part must be equal;
 - (3) at least one member must be appointed from each country of the United Kingdom and that member must live or work wholly or mainly in the country concerned;
 - (4) at least one member must be a lay person who appears to the Council to represent the interests of the patients or clients of registrants or their carers;
 - (5) the majority of members shall have such qualifications and experience in relation to the provision, funding or assessment of professional education and training as the Council considers will be of value to the Committee in the performance of its functions; and
 - (6) members who are not members of the Council shall be selected having regard to the guidance issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Meetings

2. The Committee shall meet in ordinary session (Ordinary Meeting) not less than four times in each year on dates correlated with the Council's cycle of meetings and at such other times as the Committee shall decide.
3. In addition to Ordinary Meetings:
 - (1) a special session of the Committee (Special Meeting) may be convened by the Secretary upon receipt of a written request setting out the details of the business to be transacted at that meeting from the Chairman or a quorum of members of the Committee.
 - (2) a Panel of the Committee may be convened, with the approval of the Committee, to consider:
 - (a) Visitors' reports which are submitted to the Education and Training Committee and any representations upon such reports and, if thought fit, to approve the course of education or training, qualification or institution to which that report relates;
 - (b) proposed changes to such courses, qualifications or institutions;
 - (c) matters arising from the monitoring of such courses, qualifications or institutions.
4. A Special Meeting shall take place within 14 days of the Secretary receiving the request for the meeting to be held.

Notice of Meetings

5. The Secretary shall give members not less than seven days written notice of a meeting and the notice shall set out the time and place of, and agenda for, that meeting.
6. Failure to send notice of a meeting to a member shall not invalidate the proceedings of that meeting.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman

7. The Council shall appoint one of its members to be the Chairman of the Committee and the person appointed shall serve as Chairman for a period of two years (but shall be eligible for re-appointment).
8. The Chairman shall preside at any meeting of the Committee.
9. The Council may appoint a member to be Vice Chairman of the Committee to preside at any meeting of the Committee at which the Chairman is absent and

the person appointed shall serve as Vice Chairman for a period of two years (but shall be eligible for re-appointment).

10. If the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent from, or otherwise unable or unwilling to preside at, a meeting the members present shall, as the first business of the meeting, elect one of their number to preside at that meeting.
11. In these Standing Orders references to the Chairman include the Vice Chairman or any other member presiding at a meeting in place of the Chairman.

Quorum

12. The quorum at a meeting of the Committee shall be:
 - (1) at an Ordinary Meeting or Special meeting, not less than half the members of the Committee for the time being, ~~and of the members which constitute that quorum at least three must be lay members.~~
 - (2) at a meeting of a Panel of the Committee, convened in accordance with Standing Order 3(2), not less than three members of the Committee for the time being.
13. If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the time appointed for a meeting to commence, all business which should have been transacted at that meeting shall stand over until the next Ordinary Meeting and shall take precedence over the business of that Ordinary Meeting, unless a Special Meeting is called in the meantime for the transaction of that business.

Minutes

14. The Secretary shall keep minutes of each meeting which shall include a record of the members in attendance at that meeting.
15. At each meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting shall be confirmed (or confirmed as amended) and be signed by the Chairman as a true record of that meeting.
16. The signed minutes of a meeting shall, unless the contrary is proved, be conclusive proof of the proceedings at that meeting.

The Secretary

17. The Registrar shall be the secretary to the Committee and of any sub-committee it has established.
18. The Registrar may appoint another officer or employee of the Council to act as secretary to the Committee or any sub committee which it has established.

19. In these Standing Orders references to the Secretary mean the Registrar or, where a person has been appointed in accordance with Standing Order 18, that person.

Conduct of meetings

20. The order of business at a meeting shall follow that set out in the agenda unless it is varied by the Chairman with the consent of the Committee.
21. A member may only initiate a debate or move a motion on a matter which is not on the agenda with the consent of the Committee.
22. Subject to Standing Order 13 meetings shall start at the time set out in the notice of meeting and shall normally continue until all the business on the agenda has been disposed of but the duration of a meeting may only exceed three hours with the consent of the Committee.
23. The Chairman may, with the consent of the Committee, adjourn a meeting, but no business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business which had not been disposed of when the adjournment took place.
24. If a meeting is adjourned for more than seven days (but not otherwise) notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given as if it was an Ordinary Meeting.

Voting

25. Except where the 2001 Order specifies a different requirement, any question at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting by a show of hands.
26. In the event of any equality of votes, the Chairman shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.

Approval of resolutions without meeting

27. A resolution which, with the consent of the Chairman, is circulated to, and approved in writing or electronic form by, not less than three quarters of the members entitled to receive notice of and attend a meeting of the Committee shall be as valid as if it had been passed at such a meeting.

Rules of Debate

28. A member must speak to the subject under discussion. The Chairman may call attention to any irrelevance, repetition, unbecoming language, or breach of order on the part of a member and, where the member persists in that conduct, may direct that member to cease speaking.
29. A ruling by the Chairman on any question of order, whether or not provided for by the Standing Orders, shall be final and shall not be open to debate.

Disorderly Conduct

30. The Chairman may order a member to withdraw from a meeting if, in the opinion of the Chairman, that member has persistently disregarded the ruling of the Chairman or is behaving improperly, offensively or in a manner which is obstructing the business of the meeting.
31. In the event of a general disturbance which, in the opinion of the Chairman, prevents the orderly conduct of business, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chairman consider appropriate.
32. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting the Chairman may order that person to be removed from the meeting or may order that part of the room which is open to the public to be cleared.

Members' education, training and performance

33. The Council shall establish standards of education and training for members and, as part of those standards, shall provide for members to undergo training to assist them in their performance of their duties.
34. The Council shall establish standards of attendance and performance for members, including a system of annual performance appraisal.
35. Members shall comply with the standards established by the Council under Standing Orders 33 and 34 and shall not, without reasonable excuse, refuse to participate in the training or appraisal processes.

Codes of conduct

36. Members shall comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and with the seven principles of public life established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan Principles)

Interests of members

37. Members shall make a declaration of their personal interests in accordance with the Members' Interests Registration Scheme established by the Council and shall be under a duty to ensure that the details of their interests set out in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Council are accurate and up to date.
38. A member who has a personal interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting, whether or not declared in the Register of Members' Interests, shall promptly disclose that interest to the meeting and, unless the Committee determines otherwise, the member shall withdraw from the meeting until the Committee has concluded its consideration of that matter.

Attendance and Other Allowances

39. Claims for payments, attendance allowances or expenses shall be made by members strictly in accordance with the Members' Payments Scheme approved by the Council.

Tenure of members

40. A person shall cease to be a member of the Committee if:
- (1) having been appointed by virtue of being a member of the Council, he ceases to be a member of the Council for any reason;
 - (2) he ceases to live or work wholly or mainly in the United Kingdom or, if he has been appointed as a member in respect of one of the countries of the United Kingdom, in that country;
 - (3) he ceases to be registered in the part of the register in respect of which he was appointed;
 - (4) he ceases to be wholly or mainly engaged in the practice, teaching or management of the profession for which he is registered (or in research in those fields) and for which he was appointed;
 - (5) an order has been made against him by a Practice Committee of the Council; or
 - (6) he is removed by the Council because serious and persistent deficiency in his attendance at meetings or in his conduct or performance at meetings, or because of his failure to comply with Standing Order 35.
41. Before taking any action to remove a member of the Committee the Council shall send a notice to that member:
- (1) setting out the grounds on which the member is liable to be removed from office;
 - (2) informing the member that the Council proposes to consider those grounds and that the member has a right to be heard before the Council; and
 - (3) providing the member with 14 days in which to respond.
42. Where, following the service of a notice under Standing Order 41, a member responds expressing a wish to be heard by the Council, the Registrar shall convene a meeting of the Council to determine whether or not to remove that member from the Committee.

43. The procedure in Standing Orders 41 and 42 shall not apply in respect of a person who has ceased to be a member of the Committee by virtue of Standing Order 40(1) or (5).

The Registrar, officers and advisers

44. The Registrar shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Committee.
45. The Secretary (if not the Registrar) or any other person advising on the business before a meeting of the Committee (including advising the Chairman on issues of order) may attend and, with the consent of the Chairman, speak at that meeting.

Suspension of Standing Orders

46. Any Standing Order (other than one prescribed by the 2001 Order) may be suspended with the consent of the Committee.

Public access to meetings

47. Meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public unless the business under consideration concerns:
- (1) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
 - (2) information relating to an employee or officer holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;
 - (3) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
 - (4) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
 - (5) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Committee or the Council;
 - (6) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
 - (7) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or
 - (8) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or Council's functions.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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