

Health Professions Council
Education and Training Committee Meeting – 29th March 2006

INTERNATIONAL SCRUTINY FEES - PUBLIC PAPER

Executive Summary and Recommendations

1. Introduction

This paper proposes an increase in the International Scrutiny fee.

2. Decision

The Committee is asked to agree the following: that the International Scrutiny fee be raised from £200 to £350 per application, effective from 1st January 2007.

3. Background information

Some revenue-modeling work was done by the Management Accountant in October 2005 and subsequently in February 2006 about potentially raising the International Scrutiny fee from £200 to £350 per International application, applicable from 1st January 2007. A meeting was held in December 2005 with Jonathan Bracken, Parliamentary Counsel about the process and timeframe for a potential fees rise relating to such a fee increase, since it requires Statutory approval from the Privy Council - refer Section 45 (1) of the Health Professions Order 2001.

A paper was presented on the fee rise at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting dated 8th February 2006 and approved in principal, subject to providing more information on the indirect costs, amending the fee level and conducting a sector survey on comparative fees charged. This paper is a follow up paper to address those issues.

At the Council meeting on the 1st March meeting, the Council agreed to waive the scrutiny fee for applicants in the following categories;

- (i) those with refugee status;
- (ii) those with exceptional leave to remain (granted before April 2003)
- (iii) those with humanitarian leave to remain (granted on or after 1 April 2003)
- (iv) those with discretionary leave to remain (granted on or after 1 April 2003)

The Council noted that there would be a requirement that the applicant would produce a Home Office letter confirming their refugee status or leave to remain.

Following further consultation and application to the Privy Council, there would be likely enough time for statutory approval to be reached, in time for the proposed fee increase to go live from 1st January 2007. The increased annual income from a fee increase has been calculated at £660,000 based on the £150 fee increase and conservatively assuming 4,400 applications per annum processed.

Using budget data for the year ending March 2007, the direct costs of processing International Scrutiny applications is estimated at approx £300 per application (mostly Assessor and International Registrations staff costs). A further indirect cost per application

(mostly International Registrations dept property, IT and office services-related costs) of £39 can be added to that, making the fee rise desirable to cover costs and contribute towards covering other central overhead costs.

Recently, a brief survey of other Health Regulators International Scrutiny fees was performed and UK health regulator websites searched to obtain comparative prices for similar services provided. The results are attached. The sector average for the four (including HPC) that do currently charge is £267. General Osteopathic Council, Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and General Chiropractic Council did not respond to the survey.

If the other health regulators have a similar unit cost of £339 per International application, this implies they are cross-subsidising these costs from other fees charged. Finally, survey information on UK Regulator Council/Committee member allowance fees although not directly relevant, is also included in the background paper.

An updated version of the paper will be presented to the Finance and Resources Committee at their 22nd March meeting.

4. Resource implications

Nil

5. Financial implications

Nil

6. Background papers

Survey paper on International Scrutiny Fees charged by the other UK Health Regulators.

7. Appendices

Nil

8. Date of paper

17th March 2006