

**Health Professions Council
Education and Training Committee – 28 March 2007**

Approval and Monitoring Department Draft Workplan 2007-2008

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

The attached document is the Approval and Monitoring Department's proposed workplan for 2007-2008. It details the department's main areas of work and priorities for the financial year April 2007 – March 2008.

Decision

The Committee is asked to discuss the workplan and agree the contents.

Background information

This document is intended to supplement the Council's strategic intent document and sits alongside other departmental level strategy and workplan documents such as Registrations, Projects, Policy & Standards and Communications,

It is a working document and is therefore always under review.

Resource implications

See attached workplan.

Financial implications

See attached workplan.

Appendices

Approval and Monitoring Department Draft Workplan 2007-2008

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Approvals and Monitoring 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 officers, 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 pro-active, 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 formalise 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 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.

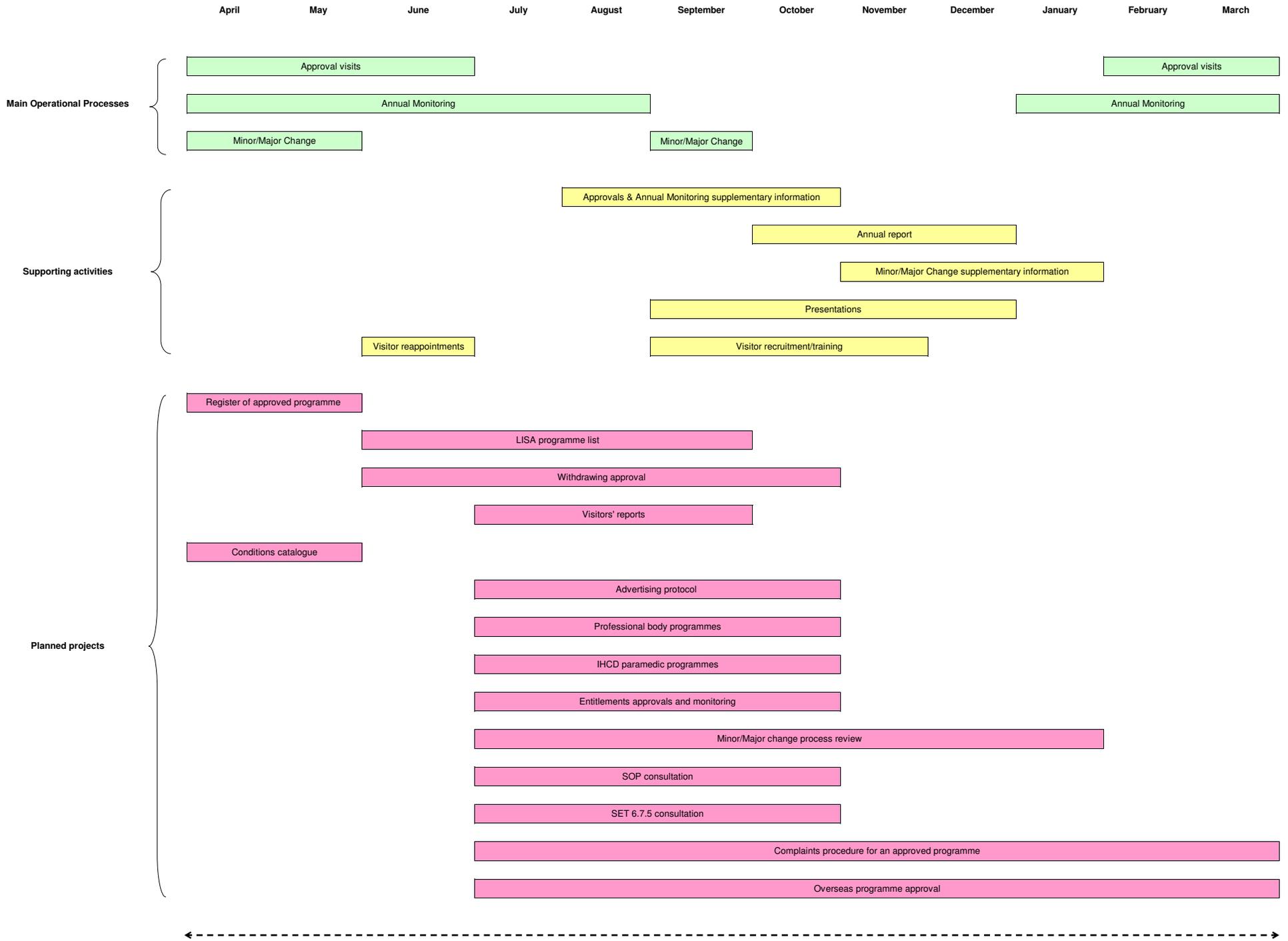
A number of enhancement led projects are also likely to take place in 2008-2009. Possible areas include (i) developing a mechanism to record and monitor student cohort size (ii) developing means to allow an open and transparent flow of information between the approval and monitoring processes (iii) evaluating 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



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