

Education and Training Committee, 2 December 2008

Review of the generic standards of proficiency

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

The attached paper outlines a review of the generic standards of proficiency and includes a workplan outlining the plan of activities.

Decision

The Committee is invited to agree the attached workplan for reviewing the generic standards of proficiency.

Background information

- Article 5(2) of the Health Professions Order 2001 requires the Council to establish standards of proficiency which are the standards necessary for safe and effective practice for each part of the Register.
- Papers considered by the Education and Training Committee on 4 December 2007, 26 March 2008 and 10 June 2008.

Resource implications

The resource implications for the policy and standards department are accounted for in department planning for 2008/09 and will be accounted for in planning for 2009/10.

Financial implications

- Mailing of consultation document
- Re-publication of standards

The financial implications will be accounted for in department planning for 2009/2010. The implications of publication will be minimised as far as possible by aligning publication with print-run schedules.

Appendices

None

Date of paper

20 November 2008

Review of the generic standards of proficiency

Introduction

At its meeting on 10 June 2008, the Education and Training Committee considered a paper from the Executive about reviewing the generic standards of proficiency.

The paper put forward a proposal for reviewing the generic standards of proficiency, in light of the work of the Professional Liaison Group (PLG) which put together draft standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists. The paper also appended a submission from the British Psychological Society, outlining why they believed that changes needed to be made to the generic standards.

The Committee agreed that a review was indicated, owing to comments made about the generic standards in more than one consultation and because of changes in the language used by professions and professionals more generally.

The paper proposed that the generic standards might be reviewed from January 2009 and a consultation held early in the 2009/2010 financial year. The Committee agreed that a workplan should be brought back to the Committee for recommendation at its December 2008 meeting.

Standards review

In December 2006, the Education and Training Committee and Council agreed a document that outlined HPC's approach to reviewing its standards. There are broadly two types of reviews:

Ongoing review is defined as the 'day-day-day' reviewing of the standards by the Council, its Committees and the Executive. This is primarily to ensure that the standards do not limit effective ways of working for health professionals and education providers. Ongoing review might indicate that a specific change to a standard was necessary or indicate that a more detailed 'periodic' review should be brought forward.

Periodic review looks at the standards at a given point in time to:

- ensure that the standards remain fit for purpose - in making decisions about education programmes and in making fitness to practise decisions, for example;
- ensure that they are well understood by our stakeholders including registrants, patients, education providers and the public; and
- ensure that they take account of change including changes in practice, legislation, technology, guidelines and wider society.

Previous reviews

The standards for the first 12 professions regulated by the Council were last reviewed from October 2005 by a Professional Liaison Group (PLG). Following consultation, new standards became effective from 1 November 2007.

The profession-specific standards for operating department practitioners were reviewed following the end of their grandparenting period. The standards became effective on 1 November 2008 and the revised generic standards applied at this time.

Format of review

The Executive proposes that it would not be necessary to set up a Professional Liaison Group (PLG) to review the generic standards. Any review could build on comments already received by the Executive. These include comments on the generic standards received in the following consultations:

- Standards of proficiency for practitioner psychologists.
- Standards of proficiency for operating department practitioners.
- Standards of proficiency for hearing aid dispensers.

The Executive also keeps a record of any other comments received about the standards between periodic reviews.

The revised profession-specific standards for operating department practitioners for consultation were the result of a meeting held with representatives from two professional bodies and members of the Education and Training Committee. The Executive suggests that this provides a model which would provide an appropriate and proportionate approach to reviewing the generic standards.

The Executive suggests that the review be conducted in the following manner:

- A letter to professional bodies in early January advising them that we are looking at the generic standards and inviting any comments they may have. (This would ensure that we take account of the views of professional groups that have not recently had a consultation on profession-specific standards.)
- A meeting held in March or April 2009 with members of the policy and standards team and four members of the Education and Training Committee to review the comments received on the standards and draft suggested standards put together by the Executive. The standards would be subsequently revised following the meeting.
- Approval of the revised standards of proficiency for consultation at the Committee's meeting in June 09, with consideration of the responses and approval of new standards in December 2009.

- It is anticipated that the standards might be subsequently implemented on a rolling basis in early 2010, taking into account the needs of each profession, including considering when the standards for those professions were last published.

Review of the generic standards of proficiency Workplan

1. About the review

The review will consider whether any changes need to be made to the generic standards of proficiency. The profession-specific standards of proficiency are not within the scope of this review.

The review will take into account, amongst other things:

- The need to ensure that the generic standards are applicable across the professions regulated by the Council, and as far as possible, are written in broad terms so that they may be applicable to professions that the Council may regulate in the future.
- The relationship between the generic standards and the profession-specific standards to ensure that the standards in their totality express the necessary standards for safe and effective practice in each profession.

2. Lead

Education and Training Committee

3. Format of review

The review will take into account feedback already received about the generic standards and any further comments received from professional bodies.

4. Plan of activities

January 2009

Letter sent to professional bodies inviting any comments on the generic standards of proficiency by March 2009.

Late March / April 2009

Meeting held with representatives of the Education and Training Committee to consider generic standards of proficiency. Further correspondence via email may subsequently be necessary.

June 2009

Education and Training Committee - 11 June 2008.
Approval sought on revised generic standards of proficiency (if necessary) for consultation.

July 2009

Council meeting 6 July 2009.
Approval sought on Education and Training Committee's recommendation for consultation.

Mid July to mid September 2009

Consultation

December 2009

Education and Training Committee meeting and Council meeting.
Consideration of consultation responses and revised standards for publication.

January 2010

Incremental roll out of revised standards.