

Guidance for non approval or withdrawal of approval from programmes

Predetermination

Approval is subject to the statutory process set out in Part IV of the Health Professions Order 2001 (HPO) and both visitors and the Education and Training Committee must not predetermine the outcome of a visit. Other than in exceptional circumstances, a visit should take place and be concluded. By doing this the visitors have the opportunity to gather all of the relevant evidence which is available before reaching a decision.

A visit should therefore continue even in the following situations (which have been experienced recently):

- poor quality (but not grossly inadequate) documentation is received before the visit; or
- the documentation received for a visit has been for one programme but when the visitors have arrived at the education provider another complete set of documentation has been received that relates to a different programme.
- the education provider fails to engage fully with the visit.

Following the visit, a visitors' report must be written and submitted.

Specific guidance for visitors

Visitors' recommendations

Visits must follow the established post-visit process. HPC policy is to give education providers the opportunity to meet any conditions which have been set.

In cases where the visitors have serious concerns, they may make a recommendation that the programme should not be approved or that approval is withdrawn. This recommendation must be reached on an objective basis. The number of standards not met or number of conditions placed on a programme are not objective criteria and therefore cannot be the sole reason why a recommendation for non approval or withdrawal of approval is made.

Objective criteria include:

- the nature or extent of the conditions suggest that there are fundamental concerns about the programme or that allowing it to be approved (or to remain approved) poses a risk to the public;

- the nature or extent of the conditions would require the commitment of a disproportionate level of HPC resources to conclude the post-visit process. The Director of Education's comments should be sought in cases of this kind;
- where the visitors have received direct evidence that a material condition cannot be met.

Visitors may recommend a follow up visit as part of the post visit process. This would be applicable when the only way to meet the conditions is through the normal meetings within an agenda or where the nature of the conditions mean that a further visit is the most appropriate way of verifying compliance.

Specific Guidance for Education and Training Committee

The Committee must follow the statutory procedure for non-approval laid down in the HPO. Decisions should be made on a case by case basis, on the individual merits.

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