

Education and Training Committee, 9 June 2016

Consultation on revised standards of education and training (SETs) and supporting guidance

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

We began a review of the SETs in September 2014. Since that time the following activities have been undertaken:

- a wide range of stakeholder engagement activities in 2014 and 2015 to seek feedback from education providers, registrants, service users and carers, commissioners, professional bodies, newly qualified professionals, visitors and HCPC Education Department employees;
- two pieces of commissioned research, one examining the nature and extent of interprofessional education in approved programmes; and the other looking at the role of the SETs in ensuring newly qualified professionals are prepared for practice; and
- a Professional Liaison Group (PLG), consisting of Council members and representatives from key stakeholder groups, which met four times between September 2015 and March 2016 to discuss themes emerging from the review and inform the drafting of revised SETs and supporting guidance.

Following the end of the PLG, members of the Education Department were asked to examine the drafts and provide feedback based on their experience of issues or difficulties which sometimes arise during the approval and monitoring processes. We also sought initial feedback from the HCPC's legal advisor.

As a result, we have made some further changes to the wording of a number of individual standards (including SETs 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.3, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.11, 5.3, 5.6 and 6.7). We have also changed the order of individual standards where we found it to be more logical and made further amendments to the guidance in the interest of providing further clarity and consistency.

We anticipate holding a 12-week public consultation on the draft revised SETs and supporting guidance between 5 September and 25 November 2016.

The attached consultation document provides information on the SETs and how they are used, the background to the review, and a summary of the changes we have proposed. A more detailed commentary on proposed amendments to individual standards and guidance is also attached, as well as the draft revised SETs and supporting guidance documents themselves.

Decision

The Committee is invited to discuss and approve the consultation document and the draft revised SETs and supporting guidance for consultation, subject to formal legal scrutiny and minor editing amendments; and to recommend them to the Council.

Background information

- Existing SETs and supporting guidance
<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/sets/>
- Education and Training Committee, 11 September 2014. Review of the standards of education and training.
<http://www.hpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004814Enc02-Reviewofthestandardsofeducationandtraining.pdf>

Resource implications

The resource implications, including those associated with publicising the consultation and analysing the responses received, have been taken into account in departmental planning for 2016-17.

Financial implications

The financial implications, including reprinting of the SETs and supporting guidance documents, will be accounted for in planning for the 2017-18 financial year.

Appendices

- Revised SETs – Draft for consultation
- Revised SETs supporting guidance – Draft for consultation
- Commentary on proposed changes to the SETs and supporting guidance

Date of paper

27 May 2016

**Consultation on revised standards of education and training (SETs)
and supporting guidance**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). This consultation seeks the views of stakeholders on our draft revised standards of education and training (SETs) and supporting guidance document.
- 1.2 We have reviewed the SETs and supporting guidance and are proposing changes in order to ensure that they remain up to date, effective and fit for purpose, and are well understood by our stakeholders.
- 1.3 This document explains the background to the SETs and supporting guidance; summarises the changes we are proposing; and provides information on how to respond.
- 1.4 The consultation will run from **5 September to 25 November 2016**. It will be of particular interest to education providers, practice educators, employers of HCPC registered professionals, and service users and carers involved in education and training.

About this document

- 1.5 This document is divided into five sections.
 - **Section 1** introduces the document.
 - **Section 2** provides background information on the SETs and supporting guidance.
 - **Section 3** explains how we reviewed the SETs and supporting guidance.
 - **Section 4** describes the changes we are proposing to these documents and the reasons behind those changes.
 - **Section 5** provides information on implementation of the revised SETs and supporting guidance, as well as other future work.
- 1.6 The draft revised SETs and supporting guidance, along with a detailed commentary on the revisions we are proposing, are set out in separate documents which can be found on our website here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/>.

About us

- 1.7 We are a regulator and were set up to protect the public. To do this, we keep a Register of professionals who meet our standards for their professional skills and behaviour. Individuals on our Register are called 'registrants'.
- 1.8 We currently regulate 16 professions.
 - Arts therapists
 - Biomedical scientists
 - Chiropodists / podiatrists

- Clinical scientists
- Dietitians
- Hearing aid dispensers
- Occupational therapists
- Operating department practitioners
- Orthoptists
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Practitioner psychologists
- Prosthetists / orthotists
- Radiographers
- Social workers in England
- Speech and language therapists

Consultation questions

1.9 We would welcome your response to this consultation. We have listed some consultation questions below to help you. These questions are not exhaustive and we would also welcome your comments on any related issue. Please provide reasons alongside your answers where possible.

- Q1. Do you think the draft revised SETs are at the threshold level necessary to ensure that all learners are able to practise their profession safely and effectively by completion of a HCPC-approved programme?
- Q2. Do you think the draft revised SETs and supporting guidance are applicable across all HCPC approved pre-registration programmes?
- Q3. Do you think there are any additional standards or guidance needed?
- Q4. Do you think there are any standards or guidance which should be amended or removed?
- Q5. Do you have any comments about the language used in the SETs or supporting guidance?
- Q6. Do you have any other comments on the SETs or supporting guidance?

How to respond to the consultation

1.10 You can respond to this consultation in one of the following ways:

- By completing our easy-to-use online survey: [Insert link]
- By emailing us at: consultation@hcpc-uk.org

- By writing to us at:

Consultation on revised SETs and supporting guidance
Policy and Standards Department
The Health and Care Professions Council
Park House
184 Kennington Park Road
London
SE11 4BU

Fax: +44(0)20 7820 9684

- 1.11 Please note that we do not normally accept responses by telephone or in person. We ask that consultation responses are made in writing to ensure that we can accurately record what the respondent would like to say. However, if you are unable to respond in writing please contact us on +44 (0)20 7840 9815 to discuss any reasonable adjustments which would help you to respond.
- 1.12 **Please contact us to request a copy of this document in an alternative format, or in Welsh.**
- 1.13 Once the consultation period has finished, we will analyse the responses we have received. We will then publish a document detailing the comments received and explaining the decisions we have taken as a result. This will be available on our website. If you would prefer we do not make your response public, please indicate this when you respond.
- 1.14 We look forward to receiving your comments.

2. About the SETs and supporting guidance

- 2.1 The SETs are the requirements for pre-registration education and training programmes which are approved by us¹. They are common across all 16 professions regulated by the HCPC. A programme that meets the SETs will enable a learner to meet the HCPC standards of proficiency (SOPs) by completion of the programme.
- 2.2 If a learner successfully completes the approved programme they are eligible to apply for registration with the HCPC, subject to health and character checks and payment of the registration fee.
- 2.3 The guidance supporting the standards has been written to provide further information and advice to education providers on the meaning and intention of the SETs and how programmes are assessed against them. It is not meant to add further requirements to those which are set out in the standards.

¹ You can find the existing SETs and supporting guidance here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/sets/>

Our approach to setting standards

- 2.4 We set all of our standards, including the SETs, to be outcome-focused. Therefore, they avoid being too prescriptive in what they require or exactly how education providers should meet them. We want to make sure that we do not hinder the development of new education and training programmes or the ability of existing providers to structure or deliver their programmes in different or innovative ways.
- 2.5 In addition the SETs should:
- be set at the **threshold** level necessary to ensure that approved programmes provide learners with the skills and understanding to practise safely and effectively and to meet the standards of proficiency for their profession;
 - be **flexible**, in that we aim to minimise prescription and to enable education providers to meet the standards in the way they consider most effective and appropriate (given institutional and professional considerations);
 - be **meaningful**, clear and useful to education providers and other stakeholders; and
 - reflect **existing provision** within education and training programmes, or be realistic or reasonable as requirements.

Our role in quality assurance of education and training programmes

- 2.6 We have a statutory role in approving and monitoring education and training programmes for the professions we regulate. We use the SETs to assess programmes which lead to eligibility for admission onto the HCPC Register.
- 2.7 We currently approve xxx pre-registration programmes delivered by xxx education providers.² Although the majority of programmes are delivered or validated by a Higher Education Institution (HEI), we also approve programmes delivered by other providers including employers and professional bodies.
- 2.8 We assess new programmes during approval visits. The assessment is carried out by 'visitors' who are appointed by us; these include registrants as well as lay people representing service users and carers. The visitors make recommendations about approval to our Education and Training Committee, which may include recommending that certain conditions should be set before approval is granted.
- 2.9 Approval is granted on an open-ended basis, subject to regular monitoring to ensure that our standards continue to be met.

² As of xxx

3. About the review

- 3.1 The SETs and supporting guidance were last reviewed and published in 2009. The standards were also amended in 2014 with the addition of a standard requiring service user and carer involvement in approved programmes.
- 3.2 We began reviewing the SETs and supporting guidance in 2014. The purpose of the review was to ensure that they remain effective and fit for purpose; are well understood by our stakeholders and the public; and take account of change including changes in practice, legislation, technology, guidelines and wider society.

Work with stakeholders

- 3.3 During the review we engaged with a wide range of external stakeholders including education providers, commissioners, learners, registrants, professional bodies, practice educators, and service users and carers. We are grateful to all of our stakeholders who have participated in the review to date, offering their views and comments on how the SETs and supporting guidance might be strengthened or improved.
- 3.4 Additionally we conducted internal engagement activities in order to utilise the expertise of HCPC visitors and employees in the Education Department who have experience of using the SETs operationally in approval and monitoring of programmes.

Research

- 3.5 We also commissioned two pieces of research to support the review. One was a project to examine the extent and nature of interprofessional education in HCPC-approved programmes. The second was aimed at determining the role of the SETs in ensuring that newly qualified professionals are prepared and fit to practise.
- 3.6 The results from these pieces of research have been used to inform a number of proposed amendments to the SETs and supporting guidance.

Professional Liaison Group

- 3.7 Between September 2015 and March 2016, a working group called a Professional Liaison Group (PLG) was convened to help us put together the revised drafts of the SETs and supporting guidance for consultation.
- 3.8 The PLG comprised representatives from the HCPC Council and key stakeholder groups including education providers, practice educators, service users, professional bodies, commissioners and newly qualified professionals. The group examined a number of themes which emerged from discussions with stakeholders and proposed a wide range of revisions.

- 3.9 The members of the group and their organisations or affiliations are listed in Appendix 1. We are grateful for the role they played in developing and refining these documents.

4. Proposed changes to the SETs and supporting guidance

- 4.1 We have used the feedback we received through stakeholder engagement, commissioned research and discussions among members of the PLG to put together draft revised SETs and supporting guidance for consultation. This section outlines some of the key changes we have made as a result of the review.
- 4.2 You can find the full consultation drafts and a more detailed commentary on the changes we proposing, alongside this consultation document on our website here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutus/consultations/>.

Terminology

- 4.3 We have made a number of changes to key terminology used in these documents:
- We have replaced the term ‘student’ with ‘learner’, which we consider to be a more inclusive term encompassing students, trainees, apprentices and practitioners in training or work-based learning.
 - We have changed ‘practice placement’ to ‘practice-based learning’, which we consider to be more applicable to different types of programmes. The word ‘placement’ implies that the learning takes place in a separate environment from the rest of the programme and during a discrete period of time – which is not the case for all approved programmes.
 - Accordingly, we have stopped using the terms ‘practice placement educator’ and ‘practice placement provider’. These are now ‘practice educator’ and ‘practice education provider’, respectively.

Format

- 4.4 There is a modest reduction in the number of individual standards from 58 to 52. We have retained the current format of the SETs – i.e., six broad sections containing individual standards – given stakeholder feedback that it was clear and helpful.
- 4.5 However, three of the sections have been renamed to better correspond with the actual subject matter of the individual standards within them. SET 3 has been renamed ‘Programme leadership, management and governance’; and SET 4 has been renamed ‘Programme design and delivery’. The title of SET 5 has also been changed to ‘Practice-based learning’, to correspond with the change in terminology mentioned above.

- 4.6 Additionally, we have made amendments to the supporting guidance to bring greater consistency to the format throughout this document. For instance, we have added or reorganised parts of the detailed guidance underneath individual standards to ensure that the intention behind the standards is clear.
- 4.7 We have also removed the example questions which were provided for each section of the guidance in the current version. In many cases the questions would not be applicable to all programmes and may lead a programme to meet or evidence the standards in a particular way, which is not the intention of the guidance

Link with the standards of conduct, performance and ethics

- 4.8 The HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE)³ are broad standards that apply to everyone on our Register and those applying for registration. They set out our expectations regarding a professional's behaviour and cover their ethics, decision-making, communication and interaction with service users, carers, colleagues and others.
- 4.9 We received a large number of comments from stakeholders about the link between the SETs and the SCPE. Specifically, these stakeholders felt that the existing standards did not contain strong enough statements about the importance of ensuring that learners are able to meet the SCPE upon qualifying.
- 4.10 We are therefore proposing changes to two individual standards (see revised SETs 4.2 and 6.2), in order to strengthen the link between the SETs and achievement of the SCPE. These standards now contain stronger expectations, in relation to the design and delivery and assessment within an approved programme, that learners understand, are able to meet and demonstrate the expectations of professional behaviour, including the SCPE.

Interprofessional education

- 4.11 Reference to interprofessional education (IPE) – the process of learning about and with other relevant professions – in the existing SETs is viewed by stakeholders as being 'negatively framed', in that it focuses on ensuring that, where IPE takes place, it is not to the detriment of profession-specific skills.
- 4.12 Feedback during the review has been overwhelmingly in favour of introducing a requirement for IPE in the SETs. The results of research commissioned during the review also supported our view of the value of IPE; it helps to develop learners' ability to communicate and work with those outside of their own profession, ultimately improving the environment and quality of care for service users.

³ Available on our website here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/aboutregistration/standards/standardsofconductperformanceandethics/>

- 4.13 We are proposing a new standard (SET 4.9) which requires that all learners have the opportunity to learn from and with professionals and learners in other relevant professions. The supporting guidance underneath this new standard introduces the term ‘interprofessional education’ and describes the benefits of IPE for ensuring fitness to practise.

Involving learners

- 4.14 A new standard (SET 3.8) has been proposed requiring that learners must be involved in the design, delivery and review of an approved programme.
- 4.15 Discussions with stakeholders, particularly education providers and service users and carers, during the review highlighted the importance of ensuring that the learning experience is central to the design and delivery of the programme. We also view learners as a valuable source of feedback for review and continuous improvement of programmes.

Supporting learners to raise concerns

- 4.16 We are also proposing a new standard (SET 3.17) to require that education providers have an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.
- 4.17 We recently reviewed and re-published our ‘Guidance on conduct and ethics for students’⁴, which provides information on how the SCPE apply to learners while on an approved programme. The guidance includes the expectation that learners will raise their concerns about the safety or wellbeing of service users by speaking to an appropriate member of staff, such as an educator or practice educator.
- 4.18 Discussions with stakeholders have highlighted the important role that learners play in raising concerns in the interests of service users; but also the challenges they can face. The new proposed standard aims to ensure that learners are enabled and effectively supported by the education provider to raise concerns and are not penalised for doing so.

Other amendments

- 4.19 Other amendments include the following:
- A number of the individual standards have been reordered or placed in a different section where it was felt that this provided for a more logical arrangement.
 - We have merged some individual standards to remove unnecessary duplication.
 - Throughout the supporting guidance we have removed specific references to the approval and annual monitoring processes (although a brief explanation is retained in the introductory sections); this is because the

⁴ [Insert link when available.]

standards apply no matter how long the programme has existed or been approved.

- We have endeavoured to streamline parts of the guidance where possible; and have removed some detail (such as examples of evidence to be provided by the programme) where it implies a more prescriptive requirement than was intended.
- A significant number of editing amendments have been made to the standards and guidance for clarity and consistency.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 This consultation closes on **25 November 2016**. We will then analyse all of the responses we receive in order to determine whether there are further amendments need to the revised SETs and supporting guidance. Following this, we will publish our response to any issues raised and our final decisions.
- 5.2 We anticipate publishing the revised standards and guidance in mid-2017. They will begin to be phased into our operational processes from the 2017-18 academic year.
- 5.3 After that time, we will consider making corresponding changes to other HCPC standards which are based in part on the SETs, including the standards for prescribing and the standards for podiatric surgery.

Appendix 1

Members of the Professional Liaison Group (PLG) for review of the standards of education and training and supporting guidance

Name	Organisation / representing
Stephen Wordsworth (Chair)	HCPC Council registrant member
Samantha Baron	Joint University Councils Social Work Education Committee (JUC SWEC)
Fiona Coutts	Council of Deans of Health
Sally Gosling	Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF)
Lucy Horder	British Psychological Society
Sonya Lam	HCPC Council registrant member
Jane Morris	National Association of Educators in Practice
Patricia Saunders	Health Education England
Tom Shakespeare	Service user / Norwich Medical School, University of East Anglia
Joy Tweed	HCPC Council lay member, Chair of the Education and Training Committee
Alan Wainwright	Institute of Biomedical Science
Lizzie White	Newly qualified registrant

Note: The content of this consultation, including any errors or omissions, remain the HCPC's responsibility.

Standards of education and training

Introduction

This document sets out the standards of education and training (SETs). These are the standards against which we assess education and training programmes.

A programme which meets the SETs allows a learner who successfully completes that programme to meet the standards of proficiency for their profession. They are then eligible to apply to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) for registration.

We conduct approval visits to education providers to assess their programmes against the SETs. If a programme meets the SETs we grant open-ended approval, subject to ongoing monitoring.

Annual monitoring is a documentary process used to determine whether a programme continues to meet the SETs. If any changes are made which significantly affect a programme, we consider these through our major change process to make sure that the SETs continue to be met.

We have produced detailed guidance on the SETs, which is intended to give more information about the meaning and intention of the standards and what our expectations will be when we assess and monitor education and training programmes against them. This guidance can be found on our website.

We have also produced supplementary information documents for education providers when preparing for an approval visit, completing annual monitoring submissions, or making significant changes to programmes. These documents, which can also be found on our website, give more information about the processes we use to assess and monitor programmes against the SETs.

Level of qualification for entry to the Register

1.1 The Council normally expects that the threshold entry routes to the Register will be the following:

Bachelor degree with honours for:

- biomedical scientists (with the Certificate of Competence awarded by the Institute of Biomedical Science, or equivalent);
- chiropodists / podiatrists;
- dietitians;
- occupational therapists;
- orthoptists;
- physiotherapists;
- prosthetists / orthotists;
- radiographers;
- social workers in England; and
- speech and language therapists.

Masters degree for arts therapists.

Masters degree for clinical scientists (with the Certificate of Attainment awarded by the Association of Clinical Scientists, or equivalent).

Foundation degree for hearing aid dispensers.

Diploma of Higher Education for operating department practitioners.

Equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education for paramedics.

Professional doctorate for clinical psychologists.

Professional doctorate for counselling psychologists, or equivalent.

Professional doctorate for educational psychologists, or equivalent.

Masters degree for forensic psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in forensic psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for health psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in health psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for occupational psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in occupational psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for sport and exercise psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in sport and exercise psychology, or equivalent).

Programme admissions

- 2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up an offer of a place on a programme.
- 2.2 The selection and entry criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.
- 2.3 The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.
- 2.4 The admissions process must include criminal record checks to ensure the suitability of applicants.
- 2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.
- 2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.
- 2.7 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants.

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Programme governance, management and leadership

- 3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.
- 3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.
- 3.3 There must be a person with overall professional responsibility for the programme who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.
- 3.4 The programme must have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.
- 3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.
- 3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.
- 3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.
- 3.8 Learners must be involved in the design, delivery and review of the programme.
- 3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.
- 3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.
- 3.11 An effective programme to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators must be in place.
- 3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme and must be accessible to all learners and educators.
- 3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.
- 3.14 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.
- 3.15 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.
- 3.16 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.
- 3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

- 3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

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Programme design and delivery

- 4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.
- 4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
- 4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.
- 4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.
- 4.5 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.
- 4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.
- 4.7 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.
- 4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.
- 4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.
- 4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.
- 4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Practice-based learning

- 5.1 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.
- 5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.
- 5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.
- 5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.
- 5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.
- 5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are agreed, must be on the relevant part of the Register.
- 5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.
- 5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Assessment

- 6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.
- 6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
- 6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.
- 6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.
- 6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to and effective at measuring the learning outcomes.
- 6.6 There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.
- 6.7 There must be at least one external examiner for the programme who is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.

Standards of education and training guidance

Introduction

This document provides guidance on the standards of education and training (SETs) including information about how we assess and monitor education and training programmes against them.

As part of our approval and monitoring processes, we use the SETs to make sure that all learners meet the standards for registration when they gain a qualification; that they are suitable to become health and care professionals; and that they are able to practise their profession safely and effectively.

This document is written for education providers who are or will be engaged in our approval and monitoring processes, but will also be useful for practice education providers and others who work with and alongside education providers.

The guidance for each standard explains the purpose behind it, provides further explanation or definitions, and in some cases suggests how you could show that you meet each standard.

About us

We are the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and we were set up to protect the public. To do this, we keep a Register of professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.

We currently regulate 16 professions.

- Arts therapists
- Biomedical scientists
- Chiropodists / podiatrists
- Clinical scientists
- Dietitians
- Hearing aid dispensers
- Occupational therapists
- Operating department practitioners
- Orthoptists
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Practitioner psychologists

- Prosthetists / orthotists
- Radiographers
- Social workers in England
- Speech and language therapists

For an up-to-date list of the professions we regulate, please see our website at www.hcpc-uk.org

Our Register is available on our website for anyone to search, so that they can check the registration of a professional. Professionals on our Register are called 'registrants'.

Our main functions

To protect the public, we:

- set standards for registrants' education and training, professional skills, conduct, performance and ethics;
- keep a register of professionals who meet those standards;
- approve education and training programmes which professionals must complete to register with us; and
- take action when professionals on our Register do not meet our standards.

About the SETs

The SETs are the standards which pre-registration education and training programmes must meet in order to be approved by us.

The SETs ensure that learners are prepared for safe and effective practice. A programme which meets the SETs allows a learner who completes that programme to meet the standards of proficiency (SOPs). These are the required knowledge, skills and understanding for safe and effective practice in each profession. The SETs also ensure that learners are able to meet the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPE), the ethical principles and expectations of a professional's behaviour. If a learner successfully completes an approved programme they are then eligible to apply to the HCPC for registration.

Our governing legislation (the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001) says that we must set our standards, including standards for education providers, at the level necessary for safe and effective practice. This is what we call the 'threshold' level. However we recognise that many education and training programmes exceed this.

All of the SETs apply to all of the education and training programmes we approve. However, the way they are implemented may differ among programmes, often depending on the profession or model of delivery.

We want to encourage the development of new education and training programmes and the ability of existing providers to structure or deliver their programmes in different or innovative ways. We have therefore avoided setting detailed requirements for how you should meet the standards. Instead, we approve and monitor how you have achieved the required outcomes; the policies and processes you have in place; and how you implement, review and evaluate them.

Guidance from other organisations

We have written this guidance document to provide more information about the meaning and intention of the SETs. It does not include good practice examples or other specific suggestions for how a programme should meet the SETs. When you are developing your programme, you may also want to refer to documents published by other organisations which take a role in developing good practice – for example, professional bodies and commissioning or funding bodies.

Language

When we use the abbreviation ‘SET’, followed by a number, this refers to a section of the standards (e.g. SET 2) or an individual standard (e.g. SET 2.1).

Throughout the document, ‘we’, ‘us’ and ‘our’ refers to the HCPC, and ‘you’ refers to the education provider, including those involved in leading or managing the programme.

We have used the term ‘learner’ throughout this document. We use this to mean anyone learning, studying or training on a programme which leads to them being eligible to apply to join our Register. The term includes students, trainees, apprentices and practitioners in training or work-based learning.

We have also used the term ‘educator’ throughout the document. We use this to mean an individual who is involved in teaching, assessing or facilitating learning. This can include those who are permanently employed and others who help to deliver the programme such as sessional or visiting lecturers and practice educators.

The term ‘staff’ is used more broadly to refer to anyone involved in the delivery of the programme, which could include educators as well as those involved in other areas such as management or administration of the programme.

Many statements contained in this document use verbs like ‘should’, ‘may’ or ‘could’ rather than ‘must’. This is because the guidance is not intended to impose additional requirements to those set out in the standards themselves. We use words like ‘should’, ‘may’ or ‘could’ in the guidance to indicate something which is recommended but not an absolute requirement, or areas we would expect education providers to consider in how they meet the SETs.

The structure of this document

We have divided up the main text of this document into six main sections, to reflect the six sections of the SETs:

- SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register
- SET 2: Programme admissions
- SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership
- SET 4: Programme design and delivery
- SET 5: Practice-based learning
- SET 6: Assessment

Under the title of each main section we have summarised the broad areas that the section is concerned with. Detailed guidance is then provided for each individual standard in the section, in a table like the one below.

Under 'Other sources of HCPC guidance' we list other HCPC publications, where available, which may be useful to you to find more information about an individual standard. Certain documents may have relevant information in them which relates to a number of individual standards.

This box contains the full text of the individual standard.
<p>Guidance</p> <p>This box contains guidance on the individual standard. It includes the intention behind the standard and any key definitions.</p>
<p>Other sources of HCPC guidance</p> <p>This box appears after some of the SETs and lists other HCPC publications which contain more background information or other related standards or guidance.</p>

SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register

Summary

This section is concerned with the qualifications which would normally be expected for someone to be eligible to apply to register with us in each profession.

Detailed guidance

1.1 The Council normally expects that the threshold entry routes to the Register will be the following:

Bachelor degree with honours for:

- biomedical scientists (with the Certificate of Competence awarded by the Institute of Biomedical Science, or equivalent);
- chiropodists / podiatrists;
- dietitians;
- occupational therapists;
- orthoptists;
- physiotherapists;
- prosthetists / orthotists;
- radiographers;
- social workers in England; and
- speech and language therapists.

Masters degree for arts therapists.

Masters degree for clinical scientists (with the Certificate of Attainment awarded by the Association of Clinical Scientists, or equivalent).

Foundation degree for hearing aid dispensers.

Diploma of Higher Education for operating department practitioners.

Equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education for paramedics.

Professional doctorate for clinical psychologists.

Professional doctorate for counselling psychologists, or equivalent.

Professional doctorate for educational psychologists, or equivalent.

Masters degree for forensic psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in forensic psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for health psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in health psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for occupational psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in occupational psychology, or equivalent).

Masters degree for sport and exercise psychologists (with the award of the British Psychological Society qualification in sport and exercise psychology, or equivalent).

Guidance

This standard sets out the level of qualification we would normally expect for approved programmes leading to registration in each of the regulated professions.

We have set the level for each profession, based on what we think is needed for programmes to deliver the standards of proficiency. We expect that most approved programmes will be at, or above, the standard we have outlined, but we realise that there may be some exceptions.

This standard contains the word 'normally' and some of the entry routes include the word 'equivalent'. This is to show that you may be able to design a programme which leads to a different qualification, but which meets the rest of the SETs, and the standards of proficiency, and so can still be approved by us. By law, we could not refuse to approve a programme just based on the form of award.

SET 2: Programme admissions

Summary

This section relates to the admissions processes for your programme, including the selection and entry criteria, procedures for assessing applicants and the information provided to the people involved. We expect that, in making decisions during the admissions process, you make sure learners are suitable to undertake the programme, including working with service users and carers in practice, and that they will be able to meet the standards of proficiency for their profession and to practise safely and effectively upon completion of the programme.

However, it is important that your applicants understand that, when you assess applications, you are checking their suitability to undertake the programme, not giving any guarantees about whether they will eventually be registered. This particularly applies to the individual standards in this section which refer to criminal record checks and health requirements.

When someone applies to join our Register, we look at their application individually, and make a decision about whether they can join our Register, based on their individual circumstances. We cannot guarantee that they will be registered in the future, or decide that a future application for registration would definitely not be successful.

Where admissions criteria and processes are applied by a separate organisation, you must retain overall responsibility and oversight. We do not normally visit organisations that you partner or collaborate with; instead we approve the policies and processes that you have in place in relation to them.

Detailed guidance

2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up an offer of a place on a programme.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that information provided throughout the admissions process is clear and comprehensive, and facilitates informed decision-making.

The purpose of this standard is two-fold; we want to be sure that the information provided by applicants enables you to come to an appropriate decision about their suitability for a particular programme. Similarly, we want to make sure that you provide applicants with information on the programme that enables them to make a fully informed decision about taking up a place on a programme.

This applies to the information you provide to applicants about all aspects of the programme, including practice-based learning.

We do not give you specific guidance on the detailed information you must ask an applicant for, but we need to be satisfied that it is enough for you to be able to make an appropriate decision about whether to offer the applicant a place on a programme.

Among other things, you should tell applicants about the costs of the programme, including accommodation and other associated costs where relevant, and any options for funding. The information you provide applicants should also be clear about the difference between completing an approved programme and registering with the HCPC; about the different roles that regulatory and professional bodies play; and about the use of protected titles as a learner and as a registrant.

2.2 The selection and entry criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure that the academic and professional entry criteria are appropriate to the level and content of the programme, which in turn ensures learners are able to meet our standards for registration upon completion.

These should include, for example, requirements for prior knowledge or qualifications where relevant. Or you may choose to include selection and entry criteria which relate to applicants' profession-related values, attitudes or personal attributes. Whatever the criteria, you need to be able to show how they are appropriate to the level and content of the programme.

The information you provide to applicants should clearly set out all of the relevant academic and professional entry standards for the programme.

2.3 The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that learners are able to use the English language at the level necessary to communicate effectively with service users and carers, educators and others and to complete the programme successfully.

You must have a thorough process in place for assessing an applicant's command of English. We do not prescribe how this should be done, but it should cover their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

We expect that any English language requirements you set at the point of admissions are appropriate to the level and content of the programme. They should take account of the fact that, upon completion of the programme, all learners must have the necessary level of English as set out in Standard 8 of the standards of proficiency for the relevant profession.

Your requirements can apply to all applicants, including those from the European Economic Area (EEA).

We realise that the requirements for applicants who do not have English as their first language may be different from the requirements for those who do. For example, applicants whose first language is English are not likely to be expected to provide evidence of meeting a language testing standard, but may demonstrate their English language skills in another way.

Your process should also make sure that reasonable adjustments are made to allow disabled applicants (e.g. deaf applicants) to demonstrate their English language and communication skills.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Standards of proficiency

2.4 The admissions process must include criminal record checks to ensure the suitability of applicants.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that service users, learners and others are not put at risk through their interaction with learners.

By 'suitability' we mean that an applicant is of appropriate character to train to become a health and care professional and to interact safely with service users and carers.

We expect you to undertake criminal record checks on all applicants. These would normally be through the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales; Disclosure Scotland; Access Northern Ireland; or, where appropriate, an equivalent body in another country. This should normally be at an 'enhanced' level or equivalent, due to the positions of trust and responsibility people on our Register are placed in. It is for you to decide who should pay the cost of carrying out the criminal convictions checks.

In making an admissions decision about someone who has a criminal record, you should consider whether it might affect their suitability to work with service users and carers or affect the public's confidence in their profession.

You should involve partner organisations in assessing the suitability of applicants. For example, you should consult practice education providers to find out whether

the fact that an applicant has a criminal record would cause any problems in practice-based learning.

We also expect that your processes will include consideration of our standards, particularly the standards of conduct, performance and ethics, and whether an individual's criminal record may affect their ability to meet them once qualified. Our Guidance on health and character provides information on how we consider criminal records of people who apply for registration with us.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Health and Care Professions Council, Guidance on health and character

2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that learners will be able to undertake a programme safely and effectively, and to meet our standards for registration upon completion.

The information you make available to applicants must clearly set out any health requirements. Health requirements could relate to the physical and/or mental health of applicants. For some programmes, they may include things that applicants are required to do before commencing a programme (e.g. immunisations); or aspects of the programme which may affect applicants with certain health conditions or disabilities in a different way (e.g. physical participation in some learning activities).

Applicants should be encouraged to disclose information about a health condition which may affect the way they are able to learn on the programme, including the way in which they interact with service users and carers. It is your responsibility to make sure you have made all reasonable adjustments in respect of applicants and learners, in line with equality and diversity law.

We do not view having a disability as a barrier to becoming a health and care professional. Our guidance document, 'Health, disability and becoming a health and care professional', provides information for disabled people applying to approved programmes, and for admissions staff considering applications from disabled people. You should make applicants aware of this and other relevant guidance during the admissions process.

In making an admissions decision about someone who has told you about a health condition, you should take into account our 'Guidance on health and character',

which provides information on how we consider health information about people who apply for registration with us.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Health, disability and becoming a health or care professional

Health and Care Professions Council, Guidance on health and character

2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that you consider the prior learning and experience of applicants as part of the admissions process in an appropriate and effective way.

This is often known as 'recognition of prior learning' and can relate to an applicant's prior experiential (informal) learning or prior certificated learning (such as relevant qualifications or completed modules). Mechanisms for the recognition of prior certificated or experiential learning may include:

- credit transfer;
- feeder routes; or
- transition arrangements.

This standard relates both to how you assess individual applicants' prior learning and experience on a case-by-case basis, as well as how you assess other programmes or training routes which may give advanced standing to a group of applicants.

Your process for assessing prior learning should take into consideration factors such as the relevance, level and currency of the prior learning. You should also make sure you have sufficient evidence from the applicant of the prior learning.

There is no requirement for you to recognise or accredit prior learning or experience if you do not consider it appropriate; and likewise we do not set limits on the amount of prior learning or experience you can accredit. Your education provider may have a specific policy or guidance in this area. However we expect you to have a clear rationale for the decisions made and a process in place which provides safeguards to ensure the standards of proficiency are met by all learners by the end of the programme.

You should also be able to show how you explain your processes in this area to applicants and learners.

2.7 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the admissions process is open and equitable and does not discriminate unfairly against certain applicants.

There must be equality and diversity policies in place which relate to the admissions process, as well as processes to monitor how these are being implemented. Your programme may have its own equality and diversity policy, or the education provider may have a policy that applies to the programme.

You should be able to show how you make these policies available to applicants, along with information about what an applicant should do if they feel that they have been unfairly discriminated against.

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SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership

Summary

This part of the SETs covers a range of topics, including how the programme is led, managed and governed; the processes for monitoring and review; collaboration with and involvement of stakeholders; and ensuring that the necessary resources are available to learners and educators.

The education provider must make sure that there is robust and effective oversight of the programme, and that there are effective systems and processes in place to establish, review, monitor and improve the delivery of the programme. This applies to all parts of the programme, including practice-based learning.

Where parts of the programme are provided by a separate organisation, the education provider must retain overall accountability and oversight. We do not normally visit organisations that you partner or collaborate with; instead we approve the policies and processes that you have in place in relation to them. These policies and processes must link into governance of the programme as a whole.

Detailed guidance

3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure that there is a future for the programme, that it is currently secure and supported by all stakeholders involved.

By 'sustainable', we mean that:

- the education provider and any partner organisations are committed to providing enough resources to effectively deliver the programme;
- possible risks or threats to delivering the programme are being effectively managed; and
- the programme has sufficient support from senior management within the education provider.

By 'fit for purpose' we mean that the programme meets the needs of learners who will be entering a profession. This includes ensuring that learners are adequately prepared for practice, and that they are able to meet the standards of proficiency and adhere to expectations of professional behaviour.

Factors relating to this standard may include:

- the programme's financial position, including funding arrangements where relevant;

- the programme’s place within the education provider’s business plan;
- the processes in place for reviewing the way the programme is delivered and the related need for development;
- work undertaken in collaboration with other organisations (such as practice education providers) to make sure the programme is sustainable and fit for purpose; and
- feedback from stakeholders about whether the programme is fit for purpose.

3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring there is effective management and clear accountability for the programme.

We expect there to be a programme management structure in place with clear roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability. You should also make sure that the people involved have the commitment, skills and expertise they need to lead and manage the programme.

Where there is a partnership arrangement in place with another organisation to deliver part of the programme (such as another education provider or a practice education provider), you should make sure that you maintain oversight of the management systems and structures within the other organisation and that all parties have a clear understanding of responsibilities. There should also be clear processes to deal with any issues or problems which arise in the partnership.

3.3 There must be a person with overall professional responsibility for the programme who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that there is a suitable person to lead the programme. This person is sometimes called the ‘programme leader’, but there may be other titles used for the role.

We do not play a role in appointing or approving the individual named person for this role; but rather we need to be assured that there is an effective process in place to identify a suitable person and, if it becomes necessary, a suitable replacement.

By ‘appropriately qualified and experienced’, we mean that the person is capable of leading the programme and effectively organising how that programme is

delivered. It may be appropriate for them to hold a particular professional or education qualification.

In addition, we normally expect this person to be registered with the HCPC in the relevant profession and, where there is more than one protected title, to be eligible to use the title the programme relates to.

However, we recognise that there may be circumstances where it is possible and appropriate for a programme to be led by someone who is not registered on the relevant part of the Register. If this is the case, you must be able to show how you make sure they are appropriate for the role and have access to the necessary information and resources specific to the relevant profession.

3.4 The programme must have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

Guidance

This standard is about how you ensure the programme's overall quality and effectiveness on an ongoing basis.

You need to be able to show how you monitor and evaluate the programme's quality and effectiveness and the systems that are in place. This includes processes which enable you to proactively gather information on quality and effectiveness; as well as to respond to any identified risks, challenges or changes.

Where relevant, you should also use this information as a way of ensuring the continuous improvement of the programme.

The processes you use should be appropriate to the programme and may include the following:

- internal and external quality audits;
- critical review of current arrangements;
- regular collection and analysis of feedback from learners, educators, service users and/or carers;
- analysis of learner complaints;
- analysis of concerns raised by learners, educators or others, for example about the safety or wellbeing of service users;
- quality audits of practice-based learning; and/or
- monitoring and evaluation through partnership with other organisations, such as practice education providers.

3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.

Guidance

This standard is about how you engage and work in partnership with those who provide practice-based learning as a way of ensuring its ongoing quality and effectiveness. We expect this collaboration to also influence the design and delivery of the programme as a whole.

By 'practice education providers' we mean departments, services or organisations which provide a setting or opportunity for learners to participate in practice-based learning, as well as organisations which employ those involved in teaching or assessing learners in practice.

By 'regular' we mean that the arrangements for collaboration must reflect a partnership and ongoing relationship, not collaboration that only happens around the time the programme undergoes approval or annual monitoring, or when specific issues arise with practice-based learning.

We do not set specific requirements but collaboration could take various forms, such as meetings, seeking feedback or other methods of communication with practice education providers. You should make decisions based on what is effective for the continuous improvement of the programme.

3.6 There must be an effective process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.

Guidance

This standard is about the processes you have in place to ensure that all learners on the programme have access to practice-based learning which meets their learning needs.

Meeting this standard requires not only consideration of the learners currently on the programme, but planning for future cohorts as well.

Where practice-based learning is provided separately from the rest of the programme by one or more third-party organisations, we expect these processes to be incorporated in your regular engagement and collaboration with the practice education providers.

In addition, securing the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for your own programme should be undertaken responsibly and include consideration of how it could impact on other programmes (for example, in the same geographical area).

3.7 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about how service users and carers contribute to the overall quality and effectiveness of a programme and ensure that learners completing an approved programme are fit to practise.

We use 'service user' as a broad term to refer to the involvement of those who use or are affected by the services of professionals registered with us. We use 'carer' as a broad term to refer to someone who has looked after, or who currently looks after or provides support to, a family member, partner or friend. They may need support because of their age, an illness, or because they have a disability.

Who the service users and carers are will vary between and within the different professions we regulate. In many professions, registrants will work closely with individuals who are the 'end recipients' of their services, including groups such as patients and clients and their carers. In other professions, registrants' contact with individual 'end recipients' of their services and carers is more indirect. In these professions, service users could legitimately include organisations or other clinicians but they could also include groups such as patients who ultimately benefit from their work. We want to be satisfied that you have considered and can justify the service user and carer groups you have chosen as the most appropriate and relevant to your programme.

Involving service users and carers could include involving individuals. It could also include working with existing groups and networks of service users and carers such as working with voluntary organisations.

By 'involved in the programme' we mean that service users and carers must be able to contribute to the programme in some way. We do not specify the exact areas of a programme in which service users and carers must be involved but they could be involved in some or all of the following:

- Admissions and selection
- Developing teaching approaches and materials
- Programme planning and development
- Teaching and learning activities
- Feedback and assessment
- Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation

You should make sure that there is support available for service users and carers, including remuneration where appropriate, so that they are able to be appropriately engaged.

You should have processes in place to plan, monitor and evaluate service user and carer involvement. You should also be able to explain where and how involvement takes place, how this is appropriate to your programme, and how it has contributed to governance and continuous improvement.

3.8 Learners must be involved in the design, delivery and review of the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the learning experience is central to the development and review of the programme. We expect that learners are involved throughout the programme, but specifically in its design, delivery and review.

You should have processes in place to seek, enable and encourage learner participation. You should be able to show how learner involvement has been used to inform decisions about the programme or to develop or change the programme with the aim of continuous improvement.

We do not specify exactly how learners must be involved. This could be done through a number of activities, including but not limited to:

- feedback through surveys;
- partnership working between learners and educators;
- staff/learner liaison committees; and/or
- learner representation on committees and working groups.

You should seek learner input regularly and not only when discrete issues arise. You should also make sure that learner involvement is used in a meaningful way to develop or enhance the programme, and that learners are aware of the actions taken as a result of their involvement.

3.9 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the resource provided for the programme allows for an adequate number of staff who are able and equipped to deliver the programme effectively.

We use the term 'staff' to mean anyone involved in delivering a programme, including educators as well as those involved in other areas such as management or administration of the programme.

By 'adequate number', we mean that you must be able to justify the number of staff you have in place, as well as the proportion of their time spent working on the programme, in relation to the practical requirements of the programme, the number of learners, their needs and the learning outcomes to be achieved. We do

not set staff-to-learner ratios; instead, we consider the staffing within the overall context of the education you provide.

You should also have arrangements in place to review the number of staff involved in the programme and to deal with situations such as staff absences.

We need to be sure that their qualifications and experience (whether practical or academic) are appropriate to the programme. This would include, for example, looking at what teaching and learning methods your educators are involved in; how they are involved in other programmes in the same profession; or the expected programme activities.

3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that educators have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver their parts of the programme effectively. This covers teaching as well as assessment and other aspects of delivery.

By 'educators' we mean individuals who are involved in teaching, assessing or facilitating learning. This includes those who are permanently part of the programme team, as well as sessional or visiting lecturers, practice educators or others.

We do not set specific requirements for the knowledge and expertise that is needed to deliver certain parts of your programme, but you must have a process in place to ensure that educators are suitable and well equipped to take part in teaching and to support learning in the subject areas they are involved in.

In addition, we expect your processes to enable you to review the necessary knowledge and expertise as learners' needs and current practice in the profession change.

3.11 An effective programme to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators must be in place.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that educators continue to develop and maintain their professional and academic skills so they are able to deliver the programme effectively.

We are including not only educators who are permanently employed, but also sessional or visiting lecturers and practice educators.

By 'academic development' we mean activities aimed at developing educators' skills related to teaching, learning and/or research, as appropriate to their role in the programme.

We do not have specific requirements for what arrangements you must have in place but this could include staff development strategies, training or mentoring schemes or professional development portfolios. Whatever the specific arrangements, you should ensure that these are available and easy for educators to gain access to.

We recognise that sessional, visiting or temporary educators may not participate in all professional development arrangements you have in place. However we still want to see how you ensure that these educators are keeping their professional and academic skills relevant to their role up to date. This standard also covers how you support practice educators in keeping up to date their skills related to their role in practice-based learning (e.g. practice educator training).

3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme, and must be accessible to all learners and educators.

Guidance

This standard is about how you make sure that programme resources are readily available to learners and educators and are used effectively to support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.

By 'all settings' we mean to include the setting for theory-based learning, as well as for practice-based learning (where it is separate) and any other site where a part of the programme is delivered.

'Resources' in this context may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- handbooks and module guides
- information technology
- virtual learning environments
- rooms and facilities
- textbooks and journals
- equipment
- any other learning and teaching materials.

You must have systems in place that enable you to assess how resources are used and how effective and accessible they are for learners and educators. This should include whether they are up to date and take into account the cost of replacing resources when needed.

3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.

Guidance

This standard is about the education provider's commitment to supporting and enabling learners to achieve and successfully complete the programme.

By 'all settings' we mean to include the setting for theory-based learning, as well as the practice-based learning environment (where it is separate) and any other place where part of the programme is delivered.

Such arrangements should include academic and pastoral support, so that learners have access to feedback and regular reviews on their progress as well as support in particular areas of the programme where needed.

They may also include financial support or services relating to learners' physical or mental wellbeing (for example a counselling service or occupational health service). You must ensure that the support and services you provide are able to respond to specific needs and that learners know how to access them and are able to do so in a timely manner.

The arrangements must be available to all learners, but you may wish to consider how to support in particular:

- mature learners;
- disabled learners;
- those who have to take periods of planned or unplanned leave from the programme;
- those with caring responsibilities; and/or
- those with financial difficulties.

3.14 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the programme provides an equitable, fair and supportive environment to enable learning.

The equality and diversity policies, as well as the processes you have in place to monitor how they are implemented, must apply throughout the programme. Where part of the programme is delivered at or by a separate organisation (e.g. practice-based learning), you must have a process to ensure that appropriate equality and diversity policies are in place and implemented which apply to all learners on different parts of the programme.

The programme may have its own equality and diversity policies, or the education provider may have policies that apply.

You should be able to show that learners know how they can gain access to these policies and what to do if they feel that they have been discriminated against.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Health, disability and becoming a health and care professional

3.15 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.

Guidance

This standard is about how you address and resolve complaints from learners, and how these contribute to the overall governance of the programme.

Learner complaints may relate to the quality of teaching and learning opportunities; the appropriateness or fairness of programme policies and procedures or how they have been implemented; or allegations of harassment or discrimination. They are different from 'academic appeals' – which are concerned only with the request for a review of a decision about progression or assessment – although the processes may be similar or linked.

The process for receiving and dealing with learner complaints must apply to all parts of the education provider and the programme, including practice-based learning.

In order to be effective, the process should not only respond to and remedy and issues or failings identified through complaints; but also use this information to review parts of the programme and identify potential areas for improvement.

3.16 There must be thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.

Guidance

This standard is about how you take responsibility for protecting service users and carers who interact with learners; and for ensuring that learners who complete the programme meet our standards for registration and expectations of professional behaviour.

We expect you to have effective processes in place that allow you to both proactively reassess the suitability of learners' conduct, character and health; and also to deal reactively with concerns about learners that come to light.

For example, it may be appropriate to undertake annual or periodic criminal records checks on learners. Or your processes may enable learners to provide information about issues relating to their character or health (i.e. self-declarations).

In assessing this information, you should consider whether the conduct, character or health-related issue could affect the learner's ability to meet our standards or to practise safely and effectively once qualified. Our 'Guidance on health and character' provides information on how we consider character issues and health conditions where they have been declared by people who apply for registration with us.

Concerns about a learner could be raised by anyone involved in the programme, such as practice educators, other learners or service users and carers, for example where a learner has acted in a way contrary to expected professional values and behaviours.

The processes you have in place should be fair and supportive, focused on helping and supporting learners to address concerns raised about their conduct or health or character issues where appropriate. However they should also be robust and allow for an appropriate range of outcomes. For example, concerns about a learner's conduct may indicate that they require additional support, or in serious cases that they are not suitable to continue on the programme. Where such information comes to light near the end of a programme, an appropriate outcome could be to provide for an award which does not provide eligibility to apply to the Register.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

HCPC, Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

HCPC, Guidance on conduct and ethics for students

HCPC, Guidance on health and character

3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.

Guidance

This standard is about enabling learners to recognise situations where service users may be at risk, supporting them in raising any concerns, and ensuring action is taken in response to those concerns.

Learners may encounter situations which cause concern during practice-based learning or in other ways during the programme. There must be a process or processes which cover all parts of the programme.

This is in part about making sure that learners understand their responsibilities with regard to raising concerns when they believe the safety or wellbeing of service users is at risk. We have produced 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students' to assist learners in understanding our expectations of their behaviour while on an approved programme, and to prepare them to meet the standards of conduct, performance and ethics once registered. This guidance includes an expectation that learners report their concerns about the safety or wellbeing of service users by speaking to an appropriate member of staff, such as an educator.

You must also support learners to raise concerns. You should ensure that learners know how and whom to address their concerns to; and how these will be considered and acted upon.

Your policies must be designed to make sure that learners are not penalised for raising concerns. Other support for learners may include:

- training on raising concerns and the importance of being open when things go wrong;
- dedicated reporting or communication mechanisms for learners to raise concerns; or
- advice from members of staff when situations arise which may be cause for concern.

The appropriate way to address a concern is likely to depend on its nature and where the concern originates; for example, it may be best dealt with by the programme leader or other managers at the education provider or practice education provider. Your process should ensure that, where necessary, the concern will be escalated to another appropriate person or organisation, such as a regulator.

3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure there is no confusion about which programmes we approve and which we do not. Learners, educators and the public must be clear on which programmes meet our standards for registration and which do not.

Where you provide an aegrotat, 'step off', intermediate or other exit award that we have not approved, it must be clear that these do not lead to eligibility to apply for HCPC registration. (An 'aegrotat award' is an award to a learner who was not able

to complete the full programme due to illness. Other exit awards may be available for learners in other circumstances.)

Learners who are not eligible to apply for registration should not be given an award that refers to a protected title. Where appropriate, you should consider giving these awards titles like 'Healthcare studies' which reflect the academic content, but do not give the impression that they confer eligibility to apply for registration. You should ensure that programme and award titles are clear, and that applicants, learners, educators and the public understand who is eligible to apply for registration with us, and who is not.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

SET 4: Programme design and delivery

Summary

This part of the SETs is about how the design and delivery of the programme ensure that learners who complete the programme meet our standards for their professional knowledge and skills, and are fit to practise. The programme must make sure that anyone who completes the programme is able to meet the HCPC standards of proficiency and understands the expectations and responsibilities associated with being a regulated professional.

The standards in this section apply to all parts of the programme, including both theory and practice-based learning.

We do not set prescriptive standards for developing a curriculum or about the detailed content of programmes and how they are delivered. We set broad standards so that you can design a programme that is responsive to changes in current practice and takes account of relevant curriculum frameworks and other profession-specific guidance.

Detailed guidance

4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure that learners who complete an approved programme are able to meet the standards of proficiency for their profession. This in turn means that those who apply for HCPC registration are able to practise safely and effectively upon entering the profession.

You must be able to show how all of the standards of proficiency are covered by the learning outcomes in the programme. It is not necessary that each of the standards of proficiency maps to a single learning outcome; it may be that a number of learning outcomes cumulatively ensure that learners are able to meet one or more of the standards of proficiency.

We need to be sure that every learner completing the programme can meet all of the standards of proficiency, no matter what optional modules they choose, or if they have postponed their study.

You should also take account of any reasonable adjustments you have made to the way you deliver the programme to disabled learners, in considering how they can meet the standards of proficiency at the end of their programme.

4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations associated with being a regulated professional.

Learners must have the opportunity throughout a programme to learn about professional conduct and to demonstrate an understanding of which types of behaviour are appropriate for a professional and which are not. This should include learning about how context affects professional decision-making.

In particular, learners need to be aware of their obligations to meet the standards of conduct, performance and ethics when they qualify and apply for registration with the HCPC, as well as throughout their future professional practice. These are broad standards that apply to everyone on our Register and those applying for registration. They set out our expectations regarding a professional's behaviour and cover their ethics, decision-making, communication and interaction with service users, carers, colleagues and others. Meeting those standards is an integral part of being fit to practise.

We do not prescribe how the standards of conduct, performance and ethics should be covered during the programme (for example, we do not require a dedicated module on ethics). However the standards should play a prominent and structured role in the design of a programme.

We have produced 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students' to help learners understand how the standards of conduct, performance and ethics apply to them.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Guidance on conduct and ethics for students

Confidentiality – Guidance for registrants

[Social media guidance once published]

4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that a programme remains current with regard to the philosophy, core values, knowledge and skills of a profession. It also aims to allow for changes within the profession.

We use the word 'reflect' rather than 'adhere to' because there may be more than one relevant curriculum guidance and/or you may need to depart from the curriculum guidance in some cases.

However, if the programme does not adhere to any of the curriculum guidance available, we need to understand how, without doing so, you are sure that learners completing your programme are able to practise safely and effectively.

We do not explicitly define 'core values' as they are likely to differ by profession. They could relate to the overarching philosophy which influences practice (e.g. the centrality of the service user), or to ethics, personal attributes or attitudes, among other things.

Curriculum guidance is often produced by professional bodies, but relevant documents are sometimes produced by other organisations, such as commissioning and funding bodies or employers. You must be able to show how any guidance is reflected in the programme.

4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Guidance

This standard is about how the programme takes account of and reflects current practice, so that it remains relevant and effective in preparing learners for practice.

Practice changes over time. You must be able to show how you make sure the curriculum stays relevant, and how you update it in line with developments or changes in current practice.

For example, you should be able to show how the design of the curriculum predicts or reflects change in practice and/or services; developments in the profession's research base and advances in technology; changes in the law; and changes in service users' needs and expectations. Additionally, you should consider how to reflect feedback on employability, from learners and employers; changes in workforce development and lifelong learning; and developments in professional and regulatory practice, including research and guidance.

4.5 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that learners are able to apply knowledge to practice as a fundamental part of being prepared and competent to practise their profession.

We expect theory and practice to be combined within both the theoretical and practical parts of the programme. By 'practical parts of the programme' we mean

to include practice-based learning as well as practical learning in an academic setting.

We expect the programme to not only include both theory and practice elements; you must also ensure that these are integrated, complementary and mutually supportive. Learners must have the opportunity to learn theory and understand why theory is important, but also to reflect on and learn how to apply theoretical frameworks in practice.

This integration needs to be relevant and meaningful to learners and to take place at appropriate times during the programme to ensure it is effective.

4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the methods you use to deliver the programme support learners to achieve the learning outcomes.

By 'appropriate' we mean relevant to and effective for achieving the learning outcomes needed, both in terms of theoretical knowledge and the practical skills required in professional practice. Learning and teaching methods should also be evidence-based as a way of ensuring their effectiveness.

We do not set specific requirements for the types, number or range of approaches your programme should include. However we expect that where possible these should take into account individual learning styles and needs to support achievement.

This standard refers to all parts of the programme, including both the theory and practice-based elements.

4.7 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.

Guidance

This standard is about enabling learners to become autonomous and reflective practitioners, as a key part of meeting our standards for registration.

Specifically, the ability to practise as an autonomous professional and to reflect on and review practice are requirements set out in standards 4 and 11 of the standards of proficiency (common across all professions).

The delivery of the programme should encourage learners to consider their own practice, including the limits of their safe and effective practice and their

responsibility to make sure that they practise safely when they complete the programme.

We do not set specific requirements for the teaching and assessment methods you should use to achieve this, but you could consider the following:

- self-appraisal with planning and writing action plans;
- discussion groups;
- workshops;
- practice simulation and debriefing;
- reflective diaries or logs; or
- personal development plans.

4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.

Guidance

This standard is about enabling learners to use evidence to inform and systematically evaluate their practice, as a key part of meeting our standards for registration.

Specifically, the ability to assure the quality of their practice is a requirement set out in standard 12 of the standards of proficiency (across all professions).

By 'evidence-based practice' we mean the ability to gather, use, analyse and appraise evidence to inform and quality assure their practice. Evidence may come from research, audit and evaluation or feedback from service users and carers, for example.

Development of evidence-based practice could be achieved through learner-centred and independent learning, teaching and assessment strategies, as well as learner-led research where appropriate. You should ensure that the programme encourages the development of analytical skills and research appreciation relevant to the profession.

4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.

Guidance

This standard is about how learners are prepared to work collaboratively with other professionals and across disciplines for the benefit of service users and carers.

The process of learning with and from other relevant professionals is often referred to as 'interprofessional education' (IPE).

This learning experience can develop learners' ability to communicate and work with those outside of their own profession, ultimately improving the environment and quality of care for service users.

By 'other relevant professions' we mean to include other health and social care professions, as well as professions outside of health and social care. It is up to you to determine which other professions are most relevant to the programme and most useful in preparing learners for practice. Improving the quality of care for service users should be the key factor in determining which other professions or occupational groups are relevant to learners on a programme.

We do not prescribe how a programme should include interprofessional education, nor the type(s) of learning activity, number of professions involved or length of time. However we want to know how you have made decisions regarding the design and delivery of IPE to maximise the relevance to learners, and the benefit for their future professional practice and for service users and carers.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

HCPC, Standards of proficiency

HCPC, Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

4.10 The programme must include effective processes for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.

Guidance

This standard is about how you use the learning process to support and develop learners' understanding of the principles and processes of obtaining consent in practice.

It is about respecting individual rights and minimising the risk of harm, and also making sure that learners understand what will be expected of them as health and care professionals. The principle of obtaining appropriate consent is central to practising in a regulated profession and is included in the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

The standard is twofold; the first part is about obtaining appropriate consent from service users who interact with learners. You must be sure that learning and teaching methods do not infringe in any way on the rights of service users. Where learners are directly involved in providing care, treatment or services (for example in practice-based learning), we expect there to be a system in place to ensure that service users and carers are aware that they are learners and that appropriate consent is obtained.

The second part is about obtaining appropriate consent from learners where they participate as service users themselves in practical and clinical teaching. The degree of involvement of learners in practical and clinical teaching will vary by programme and among professions.

You should not assume that broad consent given by a learner at the beginning of the programme will cover all situations. In some cases it will be necessary to obtain explicit consent from learners in relation to their participation in a specific activity. Such activities may include:

- role play;
- biomechanical assessments;
- patient positioning activities;
- practising clinical techniques; and
- experiential groups.

In telling learners about what clinical and practical teaching is included in the programme and obtaining their consent, you should take into account factors such as cultural differences and a learner's physical or mental health.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

Health and Care Professions Council, Confidentiality – guidance for registrants

4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that all learners who complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency, through full participation in those parts of the programme which are essential to achieving them.

We recognise that in some cases, a learner may not always need to be physically present but may engage in other ways, such as online. We use the word 'attendance' in a broad way to cover these situations.

In some cases it may be appropriate to require compulsory attendance of specific days or modules; while in other cases an expectation of average attendance over the course of the programme may be more appropriate. We do not set a minimum level of attendance, and leave this up to the programme (or the wider education provider) to set and be able to justify.

Learners need to be aware of your requirements and any consequences of missing mandatory parts of the programme.

You must have systems in place to monitor attendance and to take appropriate action if learners fail to attend the compulsory parts of the programme. For example, if you find that a learner has poor attendance, you could take follow-up action to make sure that they gain this knowledge before they are able to complete the programme. Other actions may be appropriate if learners fail to attend during assessments or practice-based learning.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

SET 5: Practice-based learning

Summary

This section is about the practice-based learning which must be an integral part of your programme. We define 'practice-based learning' as the clinical or practical experience that forms part of an approved programme. It may take place throughout a programme or in discrete periods of time. In some programmes, it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.

You must have oversight and accountability for all practice-based learning, even where it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.

While we recognise that you work closely with practice educators and practice education providers, the standards in this section aim to make sure that you maintain responsibility for the governance and quality assurance of practice-based learning, and that you have effective systems and processes in place to support it.

This section covers how you:

- approve and monitor practice-based learning to make sure that it is effective and enables learners to meet the standards of proficiency;
- ensure the safety of service users, learners and others in practice-based learning;
- provide for adequate resource and support; and
- provide the necessary information to learners and practice educators.

We do not approve individual practice-based learning settings, practice educators or practice education providers. However your systems and processes must make sure that these meet our standards.

Detailed guidance

5.1 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about how practice-based learning is used effectively, as a key component of the programme, to prepare learners for future practice.

Practice-based learning may take place throughout a programme or in discrete periods of time. In some programmes, it is provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.

You must be able to show how practice-based learning is an integral part of the programme, for example:

- how practice-based learning outcomes and progression are in line with learning outcomes for the programme as a whole;
- your ongoing partnership arrangements with practice education providers; or
- your reasons for the design of practice-based learning on the programme.

5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and the standards of proficiency.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that the way practice-based learning is designed enables learners to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme and the standards of proficiency.

We do not set requirements for the structure, duration or range of practice-based learning that you must include in your programme to meet our SETs. However we expect you to have clear reasons for your decisions in this regard and that these are appropriate to the design and content of the programme and the learning outcomes.

Some other organisations, such as professional bodies, do set guidelines on practice-based learning. These should be reflected where relevant to your programme.

You must be able to explain how learners progress during practice-based learning, in relation to the standards of proficiency and the learning outcomes of the programme.

You should ensure that learners have access to an appropriate range of practice-based learning experiences which reflect the nature of modern practice and the range of practice settings of the profession they are preparing to enter.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

Health and Care Professions Council, Standards of proficiency

5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring the continuing quality of practice-based learning.

You must have a system for approving practice-based learning and for regularly monitoring it. This may include collecting, analysing and acting on feedback from learners, service users, practice placement educators and others.

In addition we expect you to have processes in place to respond when any concerns, difficulties or adverse incidents arise in the provision of practice-based learning; or where there is evidence which may call into question the suitability of the practice-based learning environment. This might include, for example, information or reports from regulators as well as internal investigations. Responding appropriately may involve making changes to practice-based learning, addressing issues or removing approval if it becomes necessary.

You should view the quality assurance of practice-based learning as a method of continuous improvement of the learning environment and service users' experience. This means that your processes should support both the learner's and the service user's needs within practice-based learning.

Where practice-based learning is provided by a separate organisation, the programme must retain overall accountability and oversight. We do not visit individual practice-based learning environments or settings, but we approve the policies and process that you have in place in relation to them. These policies and processes must link into governance of the programme as a whole.

5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in an environment that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure that practice-based learning settings are suitable and that they support safe and effective learning.

You must be sure that practice-based learning does not cause a risk to service users. This is in part about ensuring that learners work within a scope of practice that is appropriate to their level of skills and experience. This is likely develop for an individual learner as they progress during the course of the programme, and the practice-based learning they participate in should reflect this. You should also consider other factors in providing a safe environment for service users, such as the level of supervision and autonomy that learners have.

We also expect you to have safety policies and procedures in place that enable you to identify and address risks to the health and wellbeing of learners, such as (where relevant):

- infection control;
- manual handling;
- aggression from service users, colleagues or others; and
- mental health and stress.

Where the practice-based learning is provided by an external organisation, you must be able to demonstrate how you assess and monitor the practice environment to ensure it is safe and supportive. This includes collaboration with practice educators and practice education providers.

5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring there is sufficient support for learners to enable safe and effective practice-based learning.

By 'staff' we mean to include practice educators, as well as others working in the practice-based learning environment or setting.

We recognise that there are different models of practice-based learning and the level of day-to-day supervision or involvement of practice educators and other staff can vary among programmes. As a result, we do not say how many staff must be present at practice-based learning, how exactly they must be involved or what their qualification and experience levels must be.

However, you must be able to justify what you consider to be an adequate number of staff with reference to the number of learners and the level of support specific learners need. For example, a one-to-one relationship may be required for some professions or programmes, while there may be four or five learners to one member of staff in others.

We also expect that the qualifications and experience of staff are appropriate to the specific aspects of practice-based learning they are involved in, and that they are able to effectively support learning and assessment.

Some professional bodies play an active role in providing advice on staff-to-learner ratios. You should contact these professional bodies for further guidance in this area, where relevant.

5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are agreed, must be on the relevant part of the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about how you make sure that practice educators are suitable and able to support and develop learners in a safe and effective way.

A 'practice educator' is defined as a person who is responsible for a learner's education during their practice-based learning.

We do not set specific requirements about the knowledge, skills and experience that all practice educators must have, as this is likely to vary between programmes and among the professions we regulate. However, you must determine what the necessary knowledge, skills and experience are to be able to support safe and effective practice-based learning, in relation to the learning outcomes of the programme.

In addition, we normally expect practice educators to be registered with the HCPC in the relevant profession and, where there is more than one protected title, to be eligible to use the title the programme relates to.

However, we recognise that in some circumstances there may be other appropriate practice educators whose professional backgrounds do not match the specific profession or protected title which the programme relates to; but whose knowledge, skills and experience mean they are well suited to support and develop learners in a particular area. This could include, for example, professionals registered with a different regulator.

If you choose to use practice educators who are not registered with us, you must be able to explain your decision and how you ensure that they are appropriate to undertake this role, including how their experience, qualifications and training are relevant to the practice-based learning they are involved in.

Where practice-based learning is provided by a separate organisation, you must have processes in place to check that practice educators have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience and are appropriately registered.

5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training which is appropriate to their role, learners' needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about how practice educators are appropriately prepared so they can support and facilitate learning and assess learners effectively.

We expect that all new practice educators are trained, and that this is followed up with regular refresher training and support. Some of this training is likely to be generic, but must also include aspects that are specific to the programme, delivery of the learning outcomes and the individual needs of learners (who potentially will have varying levels of skill and experience).

Where practice educators are involved in assessment of learners, they should be prepared to do so through training in a way that is consistent across all practice-based learning on the programme.

We do not set specific requirements for the length, content or frequency of training for practice educators, as we feel that this level of detail is best decided by individual education providers with reference to the specific programme.

Training may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to:

- attendance at your site for training;
- training in the workplace;
- online support;
- written support; and
- peer support through workshops and meetings.

You should consider putting in place accreditation schemes offered by some professional bodies, where relevant.

5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they need in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.

Guidance

This standard is about setting and communicating clear expectations to all parties regarding practice-based learning. This is necessary so that they understand their roles and what is expected and required for the practice-based learning to be safe and effective.

Information provided to learners and practice educators should include the following (where relevant):

- names and details of learners or practice educators;
- the timings and duration of practice-based learning;
- practical details such as location;
- induction materials;
- the learning outcomes to be achieved;
- any relevant risks or safety issues;
- what records need to be kept;
- the assessment methods and criteria, including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and
- lines of communication and responsibility.

You should also make sure that learners are aware of what to do if something goes wrong or they have a concern about their practice-based learning experience or the provision of services to service users.

It is important that this information is provided in a timely manner, to allow for any clarification or explanation before practice-based learning begins. You should also

ensure that not only is this information provided to learners and practice educators, but that it is easily available and in an appropriate format for them. You should also ensure that everyone involved has understood the information. This could be through follow-up training or opportunities for discussion, for example.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

SET 6 - Assessment

Summary

This part of the SETs is about how you assess learners throughout the programme. In particular you must ensure through assessment that learners achieve the following:

- meet the requirements of the programme;
- achieve the learning outcomes;
- meet our standards of proficiency; and
- demonstrate that they understand the expectations of being a regulated professional.

Assessments must be effective and fair and must enable learners to demonstrate their progression and achievement. This relates to the way you design the assessment strategy and methods; how you communicate with learners and educators about requirements for progression and achievement; and how you ensure robust review of the assessment processes with the appropriate professional input.

Detailed guidance

6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that learners who complete the programme have demonstrated the threshold level of knowledge, skills and understanding to practise their profession safely and effectively.

Your assessment strategy and design must make sure that learners can meet all of the standards of proficiency in a safe and effective way, before completion. Equally, you need to make sure that learners who do not meet the standards of proficiency are not allowed to complete the programme.

We do not set rules on things like pass marks, resits/retakes or the amount of compensation allowed, but your assessment strategy and design should strike a suitable balance between the need to support learners to succeed, and the need to make sure that those who complete the programme achieve the standards of proficiency.

It is not necessary that each of the standards of proficiency maps to a particular assessment; it may be that a number of assessments cumulatively ensure that learners are able to meet one or more of the standards of proficiency.

Your assessment strategy and design should include the following, where applicable:

- pre-requisites and co-requisites for the programme;
- compulsory and optional module assessments;
- individual module pass marks;
- the number of resits learners are allowed (and within what period of time);
- the maximum number of resits allowed in a year for specific modules;
- compensation and condonement regulations; and
- the maximum time a learner can take to complete the programme.

6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Guidance

This standard is about how learners are able to demonstrate that they understand the expectations associated with being a regulated professional, by the time they complete the programme.

This covers assessment in both the theory and practice-based parts of the programme.

The 'expectations of professional behaviour' include the nature of professional regulation and the responsibilities involved in being a regulated professional. In particular, we expect assessment to enable learners to demonstrate how they understand and are able to meet the HCPC standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

Other sources of HCPC guidance

HCPC, Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

HCPC, Guidance on conduct and ethics for students

6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that assessments are effective at determining whether a learner is fit to practise by the end of the programme.

By 'objective' we mean that assessment requirements are clear and realistic; and that they are able to deliver a valid and accurate picture of progression and achievement. The processes you have in place to moderate marks may be relevant here.

By 'fair' we mean that assessments provide all learners with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their progression and achievement; and that they take into consideration a specific learner's needs, e.g. the needs of disabled learners or those in extenuating circumstances.

By 'reliable' we mean that assessments are consistent and sufficiently rigorous to enable learners to clearly demonstrate the extent to which they have progressed during the course of the programme and achieved the learning outcomes.

You must have appropriate processes in place to gain assurance that assessments in the programme are objective, fair and reliable. This should include processes for addressing issues or implementing improvement where necessary. We do not prescribe how you must do this, but it should involve consideration of external examiners' reports, among other sources.

6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.

Guidance

This standard is about how you ensure that learners understand what is expected of them at each stage of the programme, and that educators can apply assessment criteria consistently.

In addition to what might prevent a learner from progressing, you should also be clear about the options available to a learner who is failing or at risk of not progressing or completing the programme.

You should be able to show how these policies are clearly communicated to both learners and educators.

6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to and effective at measuring the learning outcomes.

Guidance

This standard is about making sure that the methods used to assess learners enable you to determine whether the learning outcomes of the programme have been met. This in turn ensures that the standards of proficiency are met.

Assessment methods may include things like coursework, exams and presentations, and may be used to assess individuals or groups. We do not

specify the methods of assessment that should be included in the programme. However you must be able to show how your chosen methods are in line with the learning outcomes of each module or part of the programme. We need to be sure that, whatever assessment methods you use, they confirm that those learners who successfully complete the programme can practise safely and effectively in their profession.

Assessments must also be appropriately placed during the course of the programme to match a learner's expected progression.

6.6 There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that assessment processes are applied fairly.

An 'academic appeal' means a request by a learner for a review of a decision made by the education provider or another academic body about their progression, assessment or award. You must have a process in place which enables learners to make an appeal where they feel that the process which led to such a decision has been followed incorrectly or unfairly; or when information has come to light affecting the assessment outcome which was previously unknown.

By 'effective' we mean that the process must enable the education provider to deal with an appeal in a fair and timely manner, and that it must include appropriate action by the education provider where necessary.

You should ensure that learners are not disadvantaged in any way because they have made an academic appeal. In addition, your process should enable enhancement and improvement of the assessment process or other parts of the programme through consideration of the issues raised through appeals.

Learners should have clear information about the appeals process, including how to make an appeal and how and by whom it will be determined, as well as where they can go for advice.

6.7 There must be at least one external examiner for the programme who is appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.

Guidance

This standard is about ensuring that there is relevant professional input in the external review of the assessment process.

We do not play any part in appointing or approving external examiners, but need to be sure that the policies and processes are in place to ensure that a suitable external examiner is appointed and, when necessary, replaced.

You must ensure that at least one of your external examiners has professional experience and qualification relevant to the programme.

We would also normally expect at least one external examiner to be registered with the HCPC in the relevant part of the Register. However, we recognise that in some circumstances there may be other appropriate external examiners who are not on the relevant part of the Register. If this is not the case, you need to provide information about this decision and how you ensure that external examiners from a different professional background are suitable.

We do not set detailed requirements for how you use the advice and feedback from the external examiner. However the expectation is that the external examiner contributes to processes which ensure compliance with the SETs and achievement of the standards of proficiency.

There is guidance available on the role of external examiners from other organisations in the education sector and professional bodies. Where relevant, you should take this into account when appointing and using external examiners.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Glossary

You may not be familiar with some of the terms we use throughout this document, so we have explained them below.

Aegrotat	An award to a learner who was not able to complete the qualification due to illness.
Academic appeal	A request by a learner for review of a decision of an academic body about their progression, assessment or award. An academic appeal should not be confused with a complaint.
Annual monitoring	Our yearly process to make sure approved programmes continue to meet the standards of education and training and to deliver the standards of proficiency.
Applicant	Anyone applying to a programme you provide.
Approval	The process that leads to decisions about whether a programme meets the requirements of HCPC standards of education and training. Continuing approval depends on satisfactory monitoring.
Carer	Anyone who looks after, or provides support to, a family member, partner or friend.
Complaint	The expression of a specific concern by a learner about the quality of the programme and learning opportunities, or more generally about issues such as unequal treatment or bullying. A complaint should not be confused with an academic appeal.
Curriculum	A structured plan to provide specific learning to support learners' knowledge, skills, behaviour and associated learning experiences. The learning plan is generally organised as a sequence of modules so that a learner receives specific education and training. The curriculum includes the syllabus, teaching guides, an

	assessment guide and necessary learning resources.
Education provider	The institution (for example, a college, university, company, or private higher education provider) which maintains overall responsibility for the delivery of the programme.
Educator	Someone involved in teaching, assessing or facilitating learning on a programme. This term can include those who are permanently employed by the education provider and others who help to deliver the programme, such as sessional or visiting lecturers and practice educators.
'Enhanced' level disclosure	A type of criminal record check that is more detailed than the 'basic' or 'standard' check.
External examiner	A person you appoint to monitor the assessment process of a programme and to make sure that it meets professional and academic standards.
Fit to practise	When someone has the skills, knowledge, character and health to do their job safely and effectively.
Governance	The policies, processes and monitoring arrangements that make sure that a programme is well run.
Leadership	Providing a strategy, vision or direction for the programme
Learner	Anyone studying or training on a programme which leads to them being eligible to join our Register. The term includes students, trainees, apprentices and practitioners in training or work-based learning.
Management	Overseeing the day-to-day delivery of a programme, including setting roles and responsibilities and the allocation of resources.
Practice-based learning	The clinical or practical experience that forms an integral part of an approved

	programme. It may take place in discrete period of time or throughout a programme.
Practice educator	A person who is responsible for a learner's education during their practice-based learning and has received appropriate training for this role.
Practice education provider	The organisation that provides practice-based learning for a programme. In many cases this is a separate organisation from the education provider. This includes, for example, health and care providers, local authorities, schools, community organisations and charities across the public, private and voluntary sectors.
Programme	The academic teaching, practice-based learning, assessment, qualification and other services provided by the education provider, which together forms the programme for approval and annual monitoring purposes.
Programme leader	The person who has the overall professional responsibility for a programme.
Recognition of prior learning	The process for assessing an applicant's previous learning from experience and/or formal learning. This can lead to credit transfer or other transition arrangements into a programme, where appropriate.
Register	The list (or any part of it) that we keep of the professionals who meet our standards for their training, professional skills, behaviour and health.
Registrant	A person who is currently on the HCPC Register.
Service user	Anyone who uses or is affected by the services of registrants or learners.
Staff	Anyone involved in the delivery of the programme. The term applies to all roles including educators, management, administrative and support staff, as well as people in both paid and unpaid positions.

In practice-based learning, this term may also refer to others working in the practice-based learning setting who interact with learners.

Standards of conduct, performance and ethics (SCPEs)

Standards that apply to everyone on our Register and those applying for registration. They set out our expectations regarding a professional's behaviour and cover their ethics, decision-making, communication and interaction with service users, carers, colleagues and others.

Standards of proficiency (SOPs)

Standards which set out the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to practise a profession safely and effectively. Professionals must meet these standards when they complete an approved programme in order to become registered.

Suitability

Where an applicant or learner has the appropriate health, character and conduct to train to become a health and care professional and to interact safely with service users and carers.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Commentary on proposed changes to the SETs and supporting guidance

This commentary has been produced to assist those responding to our consultation on draft revised SETs and supporting guidance. The extent of the amendments we are proposing, particularly to the guidance document, would make tracked changes very difficult to read. We have therefore produced the table below to summarise how the drafts have changed from the existing standards and guidance. New or amended standards are shown in **bold**. Some brief commentary is also provided to explain the reasons behind the changes. The amendments summarised below are in addition to more minor editing amendments.

Existing standard	Amendments to existing standard / New standard	Amendments to the detailed guidance
SET 1: Level of qualification for entry to the Register		
1.1 The Council normally expects that the threshold entry routes to the Register will be the following [...]	(None)	(Minor amendments)
SET 2: Programme admissions		
2.1 The admissions procedures must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to take up or make an offer of a place on a programme.	<p>2.1 The admissions process must give both the applicant and the education provider the information they require to make an informed choice about whether to make or take up an offer of a place on a programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slight amendment for clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to clarify the intention of the standard, to remove unintended prescriptiveness and to increase clarity.
2.2 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria,	2.3 The admissions process must ensure that applicants have a good command of English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated references to the standards of proficiency (revised numbering)

Existing standard	Amendments to existing standard / New standard	Amendments to the detailed guidance
including evidence of a good command of reading, writing and spoken English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended for clarity and to emphasise the importance of a process for assessing English language skills. Reordered to 2.3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specified all forms that need to be evidenced: reading, writing, listening and speaking; but reasonable adjustments should be considered for disabled (e.g. deaf) applicants.
2.3 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including criminal convictions checks.	<p>2.4 The admissions process must include criminal record checks to ensure the suitability of applicants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended for clarity and emphasis on ensuring the suitability of applicants. Reordered to 2.4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified the intention of the standard and added definition of 'suitability' Updated to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (rather than Criminal Records Bureau) Inserted reference to Guidance on health and character in main body of the guidance.
2.4 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including compliance with any health requirements.	<p>2.5 The admissions process must ensure that applicants are aware of and comply with any health requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadened in recognition that not all health requirements will compel the applicant to do something before commencing the programme; they could be aspects of the programme which may affect applicants differently depending on any health conditions. Reordered to 2.5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the title of 'Health, disability and becoming a health and care professional' guidance (rather than 'A disabled person's guide to becoming a health professional'). Emphasised that having a disability is not viewed as a barrier to training as a health and care professional Added reference to the 'Guidance on health and character' to assist in making admissions decisions.
2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.	<p>2.2 The selection and entry criteria must include appropriate academic and professional entry standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added intention of the standard Further explanation added, including reference to applicants' profession-related

Existing standard	Amendments to existing standard / New standard	Amendments to the detailed guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slight amendment for clarity • Reordered to 2.2 	values, attitudes or personal attributes as possible criteria.
2.6 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including accreditation of prior (experiential) learning and other inclusion mechanisms.	<p>2.6 There must be an appropriate and effective process for assessing applicants' prior learning and experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadened the wording of the standard and removed outdated terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed to current terminology of 'recognition of prior learning' (rather than 'accreditation of prior (experiential) learning') • Clarification that the standard covers assessment of prior learning and experience on a case-by-case basis, as well as assessment of programmes, training routes or whole groups of applicants • Clarification that there is no requirement for education providers to accredit prior learning or experience or any limit on how much can be accredited; but the education provider is likely to have a policy.
2.7 The admissions procedures must ensure that the education provider has equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants and students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.	<p>2.7 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to applicants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wording of the standard amended to focus on applicants. A new standard on equality and diversity policies in relation to learners has been added to SET 3 below. 	(Minor amendments)

SET 3: Programme governance, management and leadership		
3.1 The programme must have a secure place in the education provider's business plan.	<p>3.1 The programme must be sustainable and fit for purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended to remove emphasis on the business plan; the intention of the standard covers more than just documentation and is about ensuring sustainability and fitness for purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed emphasis on the business plan (though this is retained as an example) Defined 'sustainable' and fit for purpose' Removed references to specific higher education funding bodies Added examples of relevant factors.
3.2 The programme must be effectively managed.	(None)	(Minor amendments for clarity)
3.3 The programme must have regular monitoring and evaluation systems in place.	<p>3.4 The programme must have regular and effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendment to include emphasis on improvement. Moved to 3.4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to include emphasis on both proactive and reactive processes as well as continuous improvement Removed specific reference to documentation.
3.4 There must be a named person who has overall professional responsibility for the programme who must be appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be on the relevant part of the Register.	<p>3.3 There must be a person with overall professional responsibility for the programme who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small amendment to wording. Moved to 3.3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added reference to the term 'programme leader' as the title sometimes used for this role Clarified that we do not play a role in appointing or approving individuals but approve the process put in place Explained that where other arrangements are agreed, the education provider must show how they ensure the individual is appropriate for the role.

	<p>3.5 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and practice education providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved from SET 5 to emphasise the importance of this collaboration to governance and management of the whole programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified intention of the standard Added definitions of ‘practice education providers’ and what we mean by ‘regular’ collaboration Emphasised that the standard is not just about quality and effectiveness of practice-based learning but the programme as a whole.
	<p>3.6 There must be a process in place to ensure the availability and capacity of practice-based learning for all learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new standard. The existing SETs do not contain a requirement for the education provider to have processes in place to ensure all learners will have access to practice-based learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New detailed guidance has been drafted to support this standard.
<p>3.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in place to deliver an effective programme.</p>	<p>Moved to 3.9.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added definition of ‘staff’, to include educators as well as staff involved in management and administration Added guidance stating that the number of staff should be appropriate to the needs of learners and outcomes to be achieved (not just absolute numbers of learners).
	<p>3.8 Learners must be involved in the design, delivery and review of the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new standard. Stakeholders have highlighted the importance of ensuring that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New detailed guidance has been drafted to support this standard.

	the learning experience is central to the programme.	
3.6 Subject areas must be taught by staff with relevant specialist expertise and knowledge.	<p>3.10 Subject areas must be delivered by educators with relevant specialist knowledge and expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaced the word ‘staff’ (which is used in a more general sense elsewhere) with ‘educators’. • ‘Delivered’ rather than ‘taught’ to include all forms of supporting and facilitating learning. • Moved to 3.10. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added a definition for ‘educators’ • Clarified the requirement for education providers to have processes in place to ensure the standard is being met.
3.7 A programme for staff development must be in place to ensure continuing professional and research development.	<p>3.11 An effective programme to ensure the continuing professional and academic development of educators must be in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaced the word ‘staff’ (which is used in a more general sense elsewhere) with ‘educators’. • Amended as research development is not necessarily relevant to all educators. • Moved to 3.11. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed reference to ‘staff’ to ‘educators’. • Clarified that the education provider must have processes in place to support all educators including visiting and sessional lecturers and practice educators • Added explanation of what we mean by ‘academic development’.
3.8 The resources to support student learning in all settings must be effectively used.	<p>3.12 The resources to support learning in all settings must be effective and appropriate to the delivery of the programme and must be accessible to all learners and educators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merged guidance from existing 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10 (with some editing amendments).
3.9 The resources to support student learning in all settings must effectively		

support the required learning and teaching activities of the programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New standard resulting from merging existing SETs 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10, aimed at reducing duplication. 	
3.10 The learning resources, including IT facilities, must be appropriate to the curriculum and must be readily available to students and staff.		
3.11 There must be adequate and accessible facilities to support the welfare and wellbeing of students in all settings.	<p>3.13 There must be effective and accessible arrangements in place to support the wellbeing and learning needs of learners in all settings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New standard resulting from merging existing SETs 3.11 and 3.12. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merged detailed guidance underneath existing SETs 3.11 and 3.12 (with editing amendments).
3.12 There must be a system of academic and pastoral student support in place.		
	<p>3.14 The programme must implement and monitor equality and diversity policies in relation to learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new standard, incorporating parts of existing SETs 2.7 and 5.5 but broadened to cover the whole programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New detailed guidance has been drafted to support this standard, incorporating parts of the guidance underneath existing SET 5.5 • Shifted focus to having policies in place to cover the whole programme (rather than only practice-based learning).
3.13 There must be a student complaints process in place.	<p>3.15 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for receiving and responding to learner complaints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended in order to clarify our expectations; it is not sufficient that there is a process in existence, but it must be used to take appropriate action in response to learner complaints. • Moved to 3.15. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added emphasis and further guidance on the importance of using learner complaints to remedy problems and contribute to continuous improvement of the programme.

<p>3.14 Where students participate as service users in practical and clinical teaching, appropriate protocols must be used to obtain their consent.</p>	<p>Removed. New SET 4.10 partly adapts this standard (see below).</p>	
<p>3.15 Throughout the course of the programme, the education provider must have identified where attendance is mandatory and must have associated monitoring mechanisms in place.</p>	<p>Moved to SET 4 as this is relevant to delivery of the programme (see new SET 4.11 below).</p>	
<p>3.16 There must be a process in place throughout the programme for dealing with concerns about students' profession-related conduct.</p>	<p>3.16 There must be a thorough and effective process in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to shift focus to ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners, proactively as well as reactively (i.e. when concerns arise). • Renumbered as 3.16. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance amended to match new focus of the standard; i.e. having processes in place to proactively reassess learners' suitability during the programme; as well as to reactively deal with concerns that arise about a learner.
	<p>3.17 There must be an effective process in place to support and enable learners to raise concerns about the safety and wellbeing of service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new standard. Stakeholders have highlighted the important role that learners can play in raising concerns in the interests of service users, but also the need for support from the education provider in doing this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New detailed guidance has been developed to support this standard.

3.17 Service users and carers must be involved in the programme.	Renumbered as 3.7.	(Minor amendments)
	<p>3.18 The education provider must ensure learners, educators and others are aware that only successful completion of an approved programme leads to eligibility for admission to the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new standard adapted from existing SETs 6.8 and 6.9. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New detailed guidance has been developed to support this standard, partly adapting guidance underneath existing SET 6.8 but refocused to emphasise the importance of clarity for learners, educators and the public.
SET 4: Programme design and delivery		
4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.	<p>4.1 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simplified wording. 	(Some amendments for clarity)
4.2 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance.	Moved to 4.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added further explanation around curriculum guidance Added further explanation of what 'core values' could refer to, e.g. professional philosophy, ethics, personal attributes or attitudes.
4.3 Integration of theory and practice must be central to the curriculum.	<p>4.5 The integration of theory and practice must be central to the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small change to replace 'curriculum' with 'programme', to shift focus to design and delivery more generally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further guidance added to emphasise the importance of integration for ensuring competence Clarification that the standard applies to both theoretical and practical parts of the programme, including practice-based

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reordered to 4.5. 	learning as well as practical learning in the academic setting.
4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.	(None)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified the expectation that education providers take stock of changes or developments in practice to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant • Added reference to changes within services and service users' expectations; employability; workforce development; and developments in professional and regulatory practice.
4.5 The curriculum must make sure that students understand the implications of the HCPC's standards of conduct, performance and ethics.	<p>4.2 The learning outcomes must ensure that learners understand and are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard has been amended to include a stronger requirement, and broader wording to cover 'expectations of professional behaviour'. Removed reference to 'curriculum' so as not to restrict how the SCPE are incorporated. • Moved to 4.2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The detailed guidance has been amended given the new, strengthened requirement • Added definition of the standards of conduct, performance and ethics and reference to the 'Guidance on conduct and ethics for students' • Removed reference to reading lists and clarified that the SCPE should play a 'prominent and structured role' in the programme.
4.6 The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking.	Moved to 4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Added specific reference to standards of proficiency.

<p>4.7 The delivery of the programme must encourage evidence based practice.</p>	<p>4.8 The delivery of the programme must support and develop evidence-based practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The standard has been changed based on stakeholder feedback that it should be strengthened; it now mirrors (new) SET 4.7. • Moved to 4.8. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Added specific reference to standards of proficiency • Other amendments for clarity and to add reference to analytical skills and research appreciation.
<p>4.8 The range of learning and teaching approaches used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the curriculum.</p>	<p>4.6 The learning and teaching methods used must be appropriate to the effective delivery of the learning outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slight amendment for clarity and to remove emphasis on the 'range' or variety of methods. • Reordered to 4.6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed emphasis on the 'range' of learning and teaching methods and requirement for more than one approach (as this is not the intention of the standard).
<p>4.9 When there is interprofessional learning the profession-specific skills and knowledge of each professional group must be adequately addressed.</p>	<p>4.9 The programme must ensure that learners are able to learn with, and from, professionals and learners in other relevant professions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on overwhelming support from stakeholders and the findings of commissioned research, we have changed this standard into a new positive requirement for learning with and from other professions. • Reordered to 4.9. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New detailed guidance has been developed in light of the new requirement. We have not prescribed how it must be delivered, and the guidance explains it is up to the education provider to determine what is appropriate and effective.
	<p>4.10 The programme must include an effective process for obtaining appropriate consent from service users and learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New detailed guidance has been developed to support the new standard, partly adapting guidance underneath existing SETs 3.14

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new standard, partly adapted from existing SETs 3.14 and 5.13. 	<p>and 5.13, covering the rights of both learners and service users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus shifted to emphasise the importance of learners understanding the principle of obtaining appropriate consent.
	<p>4.11 The education provider must identify and communicate to learners the parts of the programme where attendance is mandatory, and must have associated monitoring processes in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended and moved from existing SET 3.15 Added requirement to communicate to learners where attendance is mandatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified intention of the standard Added recognition that ‘attendance’ may not always have to be physical presence.
SET 5: Practice-based learning		
5.1 Practice placements must be integral to the programme.	<p>5.1 Practice-based learning must be integral to the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended to use new terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification that practice-based learning may take place throughout a programme or in discrete periods of time; and may be provided in a different setting or by a different organisation than other parts of the programme.
5.2 The number, duration and range of practice placements must be appropriate to support the delivery of the programme and the achievement of the learning outcomes.	<p>5.2 The structure, duration and range of practice-based learning must support the achievement of the learning outcomes and standards of proficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended to use new terminology; add reference to standards of proficiency; and to remove reference to ‘number’ as the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed reference to ‘number’ of practice-based learning experiences or placements, as this is not applicable to all programmes Other amendments for clarity and to reduce prescriptiveness.

	placement model is not applicable to all programmes.	
5.3 The practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment.	<p>5.4 Practice-based learning must take place in a setting that is safe and supportive for learners and service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to take account of new terminology; added specific reference to learners and service users. • Reordered to 5.4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added mention of safety for service users with reference to learners' scope of practice • Clarification of education provider's responsibility for ensuring the safety of practice-based learning provided by an external organisation.
5.4 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and monitoring all placements.	<p>5.3 The education provider must maintain a thorough and effective system for approving and ensuring the quality of practice-based learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to use new terminology and broaden the expectation to include responding to concerns or issues in practice-based learning. • Moved to 5.3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Removed list of example evidence • Emphasised the responsibility of education providers regardless of whether practice-based learning is provided by a different organisation • Clarified requirement to have a process in place to respond proactively to incidents and remove approval if necessary, including where there is evidence that calls into question the suitability of a practice learning environment (e.g. reports from regulators or internal investigations).
5.5 The placement providers must have equality and diversity policies in relation to students, together with an indication of how these will be implemented and monitored.	Removed and partly adapted in new SET 3.14 (see above).	

<p>5.6 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting.</p>	<p>5.5 There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in practice-based learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to use new terminology. • Renumbered to 5.5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed examples of forms of evidence • Emphasised that learners should have access to staff • Removed reference to registration of practice placement educators (which is under new 5.6).
<p>5.7 Practice placement educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience.</p>	<p>5.6 Practice educators must have relevant knowledge, skills and experience to support safe and effective learning and, unless other arrangements are agreed, must be on the relevant part of the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined with existing 5.9 and new terminology used. • Renumbered to 5.6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance underneath existing 5.7 and 5.9 combined • Clarified intention of the standard • Additional guidance to place emphasis on responsibility of the education provider to determine what are the necessary knowledge, skills and experience • Added definition of ‘practice educator’ • Explained that there may be exceptions agreed to the requirement for practice educators to be registered with HCPC, but these are agreed on a case-by-case basis.
<p>5.8 Practice placement educators must undertake appropriate practice placement educator training.</p>	<p>5.7 Practice educators must undertake regular training appropriate to their role, learners’ needs and the delivery of the learning outcomes of the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to use new terminology and clarify that training must be specific to the practice educator’s role and to the programme. • Renumbered to 5.7. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Added reference to support from the education provider, as discussed by the PLG • Emphasised that, although parts of the practice educator training may be generic, it must include aspects specific to the programme, individual needs of learners and delivery of learning outcomes.

<p>5.9 Practice placement educators must be appropriately registered, unless other arrangements are agreed.</p>	<p>Combined with existing 5.7 and renumbered 5.6 (see above).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance underneath existing 5.7 and 5.9 combined • References to specific professions removed • Other amendments for clarity.
<p>5.10 There must be regular and effective collaboration between the education provider and the practice placement provider.</p>	<p>Moved to 3.5 (see above).</p>	<p>(See new 3.5 above.)</p>
<p>5.11 Students, practice placement providers and practice placement educators must be fully prepared for placement which will include information about an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the learning outcomes to be achieved; – the timings and the duration of any placement experience and associated records to be maintained; – expectations of professional conduct; – the assessment procedures including the implications of, and any action to be taken in the case of, failure to progress; and – communication and lines of responsibility. 	<p>5.8 Learners and practice educators must have the information they require in a timely manner in order to be prepared for practice-based learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bullet list has been removed from the standard, for consistency of format; amended to use new terminology. • Renumbered 5.8. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Bullet points removed from the standard into detailed guidance, with some additional points added, indicating what types of information might be relevant • Added that learners should be made aware of what to do if something goes wrong or they have a concern about practice-based learning.
<p>5.12 Learning, teaching and supervision must encourage safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct.</p>	<p>Removed. Aspects of professional conduct are covered in new SET 4.2 which relates the whole of the programme (including practice-based learning).</p>	

<p>5.13 A range of learning and teaching methods that respect the rights and needs of service users and colleagues must be in place throughout practice placements.</p>	<p>Removed and incorporated in new SET 4.10 (see above).</p>	<p>Aspects have been incorporated in guidance under new 4.10 (see above).</p>
<p>SET 6: Assessment</p>		
<p>6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that the student who successfully completes the programme has met the standards of proficiency for their part of the Register.</p>	<p>6.1 The assessment strategy and design must ensure that those who successfully complete the programme meet the standards of proficiency for the relevant part of the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor amendment for clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of the standard • Emphasised the responsibility of the education provider to ensure that learners who do not meet the standards of proficiency are not allowed to complete the programme • Clarified that each individual assessment does not need to map to a particular standard of proficiency.
<p>6.2 All assessments must provide a rigorous and effective process by which compliance with external-reference frameworks can be measured.</p>	<p>Removed. The existing standard refers to fitness for academic award, whereas the SETs are about meeting the standards of proficiency and fitness for practice.</p>	<p>Removed.</p>
<p>6.3 Professional aspects of practice must be integral to the assessment procedures in both the education setting and practice placement setting.</p>	<p>6.2 Assessment throughout the programme must ensure that learners demonstrate that they are able to meet the expectations of professional behaviour, including the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This standard has been strengthened based on feedback from stakeholders on the link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance has been strengthened in line with the guidance under proposed new SET 4.2 • Clarified that this covers assessment in both the theory and practice-based parts of the programme.

	<p>between the SETs and SCPE; mirrors new SET 4.2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renumbered 6.2. 	
	<p>6.3 Assessments must provide an objective, fair and reliable measure of learners' progression and achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a new standard, incorporating some aspects of existing SETs 6.5 and 6.6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New guidance has been drafted based on the new broad standard.
<p>6.4 Assessment methods must be employed that measure the learning outcomes.</p>	<p>6.5 The assessment methods used must be appropriate to and effective at measuring the learning outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended for clarity • Renumbered 6.5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional guidance to clarify the intention of the standard • Further guidance on what we mean by assessment methods, with clarification that we do not specify which ones must be included in the programme, provided they ensure learners are able to meet the learning outcomes.
<p>6.5 The measurement of student performance must be objective and ensure fitness to practise.</p>	<p>Removed; some aspects incorporated in new SET 6.3 (see above).</p>	<p>Removed; some aspects incorporated in detailed guidance underneath proposed new SET 6.3 (see above).</p>
<p>6.6 There must be effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate standards in the assessment.</p>	<p>Removed; some aspects incorporated in new SET 6.3 (see above).</p>	<p>Removed; some aspects incorporated in detailed guidance underneath proposed new SET 6.3 (see above).</p>
<p>6.7 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for student progression and achievement within the programme.</p>	<p>6.4 Assessment policies must clearly specify requirements for progression and achievement within the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor amendment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some amendments for clarity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moved to 6.4. 	
6.8 Assessment regulations, or other relevant policies, must clearly specify requirements for approved programmes being the only programmes which contain any reference to an HCPC protected title or part of the Register in their named award.	Removed; some aspects adapted and moved to new SET 3.18 (see above).	(See new 3.18 above.)
6.9 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for an aegrotat award not to provide eligibility for admission to the Register.	Removed; some aspects adapted and moved to new SET 3.18 (see above).	(See new 3.18 above.)
6.10 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for a procedure for the right of appeal for students.	<p>6.6 There must be an effective process in place for learners to make academic appeals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to simplify and clarify • Renumbered as 6.6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added definition for ‘academic appeals’ • Emphasised importance of enhancement and improvement through issues raised in appeals • Additional guidance regarding expectations of an effective process.
6.11 Assessment regulations must clearly specify requirements for the appointment of at least one external examiner who must be appropriately experienced and qualified and, unless other arrangements are agreed, be from the relevant part of the Register.	<p>6.7 There must be at least one external examiner who is appropriately qualified and experienced and, unless other arrangements are agreed, on the relevant part of the Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended to simplify the standard and for clarity. • Renumbered as 6.7. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified intention of standard as ensuring there is relevant professional input in review of the assessment process • Additional guidance on the role of external examiners and clarification that we do not approve individuals, but rather the process in place to appoint external examiners • Explained that there may be possible exceptions to the requirement for one external examiner to be on the relevant part

		of the Register, which can be agreed on a case-by-case basis.
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