

Education and Training Committee

Minutes of the 106th meeting of the Education and Training Committee held as follows:

Date: Tuesday 7 March 2023

Time: 10am

Venue: MS Teams

Members: Maureen Drake
Oli Davies
Helen Gough (Chair)
Katie Thirlaway
Steven Vaughan

In attendance:

Claire Amor, Executive Director of Governance, Assurance & Planning

Zoe Allan, Governance Officer

Laura Coffey, Interim Executive Director of Regulation

Aveen Croash, Quality Assurance Manager

Brendon Edmonds, Head of Education

Rosemary Flowers-Wanjie, Policy Manager

Rachael Gledhill, Acting Head of Policy, Standards and Strategic Relationships

Jamie Hunt, Acting Head of Education

Nasia Nicou-Panayiotou, Quality Assurance Officer

Tracey Samuel-Smith, Education Manager

Andrew Smith, Interim Deputy Chief Executive

Public Agenda

Item 1 – Chair’s welcome and introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the 106th meeting of the Education and Training Committee, extending a special welcome to Council Apprentice and Committee member Oli Davies as it was his first meeting of the Committee. A special welcome was also extended to members of the Quality Assurance team who were observing the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Committee member Penny Joyce.

Item 2 - Approval of agenda

- 2.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

Item 3 - Declaration of members’ interests

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

Item 4 - Public minutes of the Education and Training Committee meetings of 9 November 2022 (ETC 01/23)

- 4.1 The Committee approved the public minutes of its meeting of 9 November 2022.

Items for discussion/approval

Item 5 - Registration Performance (ETC 02/23)

- 5.1 The Committee received a report from the Head of Registration and Head of Education which outlined performance for the period of October 2022 to January 2023
- 5.2 The Committee noted the following points: -
 - The benefits of the international ring-fenced team had continued to improve performance, with the monthly performance median to make a first decision reducing to 15 working days in January 2023;
 - UK telephone service levels had improved significantly, with call answer rates at now at 99% (January 2023);
 - during the period of October 2022 to January 2023, 20 registration appeals were concluded. The number of upheld appeals remained low providing assurance on the quality of the initial registration decisions;
 - the dedicated UK applications team set up in July 2022 continued to have a positive impact on performance and exceeding expectations from applicants. A monthly median of 2 working days was sustained in January 2023; and
 - There had been an upward trend in performance for international registrations.

- 5.3 The Committee were pleased to see the significant improvements made and thanked the Executive for the work undertaken to achieve this.
- 5.4 The Committee reflected on the high volume of international applications and asked whether the Executive had plans to manage upward trends and meet demand. Further, the Committee sought the Executive's reflections on the sustainability of the organisation if demand was to decrease in the future.

Externally, proactive stakeholder engagement across the sector was referenced by the Executive as a key measure to understand international recruitment volumes and support recruitment drives. The Committee encouraged a nationwide focus to this engagement.

Internally, the Executive confirmed that there had been prudent assumptions in terms of application volumes for the next financial year (8k), a new operating model would be implemented (Q1) with a focus on customer service and there was flexibility to be able to scale up or down the resource to meet demand.

- 5.5 The Committee asked about the rationale for paper based applications, the Executive confirmed that 99.9% applications were online, a paper based route was maintained as a reasonable adjustment.
- 5.6 The Committee thanked the Executive for the report, welcomed the improvements made and noted the importance of continuing the forward look discussions around international applications.

Item 6 - Education Performance (ETC 03/23)

- 6.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Education which outlined Education performance, reporting across the operational processes.
- 6.2 The Committee noted the following points:-
- 78% of cases were within service levels, a continued improvement from a historic low of 65% in September. The aim was for 90% of cases within service levels (green), with an amber RAG rating of 80-90%;
 - previously reported resourcing challenges had meant a backlog of cases built up from April 2022. Reduced performance was expected – July and August were spent focusing on ensuring approval cases where programmes were due to start in September were approved. This had resulted in cases from other processes being deprioritised;
 - the quality of decision making had not dropped through this challenging period – first and second line checks had continued to be applied, and quality indicators show decisions are of a high quality; and
 - efforts were now being focused on concluding high impact cases.
- 6.3 Reflecting on the priority cases which were over or at risk of exceeding service targets, the Committee sought assurance on whether providers were at risk of

being impacted. The Executive referenced some of the resourcing challenges which had impacted on progress. The Committee noted that the resource issues had now been resolved and future reports would reflect this via KPIs; the management and reporting tools in place were also helping to identify overdue/stuck cases and inform resourcing decisions.

- 6.4 The Committee sought assurance on how resource challenges across the organisation were being addressed. The Executive referenced the retention measures introduced around pay and award packages, turnover improvements (down to 16%) and ways of working enhancements to support productivity. In Education specifically, measures included a redesign of roles that offered more interesting work.
- 6.5 The Committee sought assurance about when improvements were anticipated for case conclusions as the KPIs did not align with the narrative. The Committee noted that this was now anticipated for June. The Executive further reflected on the presentation of the data, noting that the KPIs were a backward look of performance and not reflective of current cases within the system, this would be explored for future reports to the Committee to provide more assurance of concluded work and overall performance.
- 6.6 A Committee member provided more optimistic reflections as an education provider and was hopeful that the KPIs would soon showcase this; the education QA model was a new way of working for providers but was much better from a provider's perspective (i.e., fewer conditions were being set). Stakeholder experiences was an area the Executive wanted to include going forward as would add richness to these reports.
- 6.7 The Committee sought assurance around the role of partners and extent of demand on the Executive. The Executive reflected that partner visitors were also experiencing a change curve requiring management from the Executive in terms of facilitating the process, there was some further work required with partners and the Executive team and this was included in the team's workplan for 2023-24, importantly there was also an element of learning by doing.
- 6.8 The Committee reflected on the reduced pipeline of new programmes and HCPC's role as a regulator within workforce planning, and with a nationwide focus; working with professional bodies and Health Education England (HEE) was noted as key in terms of championing some of the lesser known professions as well as exploring more innovative approaches via data sharing, although this would require investment.
- 6.9 In response to the workforce planning discussions had, the Executive reflected on the nature of this report and referenced the thematic learning paper scheduled for the Committee's September meeting noting that the standing performance report presented the performance of the team, and the more detailed thematic learning paper would provide the opportunity to explore trends and issues for discussion which the Committee welcomed.
- 6.10 The Committee thanked the Executive for the report and noted the improved narrative despite this not being reflected in the KPIs just yet, now anticipated for June.

Item 7 - Standards of Conduct, Performance & Ethics – update

- 7.1 The Committee received a presentation from the Policy Manager. The Committee had recommended the consultation to Council in September 2022. The committee noted the scope of the review which included social media guidance, the overview of proposed areas of change, the consultation activity and implementation approach.
- 7.2 The Committee welcomed the update, noting the plan and timeline were clear.
- 7.3 The Committee reflected on the social media element which was key, noting it would be important to understand the personal vs professional line and were keen to learn the Executive's thinking on this point. The Executive confirmed that it was a live issue and legal advice on this point had been sought; the impact on public health measures was key, as were the reputational risks. The practical implications in terms of fitness to practice cases needed to be determined by the Executive. The Committee reflected on the importance of education, social media was one medium of communicating and public pages were accessible to everyone so behaving in line with HCPE standards and the Law was paramount.
- 7.4 The Committee asked whether regulatory reform could impact progression and were assured to hear that it was a priority area for the HCPC, a set piece of Policy work and would continue regardless.

Item 8 – Forward workplan

- 8.1 The Committee noted areas of business planned for future Committee meetings including the thematic learning review from Education (September), additional items of business could be added as required.

Item 9 – Any other business

- 9.1 There was no AOB.

Item 10 - Date and time of next meeting

- 10.1 2023 meetings:

- 7 June
- 6 September
- 8 November

Signed

Date

Unconfirmed