

Professional Liaison Group for the review of the standards of education and training, 19 January 2016

Theme: Values in education – Amendments to the guidance

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper focuses on the role of values in the SETs and supporting guidance, which was identified as a theme for consideration by the PLG.

At its meeting in November 2015, the PLG considered a paper summarising feedback from stakeholders and initial recommendations from the Executive relating to this theme. It was agreed that a second paper would be prepared to examine potential amendments to the guidance in order to further incorporate the concept of values in certain areas.

Decision

The PLG is invited to discuss this paper and to consider the Executive's recommendations in sections 4 and Appendix 1, and the further considerations in section 5.

Background information

- Professional Liaison Group for the review of the standards of education and training, 'Theme: Values in education' (23 November 2015).
<http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004E1AEnc04-ThemeValuesinEducation.pdf>
- The current versions of the SETs and supporting guidance have been supplied separately as documents to note.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Amendments to the guidance for SETs 2.5 and 4.2

Date of paper

24 December 2015

Theme: Values in education – Amendments to the guidance

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the second of two papers prepared for the PLG on the theme of values in education. It proposes specific amendments to the SETs supporting guidance underneath two individual standards, in order to further incorporate the concept of values in certain areas.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting in November 2015, the PLG considered a paper¹ which set out the following:
- the context relevant to the link between values and education in health and social care;
 - work undertaken by Health Education England to promote values-based recruitment in all NHS-funded courses in England;
 - the current approach to the topic of values in education in the SETs;
 - a summary of stakeholder feedback on related topics gathered during the review; and
 - an overview of approaches taken by other UK health and social care professional regulators.
- 2.2 That paper did not recommend any specific amendment to the SETs or supporting guidance with the objective of increasing the focus on values. The Executive noted that many of the values highlighted by stakeholders as being important for students to learn and demonstrate are already covered by the standards of proficiency and the standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
- 2.3 Likewise on the subject of values-based recruitment, the Executive did not recommend any additional requirements for education providers, citing the outcome-focused nature of the SETs.

3. Summary of PLG discussions

- 3.1 At that meeting, the PLG agreed with the Executive's recommendation not to add a requirement for values-based recruitment to the SETs. However, several PLG members commented that it would seem odd were a programme not to address values at all in teaching and assessing students.

¹ The previous paper from the September 2015 meeting of the PLG can be accessed here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004E1AEnc04-ThemeValuesinEducation.pdf>

- 3.2 Whilst the PLG was satisfied that the wording of the standards themselves did not need revision, it was suggested that changes could be made to the SETs guidance in order to further incorporate the concept of values in certain areas.
- 3.3 In particular, the Group suggested that amendments could be made to the guidance under SET 2.5 ('The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards') and SET 4.2 ('The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any relevant curriculum guidance').
- 3.4 One PLG member cited SET 4.6 ('The delivery of the programme must support and develop autonomous and reflective thinking'), suggesting that this might be a good opportunity to refer to the importance of 'values-based reflective practice' in the supporting guidance.
- 3.5 Some members of the PLG also suggested that an overarching 'philosophical' statement in the introduction to the guidance document could stress the centrality of the service user, as a common value across all professions.
- 3.6 The PLG requested that a second paper be prepared for a subsequent meeting to examine potential amendments to the guidance.

4. Executive recommendations

- 4.1 The Executive recommends a small number of amendments to the detailed guidance underneath SETs 2.5 and 4.2. The proposed amended text is set out in Appendix 1, and we have summarised the key changes below:
- **SET 2.5 guidance:** We propose adding to the guidance that some programmes may choose to include selection and entry criteria which relate to applicants' profession-related values, attitudes or personal attributes (the term 'values based recruitment' is not explicitly used). Other suggested amendments are aimed at clarifying the intent of the standard.
 - **SET 4.2 guidance:** We propose adding an explanation of the term 'core values' in the guidance, referring to things such as the overarching philosophy which influences practice, ethics, attributes and attitudes. Other suggested amendments are aimed at clarifying what we mean by 'curriculum guidance'.
- 4.2 We are not proposing to add mention of 'values based reflective practice' in the detailed guidance underneath SET 4.6. This is a specific model of reflective practice which was developed by the Scottish healthcare chaplaincy community and encourages health and care professionals to reflect on actions and events in their practice in the context of personal and professional values. Whilst this can no doubt be a valuable process for professionals to engage in, we do not wish to prescribe any particular model of reflective thinking or practice in the SETs guidance.

- 4.3 We also note that the standards of proficiency (SOPs) include a generic standard (11) which requires registrants to be 'able to reflect on and review practice', while profession-specific standards provide more detailed requirements. It would not be appropriate for the SETs guidance to include a more detailed or prescriptive requirement than that which exists in the SOPs.
- 4.4 Furthermore, we do not recommend adding an overarching 'philosophical' statement relating to values in the introductory section of the guidance. The SETs guidance is intended to be a practical aid to education providers who are preparing for the HCPC approval and annual monitoring processes. Information in the guidance should aim to clarify the expectations set out in the SETs themselves, rather than adding new concepts or requirements. Insofar as there is an overarching approach or 'philosophy' to the SETs, this would need to be evident from the standards themselves.

5. PLG considerations

- 5.1 The PLG is invited to consider the recommendations above and the amended guidance for SETs 2.5 and 4.2 set out in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 In addition we would welcome any other reflections or comments in relation to the role of values in the SETs guidance, and in particular any other suggestions for specific amendments.
- 5.3 The Group is encouraged to consider these in light of the key principles behind development and use of the standards and guidance. In particular, the SETs should:
- be set at the **threshold** level, to ensure that education and training programmes provide students with skills and understanding to practise safely and effectively and to meet the SOPs 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.

Appendix 1: Amendments to guidance for SETs 2.5 and 4.2

2.5 The admissions procedures must apply selection and entry criteria, including appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards.

Guidance

Setting appropriate academic and/or professional entry standards helps to ensure that students are able to complete a programme successfully and will be fit to practise upon completion.

You need to be able to show how these criteria are appropriate to the level and content of the programme.

A programme may choose to include selection and entry criteria which relate to applicants' profession-related values, attitudes or personal attributes. This is not a requirement and may be more appropriate in some programmes than in others.

The information you provide to applicants should clearly set out all of the relevant academic and/or professional entry standards for the programme. We will want to see evidence of how you make applicants aware of these criteria and how you apply them.

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

Guidance

The SET aims to ensure that a programme remains current with regard to the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge of a profession. It also aims to allow for changes within the profession.

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

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

However, if the programme does not adhere to any of the curriculum guidance available, we would need to see evidence of how, without doing so, you feel the students 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, or to ethics, personal attributes or attitudes, among other things.