

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 7th November 2017

Osprey Hotel, Naas

Present	Apologies	In Attendance
Shane Knox (Chair)	Ben Heron	Kathleen Walsh, PDO
Peter McDaid	Adrian Murphy	Jacqueline Egan, PDO
Róisín McGuire		Margaret Bracken, Support Officer
Niamh O'Leary		Hillery Collins, Vice Chair, Council
Paul Lambert		Shane Mooney, Chair, Quality & Safety Committee
Frank Keane		
Tom Brady		
Gareth Elbell		
Tess O'Donovan		
Chris O'Connor		
Ray Lacey		

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed the members. Hillery Collins, Vice Chair of Council, Shane Mooney, Chair of Quality and Safety Committee, and Jacqueline Egan, Programme Development Officer, were also welcomed to the meeting. Apologies were noted.

1.1 Minutes from previous meeting of 5th September 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th September were reviewed. Committee members expressed the concern about ensuring accuracy for the minutes and timeliness of receiving and reviewing the minutes in advance of the next meeting.

Resolution: That the minutes of the Education and Standards Committee meeting held on 5th September 2017 be approved.

Proposed: Tess O'Donovan
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Róisín McGuire

1.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

2. Election of Vice Chair for Committee

The Chair invited nominees to fill the role of Vice Chair of the Education and Standards Committee. Paul Lambert nominated himself and was elected Vice Chair of the Committee.

Resolution: That Paul Lambert is elected Vice Chair of the Education and Standards Committee.

Proposed: Tom Brady

Seconded: Róisín McGuire

Carried without dissent

3. Review of revised Terms of Reference:

Following discussion and agreement from the members at the September Committee meeting, amendments were made to the terms of reference and membership of the Education and Standards Committee working groups by the Programme Development Officers. The revised draft terms of reference were included in the papers for further review and consideration.

3.1 Recognition of Qualifications – Assessors Panel – TOR003

Ms Walsh highlighted the changes to TOR003 Qualification Assessors Panel Terms of Reference.

The Committee proposed further revisions to the following criterion:

- Point 2 revision to denote Level 9 Qualification not specific to EMS only. This point was previously determined but inadvertently omitted from the current revision.
- Point 5 requirement revised to "must be available to assess at a minimum of 5 applications on an annual basis".
- Point 9 revised to "Panel including Chair will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier as necessary".

Ms Walsh will amend TOR003 accordingly and a revised draft terms of reference will be recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments. It was agreed that further discussion and consideration will be given to expanding the Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel at a future meeting.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend TOR003 Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel Terms of Reference to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Proposed: Gareth Elbell

Seconded: Paul Lambert

Carried without dissent

3.2 Examiner Panel TOR010 V3 Draft

Ms Egan identified the changes to TOR010 PHECC Examiner Panel Terms of Reference.

The Committee proposed further revisions to the following criterion:

- Delete the comment 'to assist in the delivery of this function the Examiner Panel is one of the examinations related panels required'.
- Point 1 to be revised to "may be nominated by a CPG approved pre-hospital emergency care service provider or recognised institution". Nominated by medical, nursing or training representative body removed.
- Point 2 to include "a registered midwife".

- Point 3 – Must satisfy two or more of the following criteria:
 - bullet point 2: “medical and nursing” criteria removed to specify “involved in education of pre-hospital emergency care practitioners”
 - bullet point 3: “practitioner matters” removed
 - bullet point 4 removed “Involved in delivery of acute care”
 - bullet point 5 removed “Advanced life support instructors”
- Point 10 to state “Panel and Chair will be reviewed every 3 years”.

Ms Egan will amend TOR010 accordingly and a revised draft terms of reference will be recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend TOR010 PHECC Examiner Panel Terms of Reference to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Proposed: Tom Brady
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

3.3 Examination Quality Group – TOR005 V4 Draft

Ms Egan identified the changes to TOR005 Examination Quality Group.

The Committee proposed further revisions to the following criterion:

- Delete the comment ‘to assist in the delivery of this function the Examination Quality Group is one of the examinations related groups required’.
- Point 5 revised to ‘May include an educationalist who can be external to the PHECC Educational Award Register and is a non-examiner’.

Ms Egan will amend TOR005 and a revised draft terms of reference will be recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend TOR005 Examination Quality Group Terms of Reference to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Proposed: Chris O'Connor
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Tess O'Donovan

3.4 Test Item Writing Panel TOR011 – V2

Ms Egan informed the members that TOR011 Test Item Writing Panel Terms of Reference was submitted to Council for their consideration at the October Council meeting, amendments were suggested and noted accordingly. A revised draft terms of reference was included in the Committee meeting papers for further review.

The Committee proposed and agreed the following amendments:

- Point 1 to be revised to “must be nominated by a licensed CPG provider or recognised institution”. Nominated by medical, nursing or training representative body removed.
- Point 2 revised to “Must be invited based on specific expertise”. List of criteria to be satisfied will now be point 3.

- Point 5 to specify the requirement to “demonstrate an understanding of the Continuous Professional Competence programme”.

Ms Egan will amend TOR011 and a revised draft terms of reference will be recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Resolution: That the Education and Standards Committee recommend TOR011 Test Item Writing Panel Terms of Reference to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Proposed: Róisín Maguire
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Ray Lacey

4. Recognition of Professional Qualifications

4.1 Status Update

The members were provided with an update on the outcome of 3 recent applications for recognition of professional qualifications. There are currently 16 applications being processed. Consideration will be given by the Committee to expanding the Recognition of Qualifications Assessors Panel at a future meeting.

4.2 Summary of recent regulatory information session

Ms Walsh informed the members that she attended a recent regulatory information session regarding European Union (Recognition of Professional Qualification). A summary of issues arising were provided in the meeting papers for information purposes.

5. RI applications and course approvals

5.1 Status update

A current listing of recent RI and course approvals was provided for information purposes. The members were informed that an induction session is organised for three most recently approved RIs that were not included on the present listing. A complete listing of RIs and current course approvals will be included in the January meeting papers.

5.2 UL Paramedic programme – deferred from Sept meeting

An overview document was provided to the members with key dates and activities for UL paramedic course approval. This included the relevant previous Education & Standards Committee minutes and Council minutes. There was considerable discussion among the members.

Ms Walsh shared that there is a planned 2-day site visit to North West Ambulance Services Trust in the UK in early December for assessment of the internship sites for the students. She clarified for the members that the site visits will be conducted by PHECC Programme Development Officers – Brian Power and herself, and John Donaghy, a Quality Review Panel member.

A PHECC NQEMT SWA exam is scheduled for January 2018 in Dublin and the members proposed that the SWA exam be conducted at the same time as the site visits in the UK. Frank Keane informed the meeting that he had requested in writing the possibility of a member of PHECC staff traveling to the UK to conduct the SWA exam, with expenses paid by UL, and his request was refused. Ms Walsh explained that PHECC do not currently have the resources to facilitate such a request. Frank Keane voiced his concerns that UL have been provided with different timeframes and schedules to other RIs providing paramedic training. Jacqueline Egan informed the meeting that the assessment schedule was not submitted by UL in a timely manner. Therefore, they did not have any awareness of the timeline for scheduling of the various components of the NQEMT. Ms Egan explained that PHECC have never had a precedence of examining students in another jurisdiction. She informed the meeting that UL were presented with 3 dates to facilitate their students and all were declined. Frank Keane explained that it was too short notice and difficult for students to be released. It is noted that Mr Keane has registered his discontent with the process.

The consensus among the members was that should this situation arise in the future the Committee may consider a recommendation to Council to facilitate the students, and appropriate planning and management of the process by the exam team could be put in place.

Ms Egan explained that a robust application process will be put in place for 2018 as a matter of urgency. The importance of having discussions at the right time whereby concerns can be highlighted and brought to the Committee in a timely fashion was emphasised.

6. Examinations

6.1 Appendix 1 NQEMT examination included as part of Appeals Policy POL019 – V2

Ms Egan notified the members that POL019 Council Policy and Procedures for Appeals with additions and amendments was presented for consideration of Council at the October Council meeting. The Chair of the Education and Standards Committee, Dr Shane Knox, requested at the Council meeting that Appendix 1 NQEMT Examination be referred to the Education and Standards Committee for revision. There was considerable discussion among the members.

Ms Walsh pointed out that in parallel with revision to Appendix 1, POL012 - Council Policy for National Qualification in Emergency Medical Technology, POL020 - Council Policy for NQEMT Examination Viewings and Rechecks, and PUB013 NQEMT Examination Handbook 9th Edition, will also need to be reviewed and revised.

There was considerable discussion on the need to revise points 2, 4, 4b and 4c and reference made to the State Examinations Commission standards. It was agreed that Ms. Egan will review these items and re-submit to the Committee for further consideration.

A suggestion was made to combine the Appeal Policy and the Policy for Viewings and Rechecks with clear terminology being used. Ms Egan pointed out that they are two very separate and distinct policies but that each policy could reference the other, using clear concise language.

The possible use of video recordings of OSCES was proposed for future consideration. Paul Lambert registered his concerns regarding delays experienced by candidates booking MCQ exams with the Prometric booking system, particularly in relation to resit exams, and he proposed making a request to Prometric to reserve places in advance for resit candidates for Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic levels.

It was proposed to recommend to Council that RIs be notified of MCQ examination results after the MCQ exam, with the candidate's permission, and the members were in agreement. This would enable the RIs to plan in ample time for the OSCES.

Recommendation: that the Education and Standards Committee recommends to Council for approval that the RIs be given notification of MCQ exam results with the candidate's permission.

Proposed: Niamh O'Leary
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Chris O'Connor

6.2 Status of Policy

Ms Walsh referred to the status of the examination policy with regard to the review and revisions of the above mentioned documents under 6.1.

6.3 Paramedic examination – Interim Standard

Ms Egan informed the members that an NQEMT Paramedic Examination Standard Research event is scheduled for Tuesday 21st November. PHECC Exam Quality members, one representative from each RI at Paramedic level, Test Item writers at Paramedic level and above, and all facilitators, have been invited to attend. Dr Anthony Marini will present on best practice in paramedic assessment. It is intended to develop one paramedic assessment schedule for implementation across all RIs. Frank Keane stressed the importance of considering all aspects of the examination structure. A proposal was made to extend the invitation to UCC and Ms Egan will consult with the Director. There was considerable discussion among the members.

Frank Keane suggested that the videoing of megacode OSCES, should be considered for inclusion in the Interim Examination Standard and Appeals Policy. Ms Egan pointed out that the concept of videoing will be discussed at the Paramedic Examination Standard Research event.

It was identified that the Interim Standard does not refer to the number of examiners per station which is an important consideration. A recommendation was made for the provision of 2 examiners per station with 1 examining and 1 marking. The consensus was to amend the Interim Examination Standard to reflect this and recommend to Council for approval.

Recommendation: that the Paramedic Examination Interim Standard be recommended to Council for approval with noted amendments.

Proposed: Tom Brady
Carried without dissent

Seconded: Róisín McGuire

7. Consideration of Sub-Committee for Research

Ms Walsh outlined the key considerations for formation of a sub-committee for research. There was considerable discussion among the members. Hillery Collins, Vice Chair of Council, informed the members that research will be part of the strategic plan for 2018. The Chair suggested forming a small working group to identify broad themes and report back to the Committee. The Chair requested nominations from the members to join the working group for research and Niamh O'Leary, Chris O'Connor, Frank Keane and Tess O'Donovan volunteered. As Ben Heron and Adrian Murphy were absent from the meeting this request will be extended to them also. It was agreed that the group will feedback to Ms Walsh who will develop a discussion document. The Chair shared a draft listing of some of his ideas for terms of reference for development which could be considered by the working group. Additionally, Ms Walsh will formulate a template for collecting information by Committee members regarding terms of reference. A date will be set for a working group meeting.

8. Update on FAR/OFA transition project

8.1 Subgroup update for FAR Education and Standards Review

Following on from the Education and Standards Committee meeting of 5th September a subgroup for the review of the Far Education and Standards was composed of Paul Lambert, Róisín McGuire and Kathleen Walsh. The subgroup has had two meetings with a third planned for early November. Ms Walsh updated the members on the key priorities and issues related to the FAR/OFA transition project. It was highlighted that the Ambulatory Care Report is not appropriate for FAR and should be reviewed. The members thanked Ms Walsh, Ms McGuire and Mr Lambert for their work to date.

8.2 RI Query – FAR Instructor Standards

Ms Walsh informed the members that a query was received from an RI regarding PHECC consideration for student instructor practice for FAR instructor certification, utilising Occupational First Aid courses in meeting the requirement for supervised instructor practice. The RI expressed the concern that there was limited uptake and delivery of FAR courses at present as the OFA courses are recognised by the Health and Safety Authority up to 31 Dec 2017. The members requested clarity on the differences between OFA and FAR courses. Ms Walsh provided clarity and informed members that PHECC are setting the new standard for OFA in the workplace with the FAR standard. The Committee were of the view that it is a PHECC course and OFA course provision should not substitute for supervised instructor practice.

Hillery Collins, Vice Chair of Council, requested an update on the recent meeting with Construction Federation Ireland attended by Ms Walsh and the Director. Ms Walsh highlighted concerns raised by the CFI regarding cost and duration of FAR courses. She informed members that PHECC have communicated to the HSA that the project for reviewing and revising the FAR standard cannot be hurried. The Chair informed Ms Walsh that the Education and Standards Committee fully support the project

9. 2018 Committee meeting dates

The next meeting of the Education and Standards Committee was agreed for 11th Jan 2018 with future dates yet to be decided.

10. AOB

- 10.1 The Chair requested the publication date of the field guide. The importance of updating and publishing the field guide together with the CPGs, education and training standards and examinations, was highlighted.
- 10.2 Shane Mooney expressed concerns about issues regarding quarterly assessments for paramedics. He informed the members that assessments are carried out by qualified tutors and assistant tutors are not authorised to carry out assessments at present. He noted this is time consuming for a such a small number of tutors. Mr Mooney is proposing expanding the standard to allow assistant tutors to carry out quarterly assessments. Kathleen Walsh will examine the Teaching Faculty Framework and this will be an agenda item for the next Committee meeting in January 2018.
- * It is noted that Kathleen Walsh, Programme Development Officer, left the meeting at this point.
- 10.3 Gareth Elbell expressed concerns regarding improper calculation methods being performed in the paediatric station of the EMT OSCEs. The consensus was that the EMT OSCEs and the education and training standards require updating. It was recommended that a field guide be included in this station. The skill sheet should be in line with the CPGs. It was pointed out to the members that all Education and Training Standards are due for review.
- 10.4 Shane Mooney highlighted that EMTs may need additional skills in particular circumstances which will need to be considered in reviewing and revising the EMT Education and Training Standard.
- 10.5 It was agreed that AOB items will be sent to the Chair 2 weeks before a meeting is scheduled to enable members to make adequate preparation.

The meeting concluded at 16:00.

The next meeting of the Committee will be on 11th January 2018.

Signed: _____

Chair

Date: _____

11th Jan 2018