

Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) Consultation on the Standards of Education & Training – College of Paramedics Comments & Response.

Question 1: 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?

No

The College of Paramedics believes that the existing Level of qualification for entry to the Register - Standard 1.1 is out of date and needs to be updated and raised to BSc (Hons) level for Paramedics. This will enable equality with other Allied Health Professions, and meet the recommendations of the (2013) *Paramedic Evidence-based Education Project* (PEEP) report, the (2015) College of Paramedics *Paramedic Curriculum Guidance*, and the (2016) Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) *Subject Benchmark Statement – Paramedics*.

Question 2: Do you think the draft revised SETs and supporting guidance are applicable across all HCPC approved pre-registration programmes?

No

The College of Paramedics has particular concern that the threshold entry to the Register is 'Equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education for paramedics'. With 69 HCPC Approved programmes which cover the following academic spectrum; Institute of Health Care Development (IHCD), Cert HE, Dip HE, FdSc, and BSc (Hons) for Paramedics.

With the clear necessity to be autonomous (HCPC Standards of Proficiency – Paramedics, Standard 4):

Registrant Paramedics must: *be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement.* It is incredulous to believe that this is possible at Level 4 Equivalent to Certificate of Higher Education on current practice demands.

The Department of Health (2005) *Taking Healthcare to the Patient - Transforming NHS Ambulance Services* recommendation 61 stated.

"To aid integration, there should be a move to higher education delivered models of training and education Initial registration should be at diploma or foundation degree level".

Whilst this recommendation to level 5 was reasonable a decade ago this is now time expired for the modern day paramedic practitioners, who are required to provide and deliver safe and competent care to service users in the pre- and out-of-hospital arena, including dealing with the patient as the first point of contact.

The modern day paramedic is;

"A paramedic is an autonomous practitioner who has the knowledge, skills and clinical expertise to assess, treat, diagnose, supply and administer medicines, manage, discharge and refer patients in a range of urgent, emergency, critical or out of hospital settings".

The College of Paramedics (2015) *Paramedic - Scope of Practice Policy*

Question 3: Do you think there are any additional standards or guidance needed?

No

Question 4: Do you think there are any standards or guidance which should be amended or removed?

Yes

The College of Paramedics makes the following suggestions to amending the following standards:

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

Suggestion: Delete word 'relevant' and insert – 'contemporary professional'

SET 4.3 The programme must reflect the philosophy, core values, skills and knowledge base as articulated in any **contemporary professional** guidance.

SET 4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current practice.

Suggestion: Insert – 'professional' after the word 'current' and before 'practice'

SET 4.4 The curriculum must remain relevant to current **professional** practice.

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

Suggestion: Insert – 'design and' after the word 'The' and before 'delivery'

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

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

Suggestion: Insert – 'design and' after the word 'The' and before 'delivery'

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

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

Suggestion: Delete word 'appropriate' and insert – 'aligned'

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

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

Suggestion: Insert – 'regulations and' after the word 'Assessment' and before 'policies'

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

Question 5: Do you have any comments about the language used in the SETs or supporting guidance?

No

Question 6: Do you have any other comments on the SETs or supporting guidance?

Yes

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The College of Paramedics welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the consultation on the Standards of Education and Training which are used by the regulatory body as part of the approval process for pre-registration programmes that lead to eligibility to the Register.

We believe that open-ended approval of programmes does not ensure that education providers are meeting the current Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) requirements. It would be more appropriate to approve the programme similar to the five (5) year academic period, and reviewed and re-approved on this basis.

College of Paramedics

12th October 2016

