

Regulation Council

Annual plan 2016-2017

V1.0

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1. Introduction and summary

The healthcare science workforce is an essential part of the clinical team with the potential to do real harm to patients should things go wrong. The Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS) Regulation Council's core purpose is to reduce this risk and keep patients safe. This is achieved through structures and processes, including maintaining a register, for healthcare science workers that are not statutory regulated.

The register was accredited by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) in December 2014 for Practitioners and extended to include Higher Specialist Scientists in October 2015. Accreditation demonstrates that the register meets the PSA high standards in governance, standard-setting, education and training, management of the register, complaints handling and information.

This annual plan sets out the Regulation Council programme of work for 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 allowing for planning, prioritisation, and monitoring against key performance indicators. The plan is set out in the context of the Regulation Council strategic vision and Statement of Regulatory Intent: business plan 2014-2017. This business plan sets out 5 objectives:

- 1 - establish and maintain a register of the healthcare science workforce, while maximising the coverage and minimising the costs of registration;
- 2 - set, maintain and review standards of ethics, competence, conduct and performance and continuing professional development for members of the healthcare science workforce;
- 3 - meet and maintain the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) standards for Register accreditation;
- 4 - maintain the confidence of the public in the system of registration for the healthcare science workforce; and
- 5 - support and inform the Academy on statutory regulation of the healthcare science workforce.

The annual plan sets out details of the activities that will be undertaken in 2016/17 which will contribute towards the achievement of these objectives.

Performance against this plan will be reported and monitored by the Regulation Council and published in the annual report.

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2. Workplan

2.1 Strategic Objective 1 - Establish and maintain a register of the healthcare science workforce, while maximising the coverage and minimising the costs of, registration

Actions:

This objective will be achieved through delivery of the marketing and communication plan alongside the development of new business and attracting existing/potential registers to merge under our regulation framework.

The AHCS has employed a new Marketing organisation Fat Buzz, who will support all of the marketing and communications activities.

Communications and Marketing of the existing parts of the register:

The Communication and Marketing plan details the activities that will be required throughout the year. The work will include, but is not limited to;

Exploiting every lever and support the creation of further levers within the system to increase the uptake of registration.

Liaising with the patients and public, 4 countries regulation units, NHS employers, commissioners, leaders in HCS, Professional bodies, the scientific workforce, current registrants, HEIs involved in HCS education, and other key stakeholders as appropriate such as CCGs, Health and Wellbeing Boards, NHS Choices, Health Watch England, Monitor etc.

Ensuring that the information we provide is patient and public friendly and what they want to know, easy to navigate both the IT platform and the content and jargon free.

Working to raise the profile of the workforce, the potential risks posed and the status of the accredited register by meeting with patient, public and lay organisations.

Targeting HEI providers via the HEI Council for Healthcare Science to promote up take of graduates onto the register.

Increasing uptake, from the current workforce, of the equivalence routes to registration.

Working with unaccredited and statutory registration bodies in Healthcare Science (HCS) in an attempt to harmonise the regulation framework across HCS, simplify the landscape for the public and service users and minimising duplication and cost.

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Working with PSA to promote accredited registers, linking with their 'working together' campaign.

New Business:

The Regulation Council will demonstrate credibility and sustainability through expansion of the register to other career framework levels and other areas of the healthcare workforce where appropriate. This will achieve sustainability of the regulation work while maintaining standards.

There is also significant work needed to maintain the register for the current registrants and this is explained more under objective 3.

2.2 Objective 2 - set, maintain and review standards of ethics, competence, conduct and performance and continuing professional development for members of the healthcare science workforce

Actions:

In order to meet this objective, the standards will be reviewed as part of the annual monitoring and reporting process, informed by any complaints received during the year. The Standards are reviewed and maintained by the Education Training and Professional Standards Committee and changes will be approved by the Regulation Council before publication.

The rules are reviewed and maintained by the Regulation Council and any changes will be approved by the Council before publication.

Good Scientific Practice is owned by the Education Training and Professional Standards Committee and will be reviewed during 2016/17 taking into account the expansion of the register to other parts.

There will be a Practitioner CPD audit during 2016.

Actions following a joint workshop with the Regulation Council and the Education Training and Professional Standards committee will be taken into account during this review.

2.3 Objective 3 meet and maintain the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (PSA) standards for accreditation;

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Actions:

PSA renewal in December 2015 was granted with no conditions or instructions. There was one learning point that will be verified at the next annual review of accreditation:

“The Academy should continue to implement its service user and public engagement strategy to inform and involve the public and service users in what they do”

The Regulation Council will ensure this learning point is adhered to.

Ensure the quality assurance work including the Standards of Education and Training remain fit for purpose through the Education, Training and Professional Standards Committee.

The development work around new business will be cognisant of this objective ensuring that any new business for accredited registers is developed within the current regulation framework and that it does not risk the accreditation status that has been achieved. Any new work to promote patient safety such as directories will work within the principles of good regulation and promote public confidence.

2.4 Objective 4 - maintain the confidence of the public in the system of registration for healthcare science

Actions:

In order to deliver this objective, the Regulation Council will ensure engagement with the patient and public involvement representatives to review any communications, processes and public-facing documentation including the new look website. This engagement will allow for the view of lay users to be determined helping the Regulation Council improve and maintain the public's confidence in our work.

Other opportunities to further engage with patient, public and lay organisations will be identified and taken up by Q3.

2.5 Objective 5 - support and inform the Academy on statutory regulation of healthcare scientists

Action:

The thinking may have moved on and continues to evolve since the development of the SORI. The Regulation Council will continue to gather evidence on the effectiveness of the accredited register in mitigating risks posed by the registrants. The Regulation Council will continue to explore the regulatory landscape including the ‘theory of regulation – based on V1.0

right touch thinking' and any new legislation following the 'rethinking regulation' publication'. In doing so the Council will continue to formulate its own opinions and begin to articulate its views directly as a Regulation Council, this includes, but is not restricted to responding to consultations, continued dialogue with the PSA and producing Council reports and position papers as appropriate.

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