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Modifications to the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland)

A Consultative Document

Background

The Educational Psychology Training Model in Scotland requires some modification with the introduction of funding in a partnership approach from the Scottish Government, COSLA and local authorities in a 3 year funded model.

Prior to the introduction of the 3 year funding, the training model consisted of two parts before an individual could be fully qualified as an Educational Psychologist and able to be registered as a Practitioner Psychologist with the Health and Care Professionals Council.

Part 1 - A two year Masters of Science postgraduate degree in a British Psychological Society accredited course provided by a Scottish university. Candidates are predominantly self-funded (or occasionally sponsored by a local authority). The accreditation of the University postgraduate course is undertaken by the Partnership and Accreditation Team of the British Psychological Society. Candidates undertake placements in a local authority Educational Psychology Service.

Part 2 – The Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland). The qualification is operated by the Board. A year of supervised practice in a British Psychological Society accredited local authority Educational Psychology Service with the candidate completing the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) (hereafter QEP (S)). Candidates are currently employed by the local authority as an Educational Psychologist (Probationer). The Supervisor is required to be on the Register of Applied Supervisors by the British Psychological Society. The qualification is equivalent to a Doctorate or the Scottish Framework of Qualifications level 12. The accreditation of local authority Educational Psychology Services to be able to offer a post to the candidate as an Educational Psychologist (probationer) is undertaken by the Partnership and Accreditation Team of the British Psychological Society and the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology Training Committee.

Key changes

Scottish Government and Scottish local authorities will contribute to the funding which will be administered through the Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS). This means that

candidates complete a three year training programme. The funding approach means that the tuition and examination fees are paid and the candidates will be awarded a grant for all three years of the programme. The programme will continue to have two parts to qualification and the requirement of meeting the standards for registration as a practitioner psychologist with the Health and Care Professionals Council.

Part 1 of the programme will consist of an MSc programme in Educational Psychology currently with the University of Dundee and candidates will be required to undertake placements in local authority Educational Psychology Services for 50% of their time. This takes two years.

Part 2 of the programme involves completion of the QEP (S). This involves a year of practice and workplace learning and submitting a portfolio for assessment. The candidate will undertake applied educational psychology practice under the supervision of a coordinating supervisor in a local authority Educational Psychology Service that has been accredited by the Partnership and Accreditation Team of the British Psychological Society and the Scottish Division of Educational Psychology Training Committee. The candidate will be expected, by the end of the programme, to have demonstrated competence as an Educational Psychologist.

While the original intention of Part 2 was that this would be completed within one year, the QEP(S) process currently takes an average of 16 months from the point of initial registration to awarding the certificate. For many candidates it takes longer.

To ensure that the QEP(S) is more compatible with the new partnership funding model it is proposed to revise the QEP(S) and call the new qualification the QEP(S) 2020. These changes require consultation with key stakeholders in order to comply with the standards of the Health and Care Professionals Council. This document outlines the details of the proposed changes, the implications and the consultation process.

Proposal QEP(S) 2020

It is proposed to revise the timescales of the QEP(S) and the process of submission and assessment in order that candidates can complete the process within the 1 year of the grant funding.

The changes consist of:

1. Candidates will have conditional enrolment on the QEP(S) 2020 to ensure that they can enter a part 2 training placement, while results and qualifications from the University are being ratified. This will allow supervised practice to be credited during the period of conditional enrolment. The conditional enrolment may be agreed whilst the candidate is still undertaking their MSc.
2. Candidates will submit their evidence of competence in two portfolios over the 12 month period of supervised practice:
 - a) Portfolio 1 - submitted at the 9 month point from the start of the year of accredited supervised practice. This will consist of Workplace Evidence reports:
 - i. Assessment;

- ii. Consultation;
- iii. Intervention;
- iv. Research;
- v. Training.

- b) Portfolio 2 – submitted at the 12 month point of supervised practice in the accredited service. This consists of:
 - I. Reflective Practice Log;
 - II. Quarterly Supervisory Meeting Records;
 - III. Evaluation of Professional Competence 2020 form (EPC 2020);
 - IV. Updated Plan of Training.

- 3. All candidates will be required to complete a year of supervised practice (220 days) in an accredited local authority Educational Psychology Service. This is not changing. It is proposed to specify the quantity of time in the form of days to make this easier for trainees to ensure they meet the minimum standards. This consists of:
 - a) 1232 hours of supervised practice in applied educational psychology (80%);
 - b) 308 hours of professional learning including the completion of the portfolios (20%).

Any changes to this standard will require a different model of training in year 3.

- 4. The agreed timescale for completion of this qualification is 1 year from the point of enrolment on the QEP(S) 2020. To ensure equity for candidates who may undertake the QEP(S) 2020 and require a break in supervised practice for extenuating circumstances; they can apply for such an extension to this on an individual basis. Any request will be reviewed and agreed by the coordinating supervisor, the board and Scottish Government. A revised timescale will be communicated to those candidates on an individual basis.
- 5. To ensure a streamlined approach to the assessment process the BPS will require more assessors to register with QEP(S)2020.

We are seeking suggestions as part of this consultation as to how the pool of assessors can be increased to meet the proposed timelines.

Other changes

The Evaluation of Professional Competence 2020 form (EPC 2020) will be changed to reflect the HCPC Standards of Proficiency and Coordinating Supervisors will be asked to complete this evaluation.

The Handbooks for the QEP(S) 2020, will be revised following the consultation period.

Implications

Recruitment of trainees and qualified Educational Psychologists is undertaken by employers. Discussions are currently taking place centrally to agree the contractual mechanisms for candidates undertaking their third year on QEP(S)2020.

As candidates complete 12 months of supervised practice, and the required assessment of their portfolio means a period of 2 months between submission of the second part of the portfolio and the award of the qualification for the candidates that demonstrate competence. It is recommended that in this period employers offer prospective employees a conditional contract of employment, where the Coordinating Supervisor has assessed they are demonstrating competence, for a fixed period of no more than 12 months. Where candidates are not able to demonstrate competence after the first submission there will be two further opportunities to submit the assessment portfolio within a 12 month period. The employer will need to risk assess the fitness to practice of those candidates and implement suitable adaptations such as a continued period of supervised practice. Those candidates will require to use the title “Educational Psychologist in Training” in line HCPC requirements.

Legislation

The QEP(S) is required to comply with the legislation and rules of the Health and Care Professionals Council in order that qualified psychologists are able to demonstrate safety to work with members of the public. The specific rules that apply are The Health and Care Professions Council (Education and Training Committee) (Constitution) Rules 2013.

See details at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/about-us/corporate-governance/legislation/>

Who Would Be Affected?

- Individuals who are currently enrolled in years 1 and 2 of the MSc in Educational Psychology at Dundee University and future intakes.
- Individuals who are currently at a different point in their training who have not enrolled on the QEP(S) prior to the date of change may be affected.
- Individuals who seek to become qualified as Educational Psychologists and practice this trade in the future through a Scottish training route.
- Employers of newly qualified Educational Psychologists.
- Assessors on the QEP(S).
- Coordinating Supervisors of Trainee Educational Psychologists or Educational Psychologist (Probationers).

Date of Change

It is proposed that this change will come into effect on the 1st of April 2020.

Consultation

A formal consultation is required for any proposed change to the qualification process for practitioner psychologists according to the standards of the HCPC.

Consultees

During the consultation period, in accordance with the legislative requirements, views are being sought from a range of interested parties including:

- Trainee Educational Psychologists, (candidates enrolled on the MSc in Educational Psychology in a Scottish University).
- All Educational Psychologists in Scotland including:
 - Assessors on the QEP (S)
 - Coordinating Supervisors
 - Practice Tutors
 - Educational Psychologist (Probationers)
- University course staff providing the MSc in Educational Psychology.
- Trade Unions representative of Educational Psychologists working in Scotland.
- Principal Educational Psychologists and ASPEP
- Representatives of Local Authorities and other employers of Educational Psychologists

Consultation Period

The consultation is taking place over a 6 week period between 12th September 2019 and 25th October 2019

Stakeholder meetings will take place on the following dates and times:

- 12th September 2019 at Crown Plaza, Royal Terrace, Edinburgh 10.30 - 13.00
- 4th October 2019 at the SDEP conference, Celtic Park, Glasgow 15.45pm

How to Respond

Interested parties are encouraged to complete and return the response through the online response form. Please click on this [link](#) which will take you to the consultation page.

Or take the online survey here:

<https://response.questback.com/britishpsychologicalsociety/sknnieq1r4>

The survey asks some questions regarding the proposal, and provides an opportunity to describe any concerns.

If any interested parties wish to provide a separate written submission this would be accepted by letter until 25th October 2019 when the consultation period ends.

All submissions should be emailed to the Qualification in Educational Psychology (Scotland) edscotland.qualification@bps.org.uk

Following the Consultation

The consultation report will be considered by the Qualifications Committee of the British Psychological Society on the 14th of November 2019, or as soon thereafter, who will consider whether these changes will go ahead.

The Health and Care Professions Council will receive details of consultation responses and the public meetings and will provide the QEP(S) Board with a report.

Contact Details

If you would like to discuss these proposals please attend the stakeholder event on the 12th September 2019. If you have any queries regarding the consultation process, please email on: edscotland.qualification@bps.org.uk



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Chair of the QEP (S) Board