

The Council of Deans of Health – a brief history

The Council of Deans of Health (CoDH) was set up in 1997, following the migration of nursing and midwifery education from hospitals to universities in the mid-90s. It was formed from two established nursing education organisations, the National Directors of Nurse Education Group and the Heads of University Departments of Nursing Group, who grasped the opportunity to become part of a unified political voice; ensuring that health professions benefited from and contributed to the world of higher education. The unique remit of the group, originally called the Council of Heads of UK Faculties, Departments and Schools of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting, attracted significant numbers of academics, who were keen to identify, lobby and advise specifically on nursing and midwifery education. In 2006 the group extended its remit to the allied health professions and in 2008 the Council adopted the title 'Council of Deans of Health'.

CoDH has worked over the years to build a national profile and become known and valued as a source of robust evidence, comment, opinion and advice. When it was formed, the Council's immediate priorities included engaging with the Dearing Enquiry into Higher Education and the Harris Report on the Research Assessment Exercise (now known as REF). It went on to play a vital role in securing a standard contract for pre-registration education in England and a national benchmark price, which was set up in 2002-5. Since 2008, the members of the Council have been appointed to chair REF panels, a significant development for the relatively new area of nursing, midwifery and AHP research; an area which has developed since 2001 to achieve outstanding results in the 2008 RAE and in the 2014 REF.

The Council continues play a key role in influencing health higher education policy, demonstrating the impact of the sector's research and supporting members to anticipate and shape change in the health and higher education sectors.

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