



Education and Registration Standards Committee

3 March 2016

Recruitment of Education Visitors and Registration Assessors

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	Plans for recruiting to the Education Visitor and Registration Assessor pools.
Recommendation	To agree the approach to recruitment of our Education Visitor and Registration Assessor pools.
Financial and resourcing implications	Costs of recruitment are contained within our budget for 2016-17.
Equality and diversity implications	Equality and diversity matters form a part of our recruitment process.
Communications implications	Our proposed recruitment campaign will be launched publicly using appropriate forums to attract suitably qualified applicants.
Annex	Draft person specification for the combined roles of Education Visitor and Registration Assessor
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Background

1. Our Corporate Plan 2016-19 outlines the following strategic objectives as follows:
 - To promote public and patient safety through patient-centred, proportionate, targeted and effective regulatory activity
 - To encourage and facilitate continuous improvement in the quality of osteopathic healthcare
 - To use our resources efficiently and effectively, while adapting and responding to change in the external environment.
2. We have agreed that we will undertake the following activities to achieve our strategic objectives:
 - We will work with Quality Assurance Authority for Higher Education to maintain the quality of osteopathic education and training
 - To ensure that only those eligible to do so practise as osteopaths in the UK and to increase understanding, awareness and use of the register
3. Our quality assurance functions rely on expert osteopathic and lay Education Visitors to scrutinise osteopathic undergraduate and pre-registration courses to maintain and enhance standards of osteopathic education and ensure that only students meeting the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* are awarded a 'Recognised Qualification' enabling them to apply for registration with us.
4. Our pool of expert registration assessors support us to maintain the integrity of the Register by helping us to ensure that only those that meet the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* are able to be registered.
5. This paper explores the challenges of recruiting and maintaining these pools given the patterns of work and explores options for moving forward.

Discussion

6. We currently have a pool of 11 Education Visitors comprising both lay and osteopathic experts in the GOsC/OEI Visitor process. There are also two experienced QAA Review Co-ordinators who support the Visiting Team.
7. The nature of osteopathic education is that it is a niche area and a very small pool. People qualified to undertake this role also hold other educational roles or external roles for more than one educational institution. Consequently, it can be difficult to fully staff some osteopathic educational institution reviews due to conflicts of interest which are expressly prohibited.
8. Separately, review visits are by their nature cyclical. This means that we tend to follow the following pattern:
 - Year 1 – 3 reviews
 - Year 2 – 1 reviews

- Year 3 – 1 review
 - Year 4 – 4 reviews
 - Year 5 – no reviews
9. This is a challenge because it is difficult to retain momentum for the pool of Visitors in the quieter years and also causes us a recruitment challenge in years when there are more visits and therefore more Visitors needed.
 10. Our registration assessor pool has around 26 registration assessors, although we have received an indication from at least three that they will be retiring from their roles in the next year or so. The assessors are currently in different pools for the different aspects of registration assessment (assessment of qualification pool, further evidence of practice pool, assessment of clinical performance pool and return to practice pool). There are slightly different person specifications in these roles too due to their slightly different focus.
 11. This set up also means that due to the cyclical nature of assessments that it is difficult to ensure regular work for each assessor, whilst also ensuring that there is a sufficiently broad pool when we get a flood of assessments in.
 12. Recently, we needed to co-opt Education Visitors onto an education visit team due to the issues outlined above. Analysis of the person specifications for both roles showed that there was a remarkable degree of cross-over for these different roles and provided an opportunity for us to explore combining these pools to increase training and expertise for the combined pool across a broad range of our functions. Such cross-over could also enhance performance of the separate roles with enhanced knowledge of both UK and international education.
 13. We have discussed this idea with the QAA and also within our own organisation and there is support for undertaking a joint recruitment exercise to support a combined pool.
 14. Given the need to increase our pools, we propose to bring planned recruitment towards the end of 2016 forward to allow plenty of time to recruit ideal candidates and to work on enhanced training for a combined pool so that we are ready for the next set of reviews and assessments due in 2017.
 15. A draft person specification is attached at the Annex for consideration.
 16. We would also need to ensure an appropriate panel participated in the selection process for both Education Visitors and Registration Assessors. We think that the constituencies to be represented may include: member of the Education and Registration Standards Committee, member nominated by the Council of Osteopathic Educational Institutions, a member of the Executive and a representative of the QAA.
 17. We would like to invite the Committee's thoughts on our approach and to agree this combined approach to recruitment across our functions.

Recommendation: to agree the combined approach to recruitment of our Education Visitor and Registration Assessor pools.

Draft person specification for the combined roles of Education Visitor and Registration Assessor

- Knowledge, understanding and application of the Osteopathic Practice Standards
- Knowledge and understanding of the delivery of undergraduate osteopathic education (including assessment)
- Able to analyse complex information
- Able to make reliable and objective judgements based on evidence
- Strong communication and inter-personal skills including the ability to challenge appropriately and when necessary
- Able to work as part of a team and contribute to consensus judgements
- Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Desirable – experience of audit
- Desirable – experience of education quality assurance processes and academic management

Please note that we have drawn from a recent person specification issued by the General Optical Council adapted for our purposes and we gratefully acknowledge their contribution.