

Education Committee

14 March 2012

Quality Assurance Review – Evaluation Report Of GOsC Reviews

<u>Classification</u>	Public
<u>Purpose</u>	For decision
<u>Issue</u>	This paper reports on the outcomes of the evaluation of GOsC Reviews during 2010/11 by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The evaluation is a part of the contract agreement with the QAA.
<u>Recommendation</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. To note the findings of the QAA evaluation reportb. To note that the process for gaining feedback will be discussed further with the QAA as part of contract negotiations
<u>Financial and resourcing implications</u>	None
<u>Equality and diversity implications</u>	None
<u>Communications implications</u>	None.
<u>Annex</u>	Annex A – GOsC Review Evaluation Report 2010-11
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Background

1. As part of its contract with the GOsC, the QAA are required to undertake an evaluation of the reviews that it conducts on behalf of the GOsC. This evaluation is based on feedback from those involved in the review process, namely the QAA review visitors and staff at the osteopathic educational institutions (OEs).
2. The evaluation report for the academic year 2010-11 is provided at Annex A.

Discussion

3. You will note that from the report, that there has been a generally positive response to the review process.
4. Two issues were identified as areas for improvement including:
 - Improving the understanding of the review aims and process at institutions
 - Preparation and documents required.
5. We will continue to work with the QAA on these issues and, in particular, through the joint training that took place last year and is planned to take place again during 2012 which will have in part, addressed the issues identified.
6. However, you will also note the low response rate in general and the fact that none of the three OEs involved in reviews during this period responded to the report.
7. It is vital that we gain feedback from all stakeholders involved within the review process to ensure that our processes continue to be fit for purpose.
8. The lack of response to this evaluation may be the result of the wider consultation on changes to the GOsC Review method which took place for three months at the beginning of 2011. Most OEs responded to this consultation with feedback on issues with the existing process and areas for development. These were taken into account in drafting the new GOsC Review process which becomes effective from 1 September 2012.
9. It is still important for feedback on individual reviews, so that specific issues can be addressed. Whilst we cannot force stakeholders to respond, we should ensure that appropriate steps are in place to chase up responses to questionnaires. With this in mind, it is suggested that the process for gaining feedback is discussed further with the QAA to investigate further ways to ensure meaningful feedback.

Recommendations:

- a. To note the findings of the QAA evaluation report
- b. To note that the process for gaining feedback will be discussed further with the QAA as part of contract negotiations



General Osteopathy Council

Report on Responses from the Evaluation Questionnaire

Academic Year 2010-11

from

The Research, Information and Enquiry Team

February 2012

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Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 General perceptions
- 3.0 Response rates
- 4.0 Outcomes from the questionnaires
 - 4.1 QAA
 - 4.2 GOsC review team
 - 4.3 The early review activity
 - 4.4 The actual review
 - 4.5 Communication
 - 4.6 Findings
- 5.0 Summary

OVERVIEW OF RESPONSES
Evaluation questionnaire
General Osteopathy Council
All reviews: Academic Year 2010-11

1.0 Introduction

During the academic year 2010-11, three GOsC reviews were undertaken. This report presents the outcomes of the post review evaluation process, based on the analysis of the questionnaire used. The analysis is based on the total number of reviews undertaken (for which completed questionnaires have been received) over the period.

The primary aim of the questionnaire was to evaluate perceptions of the review process from the experience of review coordinators (CRs), visitors and institutions. The evaluation identifies areas of good practice, strengths, weaknesses and general perceptions of the process by respondent groups. This paper seeks to highlight specific issues that have been identified using both the quantitative and qualitative information captured from the questionnaires, to show emerging themes for further exploration through the focus groups. The evaluation process was undertaken in order to:

- Identify areas for development (QAA)
- Identify themes and issues for further investigation through the focus group process.

To facilitate a meaningful evaluation of the process information was collected via a questionnaire survey from three primary sources:

- Review coordinators (CRs)
- Visitors
- Institutions

All of the respondent groups completed a separate questionnaire, all containing standard core questions and sections/themes, so facilitating comparison between groups.

The evaluation focused on the following areas of the review process:

- The QAA
- The GOsC review team
- Early review activity
- The review
- Communication throughout the process
- Findings

In addition there were four open-ended questions, which asked respondents to comment on the (1) use of the ARCS folder system, (2) most and (3) least positive elements of the process, as well as (4) suggestions for how to develop the process in the future. Through an evaluation of the process, areas for further development can be identified, thus ensuring that future review activity and process requirements are effective and supportive for those involved.

2.0 General perceptions

General perceptions of the review process were evaluated by means of a barometer. All questions were worded in the positive, and no negative statements were made within the questionnaire. The questionnaire provided a 4-point response scale for respondents:

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Agree
- 4 Strongly agree

It is important to note that not all questions contained within each section were applicable to all respondents. In addition, some respondents chose not to respond to all questions. It is not possible to elucidate why respondents opted not to answer all specific questions. This analysis is based on valid responses.

	Responses
Strongly agree	120
Agree	58
Disagree	8
Strongly disagree	0

Table 1. Number of respondents for all reviews for each response scale

Based upon the analysis of responses from the respondents, there was a high level of satisfaction of 96% (recorded response of either 'Strongly agree' or 'Agree'), with the review process.

3.0 Response rates

Questionnaire Group	Number sent	Number returned for analysis
Contract Reviewers	3	0
Visitors	7	4
Institutions	3	0

Table 2. Response rates to questionnaire survey by respondent groups

The response rate for this academic year was lower than previous years, with questionnaires only being returned by visitors representing two reviews.

4.0 Outcomes from the questionnaires

In order to aid development and improvement, it is important to elucidate those factors where respondents indicated problems, weaknesses and areas requiring improvements. This will be accomplished through an analysis of the questionnaire responses by section and respondent group.

However, it must be acknowledged that the majority, (96%) of valid responses to the questionnaire indicated satisfaction with the process. It must also be noted that this analysis is based upon a very small number of respondents (4).

The following table shows dissatisfaction levels for each section:

Section	Number of
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	respondents dissatisfied
A – QAA	0
B - GOsC review team	1
C - The early review activity	-
D - The actual review	7
E - Communications	0
F – Findings	0

Table 3. Number of 'disagree' responses by section.

Table 3 shows that respondents considered section D (The actual review) to be the least satisfactory element of the review.

4.1 QAA

Respondents indicated that the support received from QAA was effective, and the handbook was easy to use. In addition respondents all strongly felt that the forms and documentation issued by QAA for use during the review were satisfactory. Visitors commented that ARCS was effective, fast and QAA staff ably helped where there were access difficulties.

4.2 GOsC Review Team

Overall the response to the teams was positive. All but one of the responses to this section were positive, although one visitor did not feel the allocation of visitor time was appropriate. A high level of satisfaction was expressed by all respondents regarding the review teams' expertise, understanding of the review method and application of skills and techniques appropriate to verify the evidence base. In addition, two respondents commented that they felt the expertise of the team was the most positive feature of the review. The review team also demonstrated understanding of the significance of developing a dialogue with the institution.

Overall, respondents felt that the CR demonstrated the skills required, with all visitors strongly agreeing that the CR demonstrated facilitation, communication, organisational and report writing skills.

4.3 The Early Review Activity

CRs and institutions are asked to comment on early review activity. No responses were received from these respondent groups.

4.4 The Actual Review

Respondents were generally very satisfied with the actual review, 83 out of 90 responses were positive. In particular, all respondents strongly agreed that meetings/face-to-face discussions were conducted in accordance with the agreed protocols of review.

Overall the visitors stated that the team made effective use of documentation provided and thought the majority of the material provided was adequate and appropriate. Meetings were a productive source of evidence. One visitor commented that the most positive feature of the review was the 'improvement made by the institution since the last review'.

However, one visitor indicated dissatisfaction, in relation to one institution, with the material made available to the team relating to use of external reference points, curricula, assessment, student achievement and progression. This respondent also commented that the material made available to the review team was not adequate to enable them to make a recommendation concerning approval.

In addition, one visitor indicated dissatisfaction with the teaching and learning observation as a productive source of evidence.

Visitors indicated that the Institutional Contact demonstrated facilitation skills, knowledge of the institution and review method. Visitors considered that staff within the institutions responded in an open and informative way and feedback from students indicated that they also responded to the review team's enquiries in an open and informative way.

Respondents commented that the following were the least positive features of the review

- 'Lack of preparedness from the institution'

- 'The institution were slow to respond prior to the visit with supplementary documentary requests and clarification of information'
- 'Underdeveloped understanding of review aims/processes by the osteo staff at the institution'.

However, one visitor commented 'I think that this review method works well'.

4.5 Communication

Respondents were satisfied that effective communication was maintained between the CR and the Institutional Contact. Communication was clear regarding requests and arrangements for meetings, and the initial electronic communication contributed well to the review. In particular, all respondents strongly felt that there was clear communication regarding requests for documentation and that visitors had a very clear and shared understanding of the procedures and the CR regularly provided feedback on the progress of the review.

All visitors thought that the training provided by QAA equipped them with the knowledge and confidence to conduct the review.

4.6 Findings

In terms of findings all responses received were positive, with all respondents strongly agreeing that the findings and any recommendations made by the review team were consistent with the dialogue during the review and were set out clearly in the oral debrief given to the institution.

5.0 Summary

On the whole, the evaluation questionnaire reflected very positively on the GOsC review process with one visitor commenting 'I think that this review method works very well – so at the moment I am unable to contribute any constructive suggestions'. By far the majority of respondents evaluated the process in a very positive way. Despite the positive outcomes of the analysis there are areas within the review process identified by respondents as requiring improvements.

Specific areas highlighted from the evaluation, which would benefit from development or further exploration through focus groups include:

- Improving the understanding of the review aims and process at institutions
- Preparation and documents required.