

Education Committee
20 September 2012
Registration Assessor Recruitment and Appraisal

Classification Public

Purpose For decision

Issue The need for additional recruitment to our registration assessment pools and the introduction of a suitable appraisal system.

Recommendations

- A. To undertake a recruitment exercise to recruit further to the return to practise and registration assessment pools.
- B. To agree the person specifications for the assessor pools.
- C. To agree three members of the Education Committee to participate in the short-listing and interview process.
- D. To consider the appropriate approach for the GOsC appraisal system for return to practise and registration assessors.
- E. To consider the appropriate person specifications for the GOsC appraisers.
- F. To consider the different arguments related to the appointment of GOsC appraisers.

Financial and resourcing implications The recruitment process would be managed in house and would be approximately £1000. The cost of the appraisal process would be about £3000. Money is available in the budget to cover these costs.

Equality and diversity implications All training for the registration assessors will include equality and diversity.

Communications implications Any recruitment process will be widely advertised and transparent in accordance with our commitment to ensure

the widest pool of applicants is reached. We will also take steps to publicise our appraisal process and all accompanying guidance to those directly involved and more widely.

Annexes

Annex A – Proposed person specifications for:

- Return to Practice Assessors
- Proposed person specification for Review of Non-UK qualifications assessors
- Further evidence of practice questionnaire
- Assessment of Clinical Performance Assessors

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Background

1. The General Osteopathic Council currently undertakes registration assessment processes comprising up to three stages to allow applicants without a UK 'Recognised Qualification' to demonstrate eligibility for registration and the return to practice process.

Return to Practise

2. The return to practise process is a supportive, developmental process for those who have been non-practising for two years or more. We now undertake approximately 20-25 per year – the number of assessments undertaken has been steadily increasing over the last two years.

Review of Non-UK qualifications

3. The review of non-UK qualifications is a paper-based assessment to determine whether an osteopathy qualification awarded outside of the UK has equivalent standards to qualifications awarded in the UK. This assessment is applied to EU/EEA/Swiss applicants only and must be completed within 1 month of submission of information as part of our obligations under the European Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications. We assess approximately 3-6 qualifications per year. This figure will increase if more countries within the EU/EEA adopt statutory regulation.

Further Evidence of Practice Questionnaire

4. The Further Evidence of Practice Questionnaire is a written assessment used as part of combined assessment approach together with the clinical assessment to test whether an applicant has met the Osteopathic Practice Standards. We assess approximately 16-20 per year.

Assessment of Clinical Performance

5. The Assessment of Clinical Performance (ACP) is a long case clinical assessment with two new patients used as part of the combined assessment approach to complement the written assessment above. It can also be used to test competence for those referred from our Fitness to Practise panels. We hold approximately 20 per year currently although this figure has increased by between 60-65% year on year since 2009.
6. Each of these assessments requires slightly different skills and so has a separate pool of assessors who have been appointed and trained by the GOsC to undertake the particular assessment.
7. All of these registration assessments have been reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education to map them to the new Osteopathic Practice Standards to ensure that applicants are assessed against these

standards from 1 September 2012 onwards. Further detail about this work is provided in the Public Agenda, Item 7 of this meeting.

8. This paper deals with matters relating to recruiting additional assessors to each of the various assessor pools and the development of the appraisal process.

Discussion

Further recruitment into the assessment pools

9. The numbers in each of the assessor pools are as follows:
 - Three Return to Practice Assessors,
 - Four Further Evidence of Practice/Review of Non-UK qualification assessors and
 - Eight Assessment of Clinical Performance assessors.
 - There are 2 assessors who complete two different type of assessment.
10. Many of the assessors have been undertaking the various assessments for a number of years (some were originally appointed in 2000). The assessment knowledge, experience and expertise is therefore concentrated in a small group of individuals for a significant period of time, particularly in the case of ACP assessments (10+ years).
11. Benefits of long-standing assessors include a great deal of experience and confidence in the assessment methods and arguably consistency in standards. However, risks of not refreshing the pool include experience and expertise being concentrated in a limited pool and no development of the expertise of others creating the possibility of a gap in expertise were the current assessors to retire from these roles. There is also, arguably, insufficient diversity within the pool in a range of areas. Further, as recruitment has not taken place for a considerable period of time, this might create a perception that judgements are based more on expertise than criteria. The small numbers also restrict the ability to plan (increasing numbers of) assessments at short notice, if required. This is most acute for the very small Return to Practise pool.
12. The QAA, in the review of the GOsC registration assessments, made some recommendations to improve the processes including
 - 'To increase the size of the assessor pool, particularly for the [return to practise process] RTPP, to increase the range of perspectives, extend the capacity for moderation and benefit from the expertise of current practitioners'.
 - In relation to the Review of Non-UK qualifications, 'ensure that this is a separate assessment process to the other assessments and that assessors have the required specialist academic/educational knowledge to undertake.' – suggested at the meeting of the QAA and the Education Committee members on 11 August 2012 (See Public Item 7).

Proposed recruitment strategy

13. It is suggested that we recruit to all pools for the reasons outlined above. We will advertise openly, but also will encourage existing assessors to apply for different pools if they have the required skill set to meet the person specifications (see below).
14. A proposal for the person specifications for the different pools of assessors Return to Practise and Review of Non-UK qualifications are attached at Annex A. Members are invited to advise on these and agree them.
15. We propose to invite three members of the Education Committee with experience of assessment to participate in the short-listing and interview panel in Winter 2012.

Recommendations:

- A. To undertake a recruitment exercise to recruit further to the return to practise and registration assessment pools.**
- B. To agree the person specifications for the assessor pools.**
- C. To agree three members of the Education Committee to participate in the short-listing and interview process.**

Development of a system of appraisal for the return to practice and registration assessment pools

16. Appraisal is a method of formally assessing the performance of an employee, to encourage, motivate and develop them for the benefit of the individual and the organisation.
17. In the GOsC Business Plan 2012-13, Section 2.7 Osteopathic Practice Standards, it was agreed that we would 'Develop an appraisal scheme for registration and return to practise assessors' by 'December 2012'. This was made more explicit in our Business Plan following the CHRE Performance review 2011-12 which stated: 'We note that in response to third party feedback, the GOsC is planning the development of an appraisal process for its assessors (in addition to the plans it already had in place to develop a plan for their training). Although we are disappointed that an appraisal process was not already in place, we are pleased that plans to develop one are now under way. Systematic training and appraisal of the assessors should enhance the consistency of decision-making and therefore public confidence in the GOsC's decisions.' (See CHRE Performance Review 2011-12 at paragraph 14.14)

Purpose and Outcomes

18. There are a number of desired outcomes resulting from the successful introduction of an appraisal scheme for GOsC registration assessors. These include:
 - a. Greater consistency in decision making of GOsC registration assessors
 - b. Greater public confidence in the GOsC's decisions on registration

- c. Increased public safety resulting from better decision-making
- d. Ability to offer feedback to Registration assessors allowing them to develop and enhance their skills
- e. Ability to identify training needs for assessors so that it can focus on key areas and can be planned accordingly
- f. Better quality feedback to applicants on strengths and development areas, providing support for those still seeking registration and those who successfully registered as a result of the assessment process.
- g. Increased confidence for Fitness to Practise panels to ensure that those referred for training and development have addressed their development needs.
- h. Confidence in our registration processes from other stakeholders such as the British Osteopathic Association and other regulatory bodies registering osteopaths outside of the UK.
- i. Gaining feedback about ways in which the assessment process can be improved.

Type of appraisal

19. This paper identifies two main types of appraisal. The first employs criteria-based assessment by a peer or manager in order to verify whether the appraisee continues to meet the job requirements. This type of appraisal is evidenced by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in its *Registration Assessor self-appraisal and peer feedback - Guidance notes* : <http://www.hpc-uk.org/Assets/documents/100035A3RegistrationAssessorselfappraisalandpeerfeedbackguidancenote.pdf>
20. Another form of appraisal involves reflective self-review which is then discussed with a peer/colleague or formal appraiser to determine areas of good practice, areas for development and goals/objectives. This type of review is evidenced by the approach to appraisals for medical doctors in the UK, outlined in the [*NHS Revalidation Support Team, Medical Appraisal Guide, March 2012.*](#)
21. Appraisals may be on a spectrum utilising aspects of both these purposes.
22. With reference to the required outcomes listed in paragraph 18, the focus on developing the Registration Assessors in order to deliver benefits to the registration applicants, the organisation and the public would lend itself more towards the second, more formative, type of appraisal based on self-reflection and discussion with a peer, colleague or mentor to empower the individual to identify and address development needs.

Recommendation:

- D. To consider the appropriate approach for the GOsC appraisal system for return to practise and registration assessors.**

Requirements of an Appraiser

23. In its publication *Quality Assurance of Medical Appraisers*, 2012, the NHS Revalidation Support Team state that the skills and attributes required of an appraiser are:
- a. 'Motivating, influencing and negotiating skills
 - b. Good oral communication skills, including active listening skills, the ability to understand and summarise a discussion, ask appropriate questions, provide constructive challenge and give effective feedback
 - c. Good written communication skills, including the ability to summarise accurately and clearly
 - d. Objective evaluation skills
 - e. Excellent personal integrity, personal effectiveness and self-awareness
 - f. Motivated, enthusiastic and positive role model
 - g. Ability to adapt behaviour to meet the needs of the [*sic*] assessor
 - h. Commitment to ongoing personal education and development
 - i. Good working relationship with professional colleagues and relevant stakeholders
 - j. Ability to work effectively in a team'
24. It is suggested that similar skills and attributes would be required for an appraiser for the GOsC registration assessors.

Recommendation:

E. To consider the appropriate person specifications for the GOsC appraisers.

25. There are a number of options for recruiting this type of appraiser. This includes:
- a. Peer appraisal from fellow assessors
 - b. Appraisal conducted by existing GOsC Committee or Council members
 - c. Appraisal conducted by an external appointee
 - d. Someone performing the 'moderator' role in the Assessment of Clinical Performance.
26. There are benefits and disadvantages from using each of the above roles to appraise the assessors. The Committee are asked to consider and advise on the benefits and disadvantages of using each role.

Peer appraisal from fellow assessors

27. The advantages of peer appraisal from fellow assessors include:
- a. Enhancement of the ability of assessors to give and receive constructive feedback.
 - b. Ability for the team as a whole to benefit from the discussion.
28. The disadvantages of the peer appraisal from fellow assessors include:

- a. The possibility that assessors may feel uncomfortable about receiving direct feedback from a member of their team.
- b. The risk that if an appraisal is not constructive that this could damage the team approach essential for successful assessment.

29. The advantages of peer appraisal from GOsC Committee members include:

- a. Feedback is received from a more objective source bringing a fresh perspective whilst remaining in the osteopathic context.
- b. Committee members involved may obtain a different perspective about the registration assessment processes and how they may be improved but also related processes – for example feedback on the Osteopathic Practice Standards.

30. The disadvantages of appraisal with GOsC Committee members include:

- a. It may be more difficult for Committee members to remain as objective decision makers if they have been involved in a process that they are making a subsequent decision on.

31. The advantages of appraisal by an external member include:

- a. The advantage of a fresh perspective brought to reflection and performance.
- b. The external appointee may have some specialist expertise which would benefit the development of the osteopathic assessor pool.

32. The disadvantage of appraisal by an external member include:

- a. Inability to discuss osteopathic technical matters.
- b. Potential lack of knowledge about osteopathy. (Although it might be possible to provide training in this area.)
- c. Seen as an 'outsider' by the assessor pools.

Recommendation:

- F. To consider the different arguments related to the appointment of GOsC appraisers.**

Annex A to Item 8**Return to Practice person specification**

It is expected that the return to practise assessors will demonstrate the following essential criteria.

Essential criteria

- General Osteopathic Council registration
- Excellent communication skills, oral, written and electronic.
- Developed osteopathic knowledge, skills and competency beyond that of registration through continuing professional development (CPD). This CPD can have been achieved through either formal osteopathic education or through experiential learning.
- Experience of assessing against criteria and providing formative feedback to others.
- Experience of coaching or mentoring to support career development.
- Current knowledge of educational provision within Osteopathic Educational Institutions.
- Has a clear working knowledge of the GOsC *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with other professional members of the team and with General Osteopathic Council staff.
- Commitment to assess up to six Return to Practice submissions and to attend face to face meetings/teleconferences/Skype conferences during each year of appointment.
- Commitment to attending training and refresher training sessions and to assess portfolios throughout period of appointment.
- Commitment to feeding back constructively on the process to enable improvements to be made.
- Ability to work and deliver to tight deadlines without compromising quality of work.
- Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the importance of promoting equality and valuing diversity and of making reasonable adjustments where required.

Desirable criteria

- Qualification in mentoring or coaching.

Review of Non-UK Qualification Person specification

It is expected that the Qualification Assessors will demonstrate the following essential criteria.

Essential criteria

- General Osteopathic Council registration
- Excellent communication skills, oral, written and electronic.
- Developed osteopathic knowledge, skills and competency beyond that of registration through continuing professional development (CPD). This CPD can have been achieved through either formal osteopathic education or through experiential learning.
- Wide experience of academic management and quality assurance at institutional level in UK osteopathy higher education
- Experience of developing academic curricula
- Experience of assessing against criteria and providing summative feedback to others.
- Experience of providing written feedback.
- Has a clear working knowledge of the GOsC *Osteopathic Practice Standards* and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's *Subject Benchmark Statement for Osteopathy, 2005*
- Commitment to assess up to six qualifications during each year of appointment.
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with other professional members of the team and with General Osteopathic Council staff.
- Commitment to attending training and refresher training sessions and to assess portfolios throughout period of appointment.
- Commitment to feeding back constructively on the process to enable improvements to be made.
- Ability to work and deliver to tight deadlines without compromising quality of work.
- Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the importance of promoting equality and valuing diversity and of making reasonable adjustments where required.
- Not a member or associate of Council currently or since January 2010. (Associate means a member of any of the Council's Committees or working groups or a fitness to practise panellist.)

Desirable criteria

- A professional qualification at an appropriate level to support educational assessment.
- Understanding of performance assessment in a formal setting.

Further evidence of practice / written assessment assessor

It is expected that the Assessors will demonstrate the following criteria.

Essential criteria

- General Osteopathic Council registration
- Excellent communication skills, oral, written and electronic.
- Developed osteopathic knowledge, skills and competency beyond that of registration through continuing professional development (CPD). This CPD can have been achieved through either formal osteopathic education or through experiential learning.
- Experience of assessing written materials (for example portfolios, case based discussions or other written assessments in osteopathic education against criteria) and providing summative feedback to others.
- Has a clear working knowledge of the GOsC *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
- Commitment to assess up to six questionnaires during each year of appointment.
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with other professional members of the team and with General Osteopathic Council staff.
- Commitment to attending training and refresher training sessions and to assess portfolios throughout period of appointment.
- Commitment to feeding back constructively on the process to enable improvements to be made.
- Ability to work and deliver to tight deadlines without compromising quality of work.
- Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the importance of promoting equality and valuing diversity and of making reasonable adjustments where required.
- Not a member or associate of Council currently or since January 2010. (Associate means a member of any of the Council's Committees or working groups or a fitness to practise panellist.)

Desirable criteria

- A professional qualification at to support educational assessment.
- Understanding of performance assessment in a formal setting.

Assessment of Clinical Performance assessor

It is expected that the Assessors will demonstrate the following criteria.

Essential criteria

- General Osteopathic Council registration
- Excellent communication skills, oral, written and electronic.
- Developed osteopathic knowledge, skills and competency beyond that of registration through continuing professional development (CPD). This CPD can have been achieved through either formal osteopathic education or through experiential learning.
- Experience of assessing clinical performance using long case assessments.
- Experience of assessing clinical performance using a variety of assessment methods.
- Ability to triangulate assessments to form a summative judgement.
- Ability to work effectively as part of moderation team.
- Ability to provide concise written reports of decisions based on assessment criteria and observations during the assessment.
- Clear working knowledge of the GOSc *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
- Commitment to assess up to eight candidates during each year of appointment.
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with other professional members of the team and with General Osteopathic Council staff.
- Commitment to attending training and refresher training sessions and to assess portfolios throughout period of appointment.
- Commitment to feeding back constructively on the process to enable improvements to be made.
- Ability to work and deliver to tight deadlines without compromising quality of work.
- Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the importance of promoting equality and valuing diversity and of making reasonable adjustments where required.
- Not a member or associate of Council currently or since January 2010. (Associate means a member of any of the Council's Committees or working groups or a fitness to practise panellist.)

Desirable criteria

- A professional qualification at an appropriate level to support educational assessment.