

## GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL

### The minutes of the 68th meeting of the General Osteopathic Council held in private on Tuesday 13 July 2010.

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UNCONFIRMED

**Chair:** Professor Adrian Eddleston

**Present:**

John Chuter	Kenneth McLean
Paula Cook	Robin Shepherd
Jonathan Hearsey	Julie Stone
Professor Ian Hughes	Fiona Walsh
Kim Lavelly	Jenny White

**In attendance:**

Evlynne Gilvarry, Chief Executive & Registrar (CE)  
 Fiona Browne, Head of Professional Standards  
 Alan Currie, Head of Registration and MIS  
 Matthew Redford, Head of Finance & Administration  
 Velia Soames, Head of Regulation  
 Brigid Tucker, Head of Policy and Communications  
 Jane Quinnell, Governance Manager

Marcus Dye, Professional Standards Manager )	
Kellie Green, Regulation Manager )	for relevant parts of the meeting
Sarah Eldred, Communications Manager )	

**Apologies**

1. Apologies were received from Geraldine Campbell, Nick Hounsfield and Brian McKenna. Geraldine Campbell had submitted written comments on various agenda items and the Chair would draw attention to these as the agenda items arose.

**Minutes**

2. The minutes of the public session of the Council held on 14 April 2010 were signed by the Chair subject to a correction being made to the last line in paragraph 15 – 'difficult' should read 'difficulty'.

**Matters arising**

3. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## Chair's Report

4. Succession Planning The Chair reported that he intended to step down in March 2012, one year before his term expires. Therefore a new Chair would need to be appointed to take over on 1 April 2012. Correspondingly, recruitment should begin in April 2011 so that the new Chair designate could be identified by September 2011 to assist with any recruitment required for Council and other members (fitness to practise panelists and external members of committees) whose terms expired in 2012 and who did not wish to be re-appointed or were ineligible for re-appointment. In a related step, the Chair reported that the Treasurer and the Chair of the Education Committee had agreed to serve an additional year, as they were eligible to do, delaying their departure until March 2013. This would provide important continuity for the GOsC. The Chair asked members to consider who might be appropriate to sit on a selection panel for a new Chair of the Council and to submit their suggestions before the next Council meeting in October.
5. Fitness to Practise matter The Chair referred to Charles Hunt's letter to Council Members of 16 April 2010 in which Mr Hunt had raised various issues relating to the early stages of a complaint made against him. The Council's attention was also drawn to the Chair's letter to Mr Hunt in response in which he signaled there would be a discussion of the issue by the Council in private.
6. The Head of Regulation confirmed that she, the Regulation Manager and three members of the Fitness to Practise Policy Committee (Julie Stone (Chair), Jonathan Harsey and Jenny White) had held a telephone conference call to discuss procedural aspects of the case (as distinct from the decisions taken by the Screener and then the Investigating Committee).
7. In the course of discussion, Council members expressed concern on two issues highlighted by this case: the degree to which private conduct could/should be taken into account for fitness to practise purposes and the GOsC's policy of retaining information even where there is a decision of 'no case to answer', such information being available to the Investigating Committee in the event of a future complaint against the same individual. It was noted that the Council had no power to re-open a case concluded by its Fitness to Practise committees. However, it was appropriate to refer the matters arising from this case to the newly established Fitness to Practise Policy Committee. It was also proposed that the GOsC should seek a legal opinion on its approach in this case and subsequently, a letter to Mr Hunt would be drafted explaining the Council's approach.

*5.05pm Julie Stone left the meeting*

*5.25pm Robin Shepherd left the meeting*

*5.27pm John Chuter left the meeting      The meeting was still quorate with 8 members.*

8. **Agreed** that legal advice would be sought on aspects of this case and a letter to Mr Hunt explaining the Council's approach would be prepared and circulated to the Council before it was sent.

## **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

9. Education Committee The Council **noted** the minutes of the Education Committee's meeting of 15 June 2010.

### Recognised Qualification status

10. European School of Osteopathy (ESO) The Professional Standards Manager presented the paper which concerned an application by the ESO for an award of Recognised Qualification (RQ) status for a new Master of Osteopathy and the integration of the BSc (Hons) Osteopathy course as a fall back award. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) had conducted a review in Winter 2009 and the Education Committee considered the QAA report at its meetings of 18 March 2010 and 15 June 2010. The Council considered the QAA report and the recommendations made by the Education Committee and **approved** the recommendations to be made to the Privy Council as follows:
11. The Master of Osteopathy and BSc (Hons) Osteopathy courses would be awarded RQ status from 1 September 2009 until 31 August 2014 subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS	
a.	The ESO must include a detailed financial progress report in the School's Annual Report to GOsC for the academic years 2009-10 and 2010-11.
b.	The School's curriculum review must be concluded to enable implementation of the proposed scheme for the start of the 2010-11 academic year; confirmation of this must be notified to GOsC by 31 August 2010.
c.	The School must change its procedures relating to resit assessments in order to provide the opportunity for external examiners to moderate this work appropriately and it should ensure that all staff and external examiners understand the requirements for the external scrutiny of resit assessments; this should be completed to commence with the summer 2010 assessments.
d.	The ESO must submit an Annual Report to the Education Committee of the General Osteopathic Council.
e.	<p>The ESO must inform the Education Committee of the General Osteopathic Council early, of any change or proposed substantial change likely to influence the quality of the course leading to the qualification and its delivery, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) substantial changes in finance</li> <li>ii) substantial changes in management</li> <li>iii) changes to the title of the qualification</li> <li>iv) changes to the level of the qualification</li> <li>v) introduction or changes to franchise agreements</li> <li>vi) changes to validation agreements</li> <li>vii) changes to the length of the course and the mode of its delivery</li> <li>viii) substantial changes in clinical provision</li> <li>ix) changes in teaching personnel</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>x) changes in assessment programmes</li> <li>xi) changes in student entry requirements</li> <li>xii) changes in student numbers.</li> <li>xiv) changes in patient numbers passing through the student clinic</li> <li>xv) changes in teaching accommodation</li> <li>xvi) changes in IT, library and other learning resource provision</li> </ul>
f.	The ESO must comply with the General Osteopathic Council's requirements for the assessment of the osteopathic clinical performance of students and its requirements for monitoring the quality and ensuring the standards of this assessment. The participation of actual patients in a real clinical setting must be included in this assessment. Any changes in these requirements will be communicated in writing to the ESO giving not less than 9 months notice.

12. Surrey Institute of Osteopathic Medicine (SIOM) The Professional Standards Manager gave a summary of the paper before the Council which dealt with the recommendations resulting from consideration of the Recognised Qualification (RQ) at the SIOM. It also dealt with a recent complaint received on 7 April 2010 by the GOsC. Although anonymous, the complaint appeared to be from staff members at SIOM. The paper dealt with the impact of this complaint on the current outstanding conditions and recommendations. The Education Committee (EdC) was asked to agree the proposed action to be taken in relation to the complaint and the Council was asked to endorse the Committee's recommendations in relation to the RQ.
13. The Council **agreed** to endorse the recommendations of the Committee as follows:
- a. That the decision to recommend that the Council communicate the proposed RQ conditions as strong recommendations to the SIOM be upheld.
  - b. That the RQ recommendations:
    - i. RECOMMENDATION: The SIOM must include in the 2009 Annual Report to GOsC the detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of the new management and teaching team and structure
    - ii. RECOMMENDATION: The SIOM will undertake a risk assessment exercise and draw up contingency plans in relation to RQ status, staffing, student recruitment and patient numbers, by 31 January 2010
    - iii. RECOMMENDATION: The SIOM must update the student handbook, in hardcopy form and on the virtual learning environment, by 31 January 2010
    - iv. RECOMMENDATION: The SIOM must ensure that the patients' complaints procedure is displayed prominently in the clinic by 31 January 2010
    - v. RECOMMENDATION: The SIOM must fully implement the latest GOsC Code of Practice (2005) by 31 January 2010

have been fulfilled with the proviso that they will be followed up in the

October/November review.

- c. That the only issues requiring immediate action arising from the staff complaint letter are the accusations against individual staff members. This will be led by the Regulation Department which will seek further advice on any necessary action required. All other issues can be explored further through the October/November review where necessary.
- d. That the QAA will review the audited accounts and evidence of insurance documents upon receipt, and any issues arising will be considered separately.
- e. That the increase in the current years intake of students indicates that marketing of the clinic appears to have addressed a decline in student numbers. No further action is necessary at this stage and again this can be followed up in the review in October/November 2010.
- f. That the issue with figures provided on student interactions and treatments in the annual report is clarified, with input from the QAA as part of the review of the Annual Reports.
- g. That the misinformation on complaints from the annual report is drawn to the attention of the SIOM with a request to it to confirm the true figures for complaints during this period.

### **Research into patterns of osteopathic practice**

- 14. The Head of Professional Standards presented a paper which asked the Council to publish an invitation to tender for research into patterns of osteopathic practice. The paper also asked the Council to agree the process for selecting the research team and to agree that the work should be overseen by the Research Strategy Working Group (RSWG).
- 15. Various amendments to the tender document were suggested. It was **agreed**, subject to the amendments to the tender document and seeking the Council's online approval, and subject also to incorporation of any necessary refinements arising from the KPMG research findings and the Standard Data Collection Project, that the revised invitation to tender for research into patterns of osteopathic practice would be published. Additionally, it was **agreed** that the process of selection of a research team and the research itself would be overseen by the RSWG.

### **Research into Preparedness for Practice**

- 16. The Head of Professional Standards presented a paper which asked the Council to agree to publish the invitation to tender for research into the preparedness of osteopathic graduates for practice. The Council was also asked to delegate the selection of a research team and oversight of the research to the RSWG.
- 17. Various amendments to the tender document were suggested. It was **agreed**, subject to making the amendments to the tender document and circulating it to the Council for approval, that the revised invitation to tender for research into the preparedness of

osteopathic graduates for practice would be published. Additionally **agreed** that the selection of the research team and the research itself would be overseen by the RSWG.

### **Analysis of Annual Reports from the Osteopathic Educational Institutions**

18. The Professional Standards Manager presented his update on work underway as part of the review of Annual Reports submitted each year by the osteopathic educational institutions (OEIs). The review of Annual Reports formed part of the GOsC's preliminary review of quality assurance processes as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2010-2013.
19. The Council **noted** the findings from the Annual Reports from the OEIs for the 2008-2009 academic year and the plans to enhance the format and content of the annual report.

### **Any other business**

20. There was none.

### **Date of the next meeting**

21. 15 September 2010 – Away Day (private)  
14 October 2010 – Council meeting.