



Council
23 July 2014

Oxford Brookes University – Extension of Recognition Qualification

Classification Public

Purpose For decision

Issues Oxford Brookes University (OBU) is seeking an extension of recognition for its Master of Osteopathy and Bachelor of Osteopathy qualifications. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) conducted a review which began in September 2013 and ended in a Visit to OBU between 6 and 8 March 2014. Its report was considered by the Education and Registration Standards Committee on 25 June 2014 and its recommendation is presented here for agreement.

Recommendation To recognise the qualifications Master of Osteopathy and Bachelor of Osteopathy qualifications awarded by Oxford Brookes University from 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2017 subject to the conditions outlined in paragraph 10.

Financial and resourcing implications The Recognised Qualification review is undertaken as part of our contract with the QAA.

Equality and diversity implications None

Communications implications We are required to 'maintain and publish a list of the qualifications which are for the time being recognised'¹ in order to ensure sufficient information is available to students, patients and others about Osteopathic Educational Institutions (OEIs) awarding 'Recognised Qualifications' that are quality assured by us.

Annexes

- A. OBU review specification
- B. QAA report from the OBU review

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¹ See S14(5) Osteopaths Act 1993.

Background

1. The Osteopaths Act 1993 requires that the Council seeks the advice of the Education Committee (now the Education and Registration Standards Committee) before deciding whether or not to recognise a qualification.
2. This paper considers the extension of the existing Recognised Qualification (RQ) status for two current qualifications provided by Oxford Brookes University (OBU). OBU is one of ten educational institutions offering osteopathic courses which are recognised by the GOsC. It currently has the following qualifications with RQ status:
 - a. Bachelor of Osteopathy (BOst) – 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016
 - b. Master of Osteopathy (MOst) – 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016
 - c. Bachelor of Science Osteopathy – 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2016
3. OBU has previously confirmed that all these courses are now closed to new students and the Education and Registration Standards Committee has been monitoring to ensure that standards are maintained. A previous closure plan was considered by the Education and Registration Standards Committee.
4. Due to the length of time it would take to ensure that all students graduate from the course, as well as the need to ensure that standards were being maintained, the Education and Registration Standards Committee agreed to an additional quality assurance review which would seek to extend the existing recognition by a period of one year. The specification for the review is provided at Annex A.
5. The QAA was asked to conduct a review of both remaining qualifications (BOst and MOst) based on the specification at Annex A. This commenced in September 2013 and concluded with a visit to the school between 6 and 8 March 2014. The final review report is at Annex B.
6. An earlier draft version of the QAA report was issued to OBU for comment, in accordance with the requirements of the section 12(7) of the Osteopaths Act 1993. All comments were sent to the QAA and the final version of the report at Annex B incorporates the appropriate changes.
7. The recommendation of the QAA review visitors for all of the qualifications is 'approval with conditions' as outlined below at paragraph 9.
8. The legal mechanism for attaching conditions to the recognition (which is due to be fulfilled before the start date of the proposed extension and with no obvious mechanisms to attach to the existing recognition) is unclear. Following discussion of this issue, the Committee therefore agreed to authorise the Chair to recommend that Council agree the extension to the recognition without the specific conditions listed in the QAA review report, should there be no clear mechanism to attach the QAA recommended conditions to the 'recognised qualification' by the date of the Council meeting. However, the Education and

Registration Standards Committee agreed that it will continue to monitor the recommendations/requirements outlined in Paragraph 9 below as if they were conditions with regular review as part of its ongoing monitoring with OBU as an institution offering a course closed to new entrants. The Education and Registration Standards Committee considered that such a course of action achieves the same outcome ensuring standards. In the unlikely event that OBU does not comply with the requirements and students cannot be assured of meeting the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*, mechanisms for removal of the RQ remain in place in the same way as they do for breaches of condition.

9. The Education and Registration Standards Committee will continue to monitor OBU, as part of its ongoing monitoring and review, with the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS	
a.	By September 2014, establish an action plan and monitoring framework, to ensure that students receive sufficient clinical experience in relation to the numbers, age range and diversity of patients seen by them in clinic.
b.	By September 2014, references in the reading lists within module handbooks to Standard 2000 are updated to the Osteopathic Practice Standards.
c.	By September 2014, establish an action plan and monitoring framework, to ensure that academic arrangements relating to the teach-out and closure of the Osteopathy Programme are regularly and closely monitored by the Faculty Academic Enhancement and Standards Committee.

10. The Education and Registration Standards Committee recommends that the Council renews recognition of the Master of Osteopathy and the Bachelor of Osteopathy from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017 subject to the following general conditions which apply to all recognised qualifications:

CONDITIONS	
a.	Oxford Brookes University must submit an Annual Report, within a three month period of the date the request was first made, to the Education Committee of the General Council.
b.	Oxford Brookes University must inform the Education Committee of the General Council as soon as practicable, of any change or proposed substantial change likely to influence the quality of the course leading to the

	<p>qualification and its delivery, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. substantial changes in finance ii. substantial changes in management iii. changes to the title of the qualification iv. changes to the level of the qualification v. changes to franchise agreements vi. changes to validation agreements vii. changes to the length of the course and the mode of its delivery viii. substantial changes in clinical provision ix. changes in teaching personnel x. changes in assessment xi. changes in student entry requirements xii. changes in student numbers (an increase or decline of 20 per cent or more in the number of students admitted to the course relative to the previous academic year should be reported) xiii. changes in patient numbers passing through the student clinic (an increase or decline of 20 per cent in the number of patients passing through the clinic relative to the previous academic year should be reported) xiv. changes in teaching accommodation xv. changes in IT, library and other learning resource provision
c.	<p>Oxford Brookes University must comply with the General 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. These are outlined in the publication: ISBN 978 1 84482 734 3 <i>Subject benchmark statement for Osteopathy, 2007</i>, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The participation of real patients in a real clinical setting must be included in this assessment. Any changes in these requirements will be communicated in writing to Oxford Brookes University giving not less than 9 months notice.</p>

Recommendation: to recognise the qualifications Master of Osteopathy and Bachelor of Osteopathy qualifications awarded by Oxford Brookes University from 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2017 subject to the conditions outlined in paragraph 10.

Oxford Brookes University (OBU) – review specification

Background

1. OBU currently provides the following qualifications which are due to expire on 31 December 2016:
 - a. Bachelor of Osteopathy
 - b. Master of Osteopathy
 - c. BSc (Hons) Osteopathy.
2. OBU is ceasing the provision of osteopathy education and is no longer recruiting to any of these courses. It does however wish to extend the recognition of qualifications listed in a. and b. for a further period to ensure that all existing students on the courses have sufficient time to graduate with a Recognised Qualification.
3. A copy of the current Recognised Qualification award and the last Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) review report of April / May 2011 for the OBU is attached for information.
4. Copies of recent Education Committee papers relating to the OBU are also attached to this specification.

QAA Review

5. The GOsC requests that the QAA schedules a review of the following qualifications:
 - a. Bachelor of Osteopathy
 - b. Master of Osteopathy.
6. The format of the review will be based on the GOsC/QAA Handbook and the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*.
7. In addition to the usual review format, the Education and Registration Standards Committee would also like to explore the following areas:
 - a. The planned closure of clinical facilities in Swindon and Oxford and the establishment of a central clinic at Mill Court site – 'The Collinade' from December 2013. It will be important to ensure that there is adequate clinical supervision during 2012 – 2013 for the benefit of both patients, students and tutors and that the diversity of patients can be managed or that other options for supporting a wider diversity of patients are explored to ensure that students get sufficient clinical experience to meet the required outcomes. This is especially important given the previous recognised qualification condition related to the improvement of the student experience.
 - b. As a general principle, the needs of patients are identified and resolved following the closure of the existing clinical facilities in Swindon and Oxford, replaced by the central Mill Court Clinic facilities.

- c. Staffing – It will be important to ensure that there is clarity about learning outcomes and assessments and the right expertise to enable consistency and clarity to OBU moving forward. This will require careful planning and review on a regular basis to ensure effective communications between staff, clarity about who is delivering what, when and how and detailed alternative arrangements should staff leave.
 - d. Student Feedback – To consider student feedback and the considerable differences in approval ratings between the three courses, with a view to sharing good practice.
 - e. Assessment – To consider the assessment process and particularly the organisation of the OSCE assessments and the assessment structure of the course and the identified inconsistencies in assessment feedback.
8. The provisional timetable for the OBU RQ review will be as follows:
- May 2013 – Agreement to review specification
 - Summer 2013 – Approval of Visitors and scheduling review timetable and visit dates.
 - Autumn 2013 – Submission of Self-evaluation document
 - Winter 2014 – Visit (including observation of teaching and learning both clinical and academic and opportunities for discussions with staff and students.)
 - Spring 2014 – Submission of draft report and statutory 28 days for comment on the report.
 - Spring 2014 – Preparation of Action Plan to meet proposed conditions (if any).
 - Spring/summer 2014 – Renewal of RQ considered by Education Committee
 - Summer 2014 – Decision to Recognise RQ considered by Council
 - Autumn 2014 – Approval of Council decision to recognise RQ by Privy Council.

This timetable will be the subject of negotiation with the OBU, GOsC and the QAA to ensure mutually convenient times.