



**Council**  
**17 May 2023**

**North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) – Renewal of Recognition of Qualification (RQ)**

<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Purpose</b>	For decision
<b>Issue</b>	<p>Consideration of the Recognised Qualification (RQ) review at the North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot), in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Master of Osteopathic Medicine (MOst)</li><li>• Bachelor of Osteopathic Medicine (BOst)</li></ul>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>To renew the recognition of the Masters in Osteopathic Medicine (M.Ost) and the Bachelor of Osteopathic Medicine (BOst) awarded by Nescot from 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2028 subject to the Conditions outlined at paragraph 10, subject to the approval of the Privy Council.</p>
<b>Financial and resourcing implications</b>	<p>The RQ Visit was included in the 2021-22 financial schedule, with a budget of £15,000. There will be an additional cost to the review of the proposed part time delivery of the MOst programme which was not included in the original specification as we were not informed of this in time.</p>
<b>Equality and diversity implications</b>	<p>Equality and diversity issues are reviewed as part of the RQ renewal process.</p>
<b>Communications implications</b>	<p>We are required to maintain and publish a list of the qualifications which are for the time being recognised in order to ensure sufficient information is available to students and patients about osteopathic educational institutions awarding 'Recognised Qualifications' quality assured by us.</p>
<b>Annexes</b>	<p>A. The Nescot review specification B. The Nescot initial RQ Visit Report</p>
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## Key Messages

- The RQ visit took place in October 2022.
- The visitor report contains a recommendation for the approval of the renewal of the recognition of Nescot's qualifications with two specific conditions. These are:
  - a. The College must refine their data capture and reporting methods to ensure coherent monitoring and forecasting of patient numbers as well as ensuring the attainment of the required hours in clinic.
  - b. While clinical audit is undertaken on a monthly basis, there does not appear to be a clear strategy to ensure the quality of the breadth of patient interactions that students encounter. The College must improve their recording of patient audit data, and management of student exposure to a full range of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal presentations, to ensure that students see a sufficient depth and breadth of patients.
- The Policy and Education Committee, at its meeting in March 2023, agreed to recommend that Council renew of the recognition of the Masters in Osteopathic Medicine (M.Ost) and the Bachelor of Osteopathic Medicine (BOst) awarded by Nescot from 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2028 subject to the Conditions outlined at paragraph 10, subject to the approval of the Privy Council.

## Background

1. Section 14(2) of the Osteopaths Act 1993 provides that 'where the Council is satisfied that (a) a qualification granted by an institution in the United Kingdom is evidence of having a required standard of proficiency, it may, with the approval of the Privy Council, recognise that qualification for the purposes of this Act.'
2. Section 15(4) provides that 'The General Council may, in recognising a qualification under Section 14, direct that the qualification is to remain a recognised qualification only so long as such conditions as the General Council sees fit to impose are complied with in relation to the qualification.'
3. Section 14(6) of the Osteopaths Act 1993 provides that 'Before deciding whether or not to recognise a qualification under this section, the General Council shall consult the Education Committee.'
4. This paper considers the advice of the Education Committee. The GOsC Policy and Education Committee (PEC) undertakes the functions of the statutory Education Committee and this Committee is referred to as the 'the Committee' in remainder of this paper. Council is asked to agree the renewal of the qualifications subject to the conditions as outlined in the recommendation.

## Discussion

3. The Committee agreed the RQ Specification for the Nescot visit and appointed a team of three Education Visitors under s12 of the Osteopaths Act 1993 to undertake the review on 7 October 2021 and this is attached at the Annex A.
4. The visit took place in October 2022.
5. The visit report was drafted and sent to Nescot on 24 November 2022 for a period of no less than one month in accordance with the Osteopaths Act 1993. An extension was given due to the Christmas holiday.
6. Nescot responded with what they considered to be factual inaccuracies on 13 January 2023, and these were considered by the Education Visitors. All comments were taken into account in the production of the final report.
7. The final report was sent to Nescot on the 27 January 2023. OEIs are required to send an action plan to Mott MacDonald within two weeks of receiving the final report for the Visitor's to review the proposed action plan ahead of Committee consideration.
8. The final visitors' report is attached at Annex B. The recommendation of the Visitor for the programmes is approval with two specific conditions. When we recognise an RQ, we also recognise in accordance with the general conditions which are also set out below.

Conditions recommended by the Visitors.

9. Two specific conditions have been identified in the report by the Visitors. These are:
  - a. The College must refine their data capture and reporting methods to ensure coherent monitoring and forecasting of patient numbers as well as ensuring the attainment of the required hours in clinic.
  - b. While clinical audit is undertaken on a monthly basis, there does not appear to be a clear strategy to ensure the quality of the breadth of patient interactions that students encounter. The College must improve their recording of patient audit data, and management of student exposure to a full range of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal presentations, to ensure that students see a sufficient depth and breadth of patients.
10. The Committee considered the visitors report at its meeting in March 2023, and agreed to recommend to Council that, subject to the approval of the Privy Council, Council recognises the programmes referred to above, subject to the specific and general conditions set out in the table below.

CONDITIONS	
1	The College must refine their data capture and reporting methods to ensure coherent monitoring and forecasting of patient numbers as well as ensuring the attainment of the required hours in clinic.
2	While clinical audit is undertaken on a monthly basis, there does not appear to be a clear strategy to ensure the quality of the breadth of patient interactions that students encounter. The College must improve their recording of patient audit data, and management of student exposure to a full range of musculoskeletal and non-musculoskeletal presentations, to ensure that students see a sufficient depth and breadth of patients.
3	Nescot 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.
4	<p>Nescot 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 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. 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> <li>x. changes in assessment</li> <li>xi. changes in student entry requirements</li> <li>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)</li> </ul>

	<p>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)</p> <p>xiv. changes in teaching accommodation</p> <p>xv. changes in IT, library, and other learning resource provision</p>
5	<p>Nescot 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 <i>Graduate Outcomes for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education and Standards for Education and Training, 2022</i>, General Osteopathic Council. 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 Nescot giving not less than 9 months notice.</p>

### *Recognition period*

15. The interim Quality Assurance handbook<sup>1</sup> sets out the current criteria regarding the period of RQ approvals stating:

'The maintenance of the RQ status currently follows a cyclical process. Where required, PEC may apply an expiry date to the RQ. This decision will be made based on anticipated level of risk that the RQ presents.'

GOsC will usually recognise qualifications for a fixed period of time in the following circumstances:

- A new provider or qualification
- An existing provider with a risk profile requiring considerable ongoing monitoring.

For existing providers, GOsC will usually recognise qualifications without an expiry date in the following circumstances:

- an existing provider without conditions or
- an existing provider with fulfilled conditions and without any other monitoring requirements or
- an existing provider who is meeting all QA requirements (providing required information on time) or an existing provider with outstanding conditions, an

<sup>1</sup> [Mott MacDonald GOsC Interim Quality Assurance Handbook - General Osteopathic Council \(osteopathy.org.uk\)](https://osteopathy.org.uk)

agreed action plan and which is complying proactively with the action plan and

- an existing provider engaging with GOsC.

This will be subject to satisfactory review of the providers annual report.'

16. Nescot's current programmes have an expiry date of 31 October 2023.

*Review of Part time MOst programme*

17. For the information of Council, an issue arose in the week prior to the planned RQ visit, when we were told by Mott MacDonald that a new part time delivery had been referenced in the paperwork supplied by Nescot, but that they were lacking in information about this. We were not aware about a part time programme and it was therefore not referenced in the RQ specification approved in [March 2022](#).

18. A draft specification in relation to a review of the part-time BOst was approved by the Committee at its March 2023 meeting. A date for the review has not yet been finalised and neither have the visiting team been suggested at this stage. Once arrangements are in place, we will report further to the Committee for agreement to the review panel. This does not impact on Council's ability to agree the RQ for the full-time course as recommended by the Policy and Education Committee.

**Recommendation:**

To renew the recognition of the Masters in Osteopathic Medicine (M.Ost) and the Bachelor of Osteopathic Medicine (BOst) awarded by Nescot from 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2028 subject to the Conditions outlined at paragraph 10, subject to the approval of the Privy Council.