

GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL
Minutes of Part I of the 67th meeting of the Education Committee which
took place on Wednesday 14 March 2012 at
Osteopathy House, 176 Tower Bridge Road,
London SE1 3LU

Unconfirmed

Chair: Professor Ian Hughes

Present: Professor Adrian Eddleston
 Professor Bernadette Griffin
 Mr Jonathan Hearsey
 Mr Robert McCoy
 Mr Brian McKenna
 Mr Liam Stapleton
 Ms Julie Stone
 Ms Fiona Walsh

Guest Professor Della Freeth

In Attendance: Ms Alison White, Chair Designate
 Mr Tim Walker, Chief Executive and Registrar
 Ms Fiona Browne, Head of Professional Standards
 Mr Marcus Dye, Professional Standards Manager
 Ms Joy Bolt, Professional Standards Officer

PART I (*items which will be reported to the Public Session of Council at its next meeting*)

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES AND INTERESTS

1. Apologies were received from Dr Jane Fox, who had provided comments on various items and these would be incorporated into meeting at the appropriate times.
2. Ms Alison White was welcomed as a guest to the meeting as the Chair designate of Council from April 2012 as was Ms Barbara Edwards of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education who was invited to comment on items relating to quality assurance.
3. Members were requested to advise of any interests held at the time when the item was to be discussed.

ITEM 2: MINUTES

4. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed for accuracy and confirmed as a true record.

ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING

5. There were no matters arising not already covered on the agenda.

ITEM 4: CHAIR AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS DEPARTMENT ACTION AND REPORT

6. The Chair had no further comments to make. The Head of Professional Standards presented the department report. It was explained that David Sutherland is an experienced educational consultant who has done extensive work with other healthcare organisations, including the Royal College of Physicians. The meeting was at his request to find out more about osteopathy and osteopathic regulation.
7. The Head of Professional Standards reported that the Law Commission, the Scottish Law Commission and the Northern Ireland Law Commission had published a considerable consultation document entitled *Regulation of Health care Professionals Regulation of Social Care Professionals in England* which was a consultation 'to review the UK law relating to the regulation of health care professionals, and in England only, the regulation of social workers'. The consultation is open from 1 March 2012 to 31 May 2012. The Head of Professional Standards also tabled the *Summary of Joint Consultation Paper*. It was explained that the Council will consider the main paper on 29 March 2012. It was planned that Committee members would be able to contribute their thoughts electronically once a draft response had been prepared for their consideration.

Noted: The Committee noted the report.

ITEM 5A: QUALITY ASSURANCE – INTERNATIONAL OSTEOPATHIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

8. The Head of Professional Standards presented the discussion paper and confirmed that no decisions were required today. The purpose of the paper was to seek the Committee's insights on the questions outlined in the paper to further develop thinking in this area. The Head of Professional Standards also acknowledged the assistance of Ben Griffith of the GMC in elaborating some of the issues for discussion.
9. It was confirmed that the GOsC does have the powers to recognise a qualification granted by and institution outside the United Kingdom but at present does not exercise these powers. It was also noted that the 2011-2012

Business Plan states the GOsC will 'Develop policy exploring quality assurance for education delivered outside the UK as part of a preliminary quality assurance review'.

10. The Committee discussed the questions in the Discussion Paper and made the following points:
 - The Committee was concerned to ensure appropriate quality for courses delivered internationally which may form part of 'Recognised Qualifications'.
 - The Committee noted that the purpose of regulation was to protect the public, and the public were internationally mobile.
 - The Committee was keen to ensure that sufficient resource would be available to support the continuing development of consistent quality assurance within the OEIs.
 - The Committee discussed other possible recognition of quality methods to develop thinking, such as kite marking, quality enhancement or awarding a quality level to courses. This would mean that although the qualification would not lead to automatic registration it would be an indicator of its quality. It was not clear to some how far these options were available to the statutory regulator.
 - The Committee was reminded that the GOsC is already involved in work within Europe at the moment (through the work with FORE and CEN) to harmonise standards and it may be inappropriate to commence work outside of this environment to recognise courses on our own.
 - It was recognised that there were ethical issues arising from the accreditation of education in another country which would not necessarily take effective account of the culture and local environment in which the education was delivered.
 - The Committee agreed that the quality of education was more important than the funding models. They discussed the financial aspect of recognising courses overseas and the possible costs. Currently the cost and ongoing monitoring of 'Recognised Qualifications' within OEIs is borne by the Registrants fees and not by the osteopathic educational institutions (OEIs). This model would not sustain the additional costs of international models of quality assurance.
 - It was also recognised that monitoring and maintaining the recognition would also present be additional challenges with language barriers and travel being obvious ones, which would also raise the cost.
 - The Committee considered that unless the international institutions would be bearing the cost of the QAAs activities, it would not be practical to recognise these courses.
11. The Committee then had a brief discussion on the consequences of a recognised course being delivered outside of the UK, i.e. if an OEI were to relocate its entire course overseas, what would be the implications on its Recognised Qualification (RQ) status. It was eventually agreed that legal advice would probably need to be sought as many other factors would impact on the

course other than its method of delivery, for example, patients numbers, language considerations, clinic premises etc.

12. The Committee noted that their insights would help to further develop a scoping and discussion paper on these issues in due course. The Committee also noted that the case for quality assuring education outside the UK was currently weak.

ITEM 5B: QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – EVALUATION REPORT OF GOSC REVIEWS

13. The Professional Standards Manager presented the paper on the QAA evaluation report.
14. The Professional Standards Manager confirmed that in general the responses were positive to the review process; however the actual response rate was very low.
15. The Committee agreed that no conclusions could be drawn on such a low response rate but that further steps should be taken to enhance the response rate as part of the next evaluation.

Noted: The Committee noted the findings of the QAA evaluation report.

Noted: The Committee noted that the process for gaining feedback will be discussed further with the QAA as part of contract negotiations.

ITEM 5C: QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW – REFRESHING THE VISITOR POOL

16. The Chair confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest with this item, and the Professional Standards Manager presented the paper.
17. It was confirmed that the recruitment process had already begun and interviews are scheduled to take place on 26 March 2012. Ms Edwards confirmed that the QAA has some applications had already been received and that the deadline was 19 March 2012.

Noted: The Committee noted the progress of the recruitment of additional Quality Assurance Visitors.

ITEM 6: OSTEOPATHIC PRACTICE STANDARDS IMPLEMENTATION

18. The Professional Standards Manager presented the paper and confirmed that all but one of the OEIs have begun to map their curricula and learning outcomes to the new Osteopathic Practice Standards (OPS) and appear to be on target for the 1 September 2012 launch date. The one outstanding OEI will be reminded and offered further advice or assistance if required.

19. It was confirmed that a tender was advertised for reviewing all the GOsC Registration Assessments to ensure that they are mapped to the new OPS and the interviews took place on 22 February 2012. The interview panel decided to appoint the QAA.
20. It has been noted that the deadlines to complete the assessment materials, fell between Education Committee meetings in June and September 2012. The Committee was therefore asked to delegate the approval of the materials to a small sub-group which could convene in July 2012 with the specific remit to approve the materials on behalf of the Education Committee prior to training.
21. The Committee was content to agree to this on the understanding that all members would have the opportunity to feed comments on the materials electronically.
22. The Committee agreed that membership of the sub group would be agreed at the next meeting in June.

Noted: The Committee noted the OPS Implementation Strategy document.

Noted: The Committee noted the progress made with the educational support and the GOsC Assessment review work streams.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to delegate the approval of the assessment review materials to a separate group which could convene in June/July with the specific remit to approve the materials on behalf of the Education Committee prior to training.

ITEM 7: STUDENT FITNESS TO PRACTISE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

23. The Head of Professional Standards presented the paper on this project.
24. It was reported that the cost has risen due to fact that Sue Roff will now be conducting this research independently rather than in collaboration with the University of Dundee. However, this now means that the GOsC will now be able to own the tools created. The Finance and General Purposes Committee has noted the additional costs and has agreed that new total cost of £12 000 can be accommodated within the existing budget for student fitness to practise work as cost savings have been made in other areas.
25. It was also reported that all but one of the OEIs have been recruited to the project.
26. The Committee discussed the governance of the appointment of Sue Roff to undertake this project. It was explained that whilst no official tender was advertised, there was a public Student Fitness to Practise consultation asking

for suggestions about ways to implement the Student Fitness to Practise guidance. Sue Roff submitted her proposal in response to the consultation. Sue Roff is well published in this area and has also undertaken the same sort of research with national and international medical schools. It was explained that much of the work would build on tools she has already created which in itself will provide a large cost saving.

27. The Committee discussed the purpose of the tool in developing and monitoring students, and considered whether it could be used for registered osteopaths. It was explained that the tools for registered osteopaths – supporting the development of the Osteopathic Practice Standards work, were planned as scenario based rather than question based but that these suggestions could be revised at the end of the Pilot if it was successful.
28. It was explained that the tools could help to show 'norms' over time. The developed tools could provide opportunities for respondents to see how their views fitted compared to other respondents.
29. The Committee noted that:
 - Student responses would need to be moderated as their 'norm' response may not be the correct response. Some norms on ethical matters will change over time as the student's progress through the course.
 - Students with 'above the norm' responses would not necessarily need to 'move down' to the average.
 - The system would need to be compatible with upgrades if the Pilot was successful.
 - If the Pilot was successful, consideration would need to be given on future proofing the tools and a decision made on who would provide upgrades; the GOsC is funding the project at the moment however should the OEIs take this on board it, would it be expected that the GOsC would continue to do so?
30. The Committee sought clarification on oversight of the project. It was confirmed that the Senior Management Team would manage the pilot, and provide regular progress reports to Education Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to endorse the progress of the Student Implementation Work – Professionalism in Osteopathy Research Pilot.

ITEM 8: GUIDANCE ABOUT OSTEOPATHIC PRE-REGISTRATION EDUCATION

31. The Head of Professional Standards presented the paper and asked the Committee to agree that the project name be changed to 'Guidance about osteopathic pre-registration education' as it was felt that this more accurately reflected the nature of the project and also to agree the purpose of the project
32. The Committee considered the Terms of Reference and agreed that:

- a. The purpose of the project stated in the Terms of Reference to be more appropriate than the one quoted in the paper. The cover paper for Council should be adjusted accordingly.
 - b. The quorum for the group should be 5 to account to account for the diverse membership of the group including the Chair, representatives of each OEI and an osteopathic patient.
 - c. Paragraph 4 of the Terms of Reference should be re-written to read "To ensure that *the health and well being of the public* is at the heart of all matters...".
 - d. Consideration should be given to the further development of deliverables from the working group as the Terms of Reference were developed with the Working Group.
33. The Committee was advised it was only being asked to agree the Terms of Reference in draft form and that it would get a further opportunity to review them following discussion within the Working Group. On this basis the Committee agreed the draft Terms of Reference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to recommend to Council that the name of the project should be Guidance about Osteopathic pre-registration education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the draft terms of reference at Annex A of the cover paper.

ITEM 9: PREPAREDNESS TO PRACTISE RESEARCH REPORT

34. The Head of Professional Standards explained that Professor Della Freeth and colleagues from Queen Mary University of London had been appointed to undertake the Preparedness to Practise Research and the draft final report was emailed out to Education Committee members on 5 March 2012. The Chair read out the following statement that had been submitted by Dr Jane Fox ahead of the meeting "The summary is very clear with what seem appropriate recommendations I am truly sorry I cannot attend as it's obviously a key discussion".
35. The Head of Professional Standards then handed over to Professor Freeth to give a presentation on the findings from the report.
36. It was confirmed that several different groups had been consulted in the data collection process, namely:
- a. Osteopaths who first registered with the GOsC in 2009 or 2010, termed 'New Registrants';
 - b. More experienced osteopaths (first registered before 2008) working in the same practices as the New Registrants, termed 'Colleagues and Employers';
 - c. Final year osteopathy students (UK OEIs); and
 - d. Selected staff at Osteopathic Education Institutions (UK OEIs).

- e. Views from experienced osteopaths who had not worked with students graduating during 2009 and 2012 were also incorporated into the study.
37. The data was collected via:
- Online surveys;
 - Anonymous data from the register;
 - Focus groups with OEI faculty members, osteopathy students and a stakeholder panel;
 - Small numbers of additional face to face and telephone interviews in some categories.
38. The Head of Registration and MIS was thanked for this support in interrogating the data systems and sending out communications on behalf of the research team.
39. It was also confirmed that all the OEIs were represented in the data collection in some way through respondents, however it would have been preferable if they could have had a larger response from colleagues and employers to feed into the report.
40. The data collected was collated into five areas for consideration:
- clinical skills and knowledge;
 - interpersonal and communication skills;
 - entrepreneurial and business skills;
 - professionalism and, finally;
 - supporting osteopathy graduates' transitions into practice.
41. From analysing the data collected, there emerged three major cross-cutting themes which were developed through the report.
42. Recommendations from the Report were divided into three areas:
- GOsC: Supporting early CPD; drawing ideas from other professions; lone practitioners;
 - Practising Osteopaths: Mentorship and support;
 - OEIs: Future research; lone practitioners; interprofessional perspectives; leavers.
43. The presentation was well received and the Committee congratulated Professor Freeth on a thorough piece of work.
44. The Committee made the following comments:
- The meaning of the cross-cutting themes should be explained clearly to avoid misunderstandings;
 - The Committee noted that there were no 'Day 1' competences at present to put some of the findings into context;
 - It was suggested that emphasis on the nature of being a primary care or first contact practitioner;

- Equality of support for new graduates was important.

45. The Committee agreed that detailed comments on the document would be submitted via email to the Head of Professional Standards and sent back to Professor Freeth back.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the report subject to final approval of the Chair of the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Executive should consider fully the implications of the report in relation to current and planned policy work and to bring a further discussion back to the Committee about this in due course.

ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

46. The Head of Professional Standards reported that at the last meeting with the GOsC, the OEIs had requested a statement to confirm that 'osteopathic practice' for the purposes of CPD and Revalidation related to academic and research practice as well as clinical practice. The Committee agreed with this statement in principle and agreed that they would be content to agree a formal statement to this effect by email.

ITEM 11: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

47. The date for the next meeting is Wednesday 13 June 2012.