



## General Osteopathic Council

### Education and Registration Standards Committee

Minutes of the Education and Registration Standards Committee Part I held on  
19 September 2013

Unconfirmed

Chair: Professor Colin Coulson-Thomas

Present: Ms Geraldine Campbell  
Dr Jorge Esteves  
Dr Jane Fox  
Professor Bernadette Griffin  
Mr Robert McCoy  
Mr Brian McKenna  
Ms Alison J White

In attendance: Mr Tim Walker, Chief Executive and Registrar  
Ms Fiona Browne, Head of Professional Standards  
Mr Matthew Redford, Head of Finance and acting Head of  
Registration  
Mr Marcus Dye, Professional Standards Manager  
Ms Gina Baidoo, Senior Professional Standards Officer  
Ms Brigid Tucker, Head of Communications  
Mr David Gomez, Head of Regulation  
Ms Kellie Green, Regulation Manager

Observers: Mr Kenneth McLean

#### **Item 1: Welcome, apologies and interests**

1. Apologies were received from Liam Stapleton. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting with a special welcome to the new Head of Regulation David Gomez and Kenneth McLean.

#### **Item 2: Minutes and matters arising**

2. The Committee advised that the minutes from the 14 May 2013 needed to be changed to Part I of the 72<sup>nd</sup> statutory Education Committee. The minutes were duly agreed subject to this amendment.

### **Item 3: Chair's Report**

3. The Chair updated the Committee on his work with the GOsC since the last meeting in May and highlighted the following events:
  - On 17 May 2013 the Chair attended the *Reforming Professional Regulation* seminar at the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) with the Head of Professional Standards where Ron Patterson gave an update on international developments and his response to Francis Report.
  - On 25 June and 15 July 2013 the Chair served on the Effectiveness of Regulation Research recruitment panel alongside the Chief Executive and Registrar, Head of Professional Standards and Jorge Esteves.
  - On 9 July the Chair met with Adrian Barnes (European School of Osteopathy Principal) and the Head of Professional Standards to decide what matters needed to be discussed at the OEI meeting on 11 September 2013.
  - On 18 July 2013 the Chair attended the Continuing Fitness to Practice seminar organised by the GOsC.
  - On 10 September the Chair attended the GOsC Council Strategy away day.
4. The Committee enquired as to whether the transcript for the Reforming Professional Regulation seminar would be made available for everyone to see as it would be helpful if this was shared amongst others. The Head of Professional Standards agreed to share a note with the Committee
5. **Noted:** The Committee noted the Chair's report.

### **Item 4: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) – Evaluation of review visits**

6. The Professional Standards Manager introduced the item and gave an overview of the QAA review visits process explaining that evaluation was a key part of the regular review. The Professional Standards Manager highlighted the increased response rate of almost 100% return of respondents.
7. The Professional Standards Manager highlighted suggested changes to the process to take account of the feedback. Positive comments from the OEIs relating to the timing and duration of Visits, were also highlighted.
8. The Committee discussion included the following points:
  - The costs and benefits of reviewing qualifications collectively and separately.
  - Whether there was a need to independently evaluate the QAA review process to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. It was noted that efficiency and effectiveness would be tested, to an extent, through the tendering process which would take place within the next year or two.

- Whether there was a need to incorporate feedback from stakeholders other than schools, reviewers and Visitors.

9. **Noted:** The Committee noted the contents of the evaluation plan and the action plan.

10. **Agreed:** The Committee agreed the actions recommended by the QAA in relation to the evaluation report.

11. **Noted:** The Committee noted that teaching and clinic observation will be clarified in the review visitor training taking place in October 2013.

### **Item 5: Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education (GOPRE)**

12. The Head of Professional Standards introduced the item and advised the Committee that the guidance would be shared with the osteopathic educational institutions (OEIs) and GOPRE before going to the next GOsC Council Meeting in January.

13. The Committee considered the Guidance and the consultation strategy and were generally content making the following points in discussion:

- There was a sense, from some members, that there needed to be more information about 'osteopathy' in the document to illustrate what it was that made this guidance for osteopathic pre-registration education as opposed to any other form of health education. Perhaps 'osteopathic principles' needed to be clearer within the document. It was felt that this could be explored further in consultation. However, it was also felt that the document does situate osteopaths more clearly in the healthcare professional environment.
- The Guidance should include 'abnormal' as well as 'normal' function.
- The Guidance should strengthen research requirements so that they required a 'critical appraisal' of the research, professional knowledge and why it was important or not. Awareness of journals and other peer-reviewed resources and guidelines could also be highlighted here.
- Highlighting the need of risk assessment of themselves and others could strengthen the implicit suggestion in the document.
- The complaints section could deal with the need to anticipate complaints as well as dealing with them effectively.
- The role of other health professionals and the need for referral could be made more explicit.
- The timetable for implementation of the guidance had some errors with the dates. The Head of Professional Standards agreed to clarify these dates changing relevant dates from 2013 to 2014.

14. The Head of Professional Standards concluded the item by confirming that the Guidance was to support the delivery of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* (OPS) within the educational context. But that RQ conditions, for example, would always be framed with reference to the OPS. Council would be asked to agree to publish the Guidance for consultation in early 2014.
15. **Agreed:** The Committee agreed consultation strategy and timetable subject to the errors in dates being corrected.

### **Item 6: Temporary and Occasional Registration**

16. The acting Head of Registration introduced the item, stating that we currently have a very low number of temporary registration applicants and this may continue in the future. There are no set guidelines on our position regarding temporary registration, therefore there are no explicit criteria to assess applicants against. It was important to have a clear policy in place.
17. The Committee noted the requirements of the Directive and the assessment process that applies to all applicants to ensure that their experience and training is comparable to the standards expected in the UK. In discussion, the Committee discussed the following points:
  - The importance of making patient safety an explicit focus within the confines of the legislation.
  - The fact that applicants would need to remain under the jurisdiction of their home state in terms of CPD requirements etc.
  - Gaps in terms of insurance requirements for temporary registrants.
  - 'moved' to the UK should be changed to 'visited' the UK in paragraphs 12c and d.
18. The Committee felt that the wording in 12c and 12d should be changed from moved to the UK to visiting the UK to which the Head of Regulation responded to say that he would change this.
19. **Agreed:** The Committee agreed to recommend that Council approves the position statement set out at Annex A.
20. **Noted:** The Committee noted the internal factsheet to be used by the Registration team set out at Annex B subject to amendments to 12c and 12d

### **Item 7: Student Fitness to Practise**

21. The Head of Professional Standards introduced the item providing an overview of the paper and summarising the recommendations. It was noted that the detailed data from the professionalism studies had involved small numbers, that therefore, information should remain private at the present time until the conclusions were clearer. It was also considered that data from the annual

reports about student fitness to practice cases were in such small numbers and provided in confidence, that publication would not be appropriate at this stage, particularly if there was a chance that students may be identified from the information provided. Feedback from the osteopathic educational institutions about the guidance was also taken into account.

22. The Committee discussed the findings and agreed that, on the basis of the data currently available:
- Consistency in the reporting of student fitness to practise data in the annual reports is required to enable meaningful comparisons to be drawn.
  - More detailed implementation plans should be developed and monitored by GOsC and by OEIs to ensure both the teaching and learning of professional behaviours (including the duty of candour) and also the effective implementation of the student fitness to practise guidance.
  - Further guidance about boundaries may be helpful.
  - Further guidance about sanctions may be helpful.
23. **Noted:** The Committee noted the emerging evaluation findings about the Professionalism in Research project.
24. **Noted:** The Committee noted the emerging evaluation findings about the student fitness to practise guidance.
25. **Agreed:** The Committee agreed the details that should be reported about student fitness to practise cases in accordance with the current guidelines as outlined in paragraph 23 of the cover paper.

### **Item 8: Good Character Assessment Framework**

26. The Head of Regulation introduced the item and advised the Committee that the purpose of this paper is to identify and lay out exactly what good character means and the level that applicants to the GOsC register will need to adhere to.
27. The Committee questioned how issues around harassment would be dealt with and suggested that this could be made clearer in order to emphasise how seriously this would be taken.
28. The Committee felt that discrimination on page 4 of the annex should also include disability as one of the attributes. The Head of Regulation responded to say that this would be changed to include all 12 of the characteristics listed in the *Equality Act 2010*.
29. The Committee also felt that trafficking or manufacturing illegal drugs on page 4 of the annex should be changed to the misuse of drugs. The Head of the Regulation department responded to say that this would be changed to the misuse of drugs including medicines.

30. The Committee felt that document as a whole was very useful and transparent and would be particularly useful when making decisions on character.
31. The Chief Executive and Registrar concluded the item by stating that although this framework had been developed, decisions would still be made on a case by case basis as the overall decision to register would be dependent on many different factors – but that it was important to have a consistent approach in place.
32. **Considered:** The Committee considered and provided feedback about the Good Character Assessment Framework set out in the Annex.

### **Item 9: Professional Standards Authority Performance Review**

33. The Chief Executive and Registrar introduced the paper providing an overview of the Performance Review process. He corrected a small error on page 5 where a box had been left blank.
34. The Committee was very impressed with the document and the overall performance of the GOsC.
35. The Committee asked for more clarification on 8h of the document *the outcomes of work relating to illegal practice* and what this entailed. The Registrar responded stating that this is something the GOsC is working on currently by promoting registration and looking into people claiming to be osteopaths who are not registered.
36. **Noted: The Committee noted the content of the report.**

### **Item 10: Fitness to Practise Case Trends**

37. The Regulation Manager introduced the item and advised the Committee that as the data is taken from very small numbers caution should be applied to conclusions from the statistics.
38. The Committee wondered if the complaints listed were what the public complain about or terminology we use to judge against. The Regulation Manager confirmed that the terminology for the type of issue was developed through consultation.
39. The Committee felt that it may be useful if more information was provided about the factors leading patients to complain. Could this be highlighted in the future? The Committee also felt that the cases that had an outcome of no case to answer were potentially indicative of failure at a local level.
40. The Committee considered Chart 7 in Annex A and suggested that it would be clearer if the bar graph and table were separated.
41. The Chair wondered if the data was being used to look for trends? The Regulation Manager explained that information is used in articles and guidance

and that further consideration would be given to what the data is telling us as the numbers increased.

42. **Noted:** The Committee noted the content of the report.

**Item 11: Quality Assurance Review Update**

43. The Professional Standards Manager introduced the item and highlighted paragraph 7 of the document where the key themes identified have been outlined. The Professional Standards Manager also advised that the next steps would be to collate all the information and create a report for the next meeting.

44. The Chair felt that it may be useful if the comments from this paper could be fed into the report.

45. **Noted:** The Committee noted the progress of the quality assurance major review.

**Item 12: Registration Assessor recruitment, appraisal and training update**

46. The Professional Standards Manager introduced the item and advised that 11 new assessors had been appointed in addition to the existing 12 assessors.

47. The Committee members who were on the interview panel gave their observations stating that they felt there was a good range of candidates and further comments on the process had already been fed back to the Professional Standards Department. It was confirmed that in future roles, more detailed guidance to help candidates prepare for competency based interviews.

48. The Committee was reminded that a paper explaining the changes to the recruitment process was considered at its meeting in May. Although the person specification and selection criteria had not changed, the selection panel was strengthened to make the process more robust.

49. **Noted:** The Committee noted the progress made with registration assessor and reviewer recruitment, training and appraisal.

**Item 13: Any other business**

50. The Chair of the GOsC Council thanked Geraldine Campbell for her valuable input over the years as this would be her last meeting at the GOsC. The Committee congratulated Geraldine on her appointment as a lay member of the General Dental Council with effect from 1 October 2013.

**Date of the next meeting:** 27 February 2014.

*C. J. Coulson Thomas*  
27 / 2 / 2014

