



Policy Advisory Committee

13 October 2016

Registration update (including appraisal, training, recruitment and evaluation)

Classification	Public
Purpose	For noting
Issue	Update on training and appraisal, recruitment and evaluation and other mechanisms to ensure that we maintain and enhance the effectiveness of our registration processes.
Recommendation	To note the update on registration assessor appraisal, training and evaluation and the joint recruitment process for Education Visitors and Registration Assessors.
Financial and resourcing implications	The costs of activities related to appraisal, training, recruitment and evaluation outlined in this paper are incorporated within our registration and resources budget.
Equality and diversity implications	Equality and diversity training is an important aspect of our registration assessor and return to practice training.
Communications implications	None from this paper.
Annex	Registration Assessor Appraisals Analysis
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Background

1. We maintain the standards of entry to the register in different ways. For UK qualified graduates, we ensure the quality of their education and training through our process of quality assuring osteopathic educational institutions. We ensure that the curricula are mapped to the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*, and we test delivery of these curricula through the quality assurance mechanisms including periodic review, annual reporting and reporting on an as needed basis on any changes that may impact on the delivery of the standards. These qualifications are 'recognised qualifications' under s14 of the Osteopaths Act 1993. Using our quality assurance mechanisms, we ensure that qualifications awarded by these institutions certify that graduates are able to practise in accordance with the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*. Education Visitors provide reports to the statutory Education Committee which are relied upon in taking decisions about 'recognised qualifications'.
2. S3 of the Osteopaths Act 1993 and the General Osteopathic Council (Recognition of Qualifications) Rules Order of Council 2000 (as amended) provides that, for osteopaths who have obtained a qualification in osteopathy outside the United Kingdom who do not hold a recognised qualification (quality assured by us), they must satisfy the registrar that they meet our *Osteopathic Practice Standards* (there are some other matters to take into account for those with EU rights or qualifications recognised by other EU countries).
3. Therefore, internationally qualified applicants go through a different process to register with us as we not quality assure their qualification directly within an institution. The registration process for internationally qualified applicants comprises:
 - an assessment of the initial osteopathy qualification
 - completion of the further evidence of practise questionnaire (which assesses certain aspects of the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*)
 - completion of an assessment of clinical performance (which also assess certain aspects of the *Osteopath Practice Standards*)
 - For applicants with EU rights, there is a more streamlined assessment process which considers the applicant's qualification, work experience and life long learning to determine whether the applicant can be registered or whether they must undergo compensation measures before registration.
4. Our Business Plan 2016-17 provides that we will 'Continue to monitor and enhance the quality of osteopathic education by: ensuring appraisal and training of Education Visitors'. It also states that we will 'Ensure the quality of registration assessments, including the training and appraisal of GOsC registration assessors and return to practice reviewers, moderation meeting facilitation and regular communications and evaluation.' All these activities are essential to maintaining the quality of decisions at the point of entry to the register and therefore contribute to the integrity of the Register.

- This provides an update on our activities to ensure the quality of these decisions to provide assurance to the Committee that they can have confidence in our processes.

Discussion

Registration Assessments Statistics

- Since April 2016 a total of 26 assessments have been completed to date. The table below shows the breakdown according to assessment type.

Type of Assessment	Total
Return to Practice	6
Non UK Qualification	8
Further Evidence of Practice Questionnaire	9
ACP (Pass)	2
ACP (Fail)	1
<i>Scheduled ACP (Pending)</i>	<i>3</i>

Communication and Feedback with Registration Assessors

- In August 2016 the GOsC undertook a thematic analysis of the current registration assessors' appraisals (see Annex A). In summary, registration assessors reported at their appraisals that they would like to receive training in the future around two broad themes: legislation and best practice initiatives. Registration assessors reported a number of key areas that would benefit from review in order to make their job as assessors more effective. Engagement and networking opportunities were equally seen as important by the registration assessors with some suggestions being made around methods of engagement with each other which will be explored moving forward.
- Many of the current registration assessors reported at their appraisals that they would like to see improvements in the future around key registration assessment processes. In the table below we have outlined how we have acted on some of those suggestions.

Registration Assessors told us...	We have...
It was often hard to navigate candidates' applications and locate where the evidence was provided	Introduced new templates and forms, which include a revised mapping document in line with the <i>Osteopathic Practice Standards</i> . There is space to indicate where evidence is located across an application; this should aid collaboration between assessor teams and make the assessment process more transparent. We will collect feedback about the changes from you.
Submissions by applicants were frequently incomplete when you received them.	Constructed a checklist of supporting documentation for the candidate. This checklist is now sent to all candidates.
There was a lack of detail from candidates and/or educational institutions about what was covered in each study module or course handbook.	Designed a sample module guide, which is now sent to candidates who ask questions about this assessment component.
Return to Practice forms were often hard to read as they were handwritten.	Started to develop Return to Practice forms that the candidate can type in. In the near future, we will request that all Return to Practice forms are submitted in a word-processed format.
The hours attributed by the GOsC to assessing FEPQs should be reviewed, as the current fee is insufficient for the work required.	Designed a survey to collect data monitoring the time taken to complete assessments.
Quality screening of documentation was inconsistent.	This is now being more closely monitored.

9. The GOsC has now introduced a registration assessor feedback and evaluation form where assessors can input their feedback after each registration assessment that they undertake for us. This will help us to monitor and evaluate the assessment process throughout the year and encourage everyone to reflect on the process as a whole. We are gathering feedback about the assessment process – what went well, what could be improved and the length of time to undertake it as well as views about fitness for purpose to inform evaluation and the future registration review. The survey is at: bit.ly/gosc-assessor-feedback-201617.

10. In September 2016 the GOsC introduced a quarterly registration assessor newsletter to communicate some of these issues to the assessment team
11. The GOsC are currently in a process of categorizing completed registration assessments to develop a "case bank" resource of best practice examples.

Recruitment

12. We are currently advertising for six osteopaths to take on the dual roles of education visitor and registration assessor. An analysis of the roles suggested that they were very similar, and by bringing the pools closer together, we hope to enhance communications and community and learning across both roles. The closing date for applications was Friday 23 September 2016, with interviews to take place on Tuesday 8 and Wednesday 9 November 2016. The QAA and GOsC will provide training for education visitors in March 2017.

Training

13. Current registration assessors have expressed an interest in further training around the new EU directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, in terms of interpreting its "substantial difference" criterion and sharing learning with other regulators about the directive's introduction. There is also enthusiasm for exploring and discussing shared expectations of standards and "standard-setting" more generally, to establish a "gold standard," and for reflecting collectively on lessons to be learnt from individual assessments. This training will take place on one of the following dates: 24 January, 16 February, or 30 March 2017 with external speakers from HCPC, College of Optometrists and the BSO.

Recommendation: to note the update on registration assessor appraisal, training and evaluation and the joint recruitment process for Education Visitors and Registration Assessors.

Registration Assessor Appraisals Analysis

1. Training and Areas of Development

Registration assessors reported at their appraisals that they would like to receive training in the future around two broad themes:

(i) Legislation

- *New EU directive* in terms of “substantial difference” criteria and its interpretation and sharing learning with other UK health regulators in interpreting and introducing this directive.
- Standard-setting more generally in terms of establishing a “gold standard”
- Further exploration and clarity regarding clinical responsibility/ legal liability during ACP assessments.
- Ways in which to verify applicant claims if no third-party evidence of clinical competencies is provided by candidates.
- Further development of process guidelines relating to issues of consent and CPD for international candidates from ROW applicants (e.g. Australian applicants FastTrack option needs exploring).

(ii) Best Practice Initiatives

- Collective work on “reflection” in terms of lessons learnt from individual assessments and assessor teams.
- Further training for assessors to help ensure greater consistency (in terms of the nature of evidence).
- Opportunity to explore and discuss shared expectations of standards.
- Case examples of best practice versus poor registration application examples.
- Feedback from Return to Practice and ACPs in terms of issues and trends.
- Training on in-house style in writing assessment reports, along the lines of the QAA guidance for reviewers
- Exploration of document reading and information analysis strategies
- Focused exploration of different international models and principles for assessments as a basis for the identification of best practice and use within UK processes and standards.

2. Areas for Review

Registration assessors reported a number of key areas that would benefit from review in order to make their job as assessors more effective.

- Review the extent and quality of the overt evidence needed to make judgements concerning each area within the evaluation/assessment forms
- Review the avoidance of patients with no prior osteopathic treatment experience within ACP assessment situations.
- Some concern was expressed around the pre-assessment notifications from FEPQ assessors concerning “areas of candidates potential weakness” being highlighted to ACP assessors in that this could negatively impact upon the assessment process and subsequent judgements by ACP assessors.

- Review and seek to streamline the recording process associated with ACPs (both during and after moderation) as it is felt to be too time-consuming.
- Review the recognitions given to the time/workload required to complete and subsequently moderate a portfolio, particularly for FEPQ assessment it was felt that currently this is insufficient.
- Consider strengthening guidelines for Non-UK candidates regarding the UK requirements/arrangements for consent, this could be supported by some orientation opportunity to the UK culture/practice in relation to consent e.g. observation, videos opportunities
- Review requirements regarding case history forms used.
- Review the overall assessor strategy to ensure assessors have sufficient engagement in the year to maintain knowledge and skills assessment.

3. Methods of engagement with each other

Engagement and networking opportunities were equally seen as important by the registration assessors, with the following suggestions being made moving forward:

- Establishment of a forum for portfolio assessors to meet and discuss issues which provide a focus upon the sharing of best practice and consideration of methods used by assessors. Simultaneously, this would also allow assessors the opportunity to keep abreast of developments and issues relating to the whole registration process, legislative and procedural changes, roles and responsibilities and serve to support future guidance and exemplars of best practice.
- Provision of guest blog on GOsC website for members of the assessment team
- The posting of issues that GOsC are facing concerning the overseas registration perspective.
- Introducing a post assessment team discussion with other assessors and moderators involved in ACP.