



Policy and Education Committee

6 June 2024

The British College of Naturopathy and Osteopathy (BCNO) Group – Recognition of Qualification (RQ) Specification (reserved)

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	Approval of the Review Specification for the renewal of the Recognised Qualification (RQ) review at the BCNO Group
Recommendation	1. To agree the updated draft review specification for the BCNO Group RQ Review.
Financial and resourcing implications	The costs of the review will be budgeted for within the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial year. It has been added to our current contract with Mott MacDonald at a cost of c£22,083.93 to enable it to take place in 2025.
Equality and diversity implications	Equality and diversity issues are explored as part of the RQ renewal process and are explicitly referenced as part of the Graduate Outcomes and Standards for Education and Training (2022) and in the review criteria set out in the Mott MacDonald Interim Quality Assurance Handbook .
Communications implications	The review specification is shared with the BCNO Group, Mott MacDonald and will be shared with the Visiting Team when they are appointed, and it is publicly available.
Annex	Draft review specification for the BCNO Group Renewal of Recognition review.
Author	Banye Kanon

Key Points

- This paper asks the Committee to approve the updated review specification for the next BCNO RQ visit which will take place during the 24/25 academic year previously agreed in March 2024. Additions are set out at paragraphs
- The specification has been updated to include an application for a new course.
- Visitors will be appointed in due course.

Background

1. The BCNO Group currently provides the following qualifications which are approved with an expiry date of 31 August 2026.
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathy (modified attendance)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathic Medicine
 - Master of Osteopathy and BSc (Hons) Osteopathy, (validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) awarded by the ESO)
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost) and Bachelors in Osteopathic Medicine (B.OstMed), (validated by University of Plymouth (UoP) awarded by BCOM)
2. Before the review is scheduled, the Committee will be asked to approve a team of appropriately qualified Visitors under s12 of the Osteopaths Act 1993, taking into account the review specification at the Annex.
3. This paper asks the Committee to agree the updated review specification following receipt of an application for a new course qualification.

Discussion

4. In addition to a renewal of recognition of its current courses, BCNO has submitted an initial recognition form for a new BSc (Hons) Osteopathic Medicine (full time three year course). It is proposed that the course will be validated by the University of Plymouth on 18 June 2024 and it is planned to admit students from September 2025. A copy of the Declaration of Intent and Application for Initial Recognition of Recognition of Qualification signed by the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive is available on request from Banye Kanon (bkanon@osteopathy.org.uk).
5. The commitments on the Declaration of Intent and application form includes the following:
 - Submission of key documents including curriculum map, accounts, strategic plans, external reports, validation documents, arrangements for appointing external examiners, course handbooks, staff CVs.

- Clinical experience is outlined including the diversity and sufficiency of patient numbers in an established student clinic, the expected clinical experience to be achieved by each student.
- The new RQ will be delivered within an already established environment with RQs. The new RQ will be reviewed alongside the renewal of the existing courses to ensure sufficiency of resources, experience etc across all provision.

Review specification

6. Mott MacDonald will conduct the review on behalf of the GOsC, based on the review specification. An updated draft review specification is presented at the Annex for the Committee to approve. In light of the new course, paragraphs 5 to 10 have been inserted to provide further guidance about this in the context of the renewal of qualifications highlighting the specific standards that may be relevant to consider in relation to the planned new course.

Timing of the visit

7. The timing is yet to be determined in discussion with the BCNO Group, but will be scheduled to take part within the 2024-2025 academic year, and within the timing of the Mott MacDonald contract.
8. The review specification may be subject to change due to changing circumstances prior to the review. Any substantive changes to the specification will be notified to the Committee for agreement.

Recommendations:

1. To agree the draft review specification for the BCNO Group RQ Review.

Draft Review Specification for BCNO Group - Renewal of Recognised Qualification Review.

Background

1. The BCNO Group currently provides the following qualifications which are due to expire on 31 August 2026:
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathy (modified attendance)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathic Medicine
 - Master of Osteopathy and BSc (Hons) Osteopathy, (validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) awarded by the ESO)
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost) and Bachelors in Osteopathic Medicine (B.OstMed), (validated by University of Plymouth (UoP) awarded by BCOM)

Review Specification

2. The GOsC requests that Mott MacDonald schedules a renewal of recognition review for Visitors to report on the following qualifications:
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathy (modified attendance)
 - BSc (Hons) Osteopathic Medicine
 - Master of Osteopathy and BSc (Hons) Osteopathy, (validated by Buckinghamshire New University (BNU) awarded by the ESO)
 - Masters in Osteopathy (M.Ost) and Bachelors in Osteopathic Medicine (B.OstMed), (validated by University of Plymouth (UoP) awarded by BCOM)
3. The aim of the GOsC Quality Assurance process is to:
 - Put patient safety and public protection at the heart of all activities
 - Ensure that graduates meet the standards outlined in the Osteopathic Practice Standards
 - Make sure graduates meet the outcomes of the Guidance for Osteopathic Pre-registration Education.
 - Identify good practice and innovation to improve the student and patient experience
 - Identify concerns at an early stage and help to resolve them effectively without compromising patient safety or having a detrimental effect on student education
 - Identify areas for development or any specific conditions to be imposed upon the course providers to ensure standards continue to be met
 - Promote equality and diversity in osteopathic education.
4. The format of the review will be based on the [interim Mott MacDonald Handbook \(2020\)](#) and the [Graduate Outcomes and Standards for Education and Training \(2023\)](#). In addition to the usual review format for a renewal of recognition

review, the Committee would like to ensure that the following areas are explored (account for new RQ):

- The teach-out arrangement at the Kent campus, where the undergraduate course is no longer recruiting, including the impact on students, staff and patients, and actions put in place to mitigate these.
 - How feedback from staff is gained to ensure that that staff needs are addressed appropriately.
 - How shared decision making with patients is embedded within the teaching clinics.
 - How the safeguarding policy is implemented and how patients are made aware of this.
 - How feedback on students from staff is managed centrally to ensure actions are being addressed and resolved, to support their development as learners and professionals.
 - How the outputs from student feedback mechanisms are cohesively reviewed to ensure actions are effectively identified, monitored and implemented.
 - How data monitoring practices of student experience within the clinic is being fed back to relevant individuals for action, for example, to the marketing team to undertake targeted advertising for certain patient presentations.
 - The processes by which the College reflects on student complaints to identify any required actions to ensure there is an effective process in place for responding to and learning from student complaints.
5. In addition, BCNO has submitted an new Recognised Qualification application for the following course for Visitors to report on in addition of the qualifications listed above.:
- BSc (Hons) Osteopathic Medicine (3 year full time)
6. This programme is to be validated by the University of Plymouth in June 2024. It is intended that students will commencing this course from September 2025 with the first cohort graduating in 2028. The new course will be delivered alongside the courses above. The first year cohort is expected to be 30 students with the second year cohort expected to be 45 students. A copy of the Recognised Qualification (RQ) Initial Recognition Declaration of Intent and RQ Initial Recognition Application Questionnaire is attached for information along with supporting documentation outlined.
7. As a result of this application, the GOsC requests that Mott MacDonald includes this initial recognition review as part of the existing renewal of recognition

review.

8. For the new RQ Visitors are also requested to particularly explore the following in relation to the planned new qualification. It will be important to have assurance that the planned curriculum meets the Graduate Outcomes and that intended delivery of the curriculum will evidence the appropriate quality and quantity of clinical experience as outlined in the Graduate Outcomes at paragraphs 22 to 28 and that there are sufficient resources to do this alongside the current qualifications delivered.
9. The following Standards for Education and Training are highlighted as particularly important to review in terms of the new curriculum and plans for delivery to meet the Graduate Outcomes in an existing course provider but these are not inclusive and should be considered in the context of all the Standards for Education and Training and the whole provision:
 - a. Programme design, delivery and assessment
 - All staff involved in the design and delivery of programmes are trained in all policies of the educational provider (including policies to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion and are supportive, accessible and able to fulfil their roles effectively)
 - Curricula and assessments are developed and evaluated by appropriately experienced and qualified educators and practitioners
 - They involve the participation of students, patients, and where possible and appropriate, the wider public in the design and development of programmes, and ensure that feedback from these groups is regularly taken into account and acted upon.
 - The programme designed and planned for delivery reflects the skills, knowledge base, attitudes and values, set out in the Graduate Outcomes (including all outcomes including effectiveness in teaching students about health inequalities and the non-biased treatment of diverse patients)
 - Assessment methods are reliable and valid and provide a fair measure of students' achievement and progression for the relevant part of the programme.
 - Subject areas will be delivered by educators with relevant and appropriate knowledge and expertise
 - b. Programme governance, leadership and management
 - They implement effective governance mechanisms that ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory and educational requirements....

This should include effective risk management and governance andgovernance over the design, delivery and award of qualifications.

- Systems will be in place to provide assurance with supporting evidence that students have fully demonstrated learning outcomes.
- c. Learning culture
- Students are supported to develop as learners and professionals during their education
 - External expertise is used within the quality review of osteopathic pre-registration programmes
- d. Quality evaluation, review and assurance
- effective mechanisms are in place for the monitoring and review of the programme, to include information regarding student performance and progression (and information about protected characteristics), as part of a cycle of quality review.
 - external expertise is used within the quality review of osteopathic pre-registration programmes
- e. Resources
- they provide adequate, accessible and sufficient resources across all aspects of the programme, including clinical provision, to ensure that all learning outcomes are delivered effectively and efficiently.
 - the staff-student ratio is sufficient to provide education and training that is safe, accessible and of the appropriate quality within the acquisition of practical osteopathic skills, and in the teaching clinic and other interactions with patients.
- f. Students
- are provided with clear and accurate information regarding the curriculum, approaches to teaching, learning and assessment and the policies and processes relevant to their programme.
- g. Clinical experience
- clinical experience is provided through a variety of mechanisms to ensure that students are able to meet the clinical outcomes set out in the Graduate Outcomes for Osteopathic Pre-Registration Education.
 - there are effective means of ensuring that students gain sufficient access to the clinical experience required to develop and integrate their knowledge and skills, and meet the programme outcomes, in order to sufficiently be able to deliver the Osteopathic Practice Standards
- h. Staff support and development
- there are sufficient numbers of experienced educators with the capacity to teach, assess and support the delivery of the Recognised Qualification. Those teaching practical osteopathic skills and theory,

or acting as clinical or practice educators, must be registered with the General Osteopathic Council, or with another UK statutory health care regulator if appropriate to the provision of diverse education opportunities.

i. Patients

- patient safety within their teaching clinics, remote clinics, simulated clinics and other interactions is paramount, and that care of patients and the supervision of this, is of an appropriate standard and based on effective shared decision making.
- the staff student ratio is sufficient to provide safe and accessible education of an appropriate quality.

10. Visitors should consider the stage of development of the course in making their recommendations and should consider if further inspection should be recommended prior to the first cohort of students graduating in the context of this established provider.

Provisional Timetable

11. The provisional timetable for the review will be as follows, but is subject to review in discussion with the BCNO Group, Mott and the Visiting Team:

RQ visit in TBC 2025

Month/Year	Action/Decision
March/June 2024	Committee agreement of initial review specification and statutory appointment of visitors
10 weeks before the visit c November / December 2024	Submission of mapping document
c. February 2025	Review takes place
5 weeks following visit c. March 2025	Draft Report to BCNO for comments - statutory period.
April / May 2025	Comments returned and final report agreed.
May 2025	Preparation of Action Plan to meet proposed conditions (if any)
June 2025	Recommendation from the Committee to Council whether to make changes to the RQ programme approval (e.g., conditions or addition of an expiry date)

Annex to 9

July 2025	Recognition of Qualification ongoing by the General Osteopathic Council
September 2025	Privy Council Approval

This timetable will be the subject of negotiation with BCNO Group, GOsC and Mott MacDonald to ensure mutually convenient times that fit well with the quality assurance cycle.