



Policy and Education Committee

7 March 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 draft review specification for the BCNO Group RQ Review.
Financial and resourcing implications	The costs of the review will be budgeted for within the 2022-23 financial year are incorporated in our current contract with Mott MacDonald at a cost of c£15,000.
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 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.
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Key Points

- This paper asks the Committee to approve the review specification for the next BCNO RQ visit which will take place during the 24/25 academic year.
- The specification includes aspects outlined from the most recent Annual Report Analysis on the private agenda.
- 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. The last RQ visit took place in January 2022 and the Policy and Education Committee agreed to recommend renewal of the RQ with specific conditions at its meeting in April 2022 from 01 September 2021 to 31 August 2026. This recommendation was agreed by Council at its meeting in May 2022 and the qualifications listed (above) received Privy Council approval on 11 August 2022.
3. 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.
4. This paper asks the Committee to agree the review specification.

Discussion

Review specification

5. Mott MacDonald will conduct the review on behalf of the GOsC, based on the review specification. A draft review specification is presented at the Annex for the Committee to approve.

Timing of the visit

6. The timing is yet to be determined in discussion with the BCNO Group, but will be scheduled to take part within the 2014-2025 academic year, and within the timing of the Mott MacDonald contract.
7. 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 monitoring 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:

- 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.

Provisional Timetable

5. 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.

Annex to 8

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)
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.