

Education and Registration Standards Committee

14 May 2013

Period of Adaptation Guidance

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	The development of Guidance about Periods of Adaptation
Recommendation	To agree to consult on Guidance about Periods of Adaptation.
Financial and resourcing implications	The costs of this work are incorporated into the current budget and mainly comprise staff time.
Equality and diversity implications	Compliance with legislation requires mutual recognition of qualifications in certain circumstances. Further detail about this is outlined in this paper and in the guidance attached at the Annex.
Communications implications	Public consultation will take place. We will target osteopathic patients, other regulators and osteopathic educational institutions for responses.
Annex	Draft Guidance about Periods of Adaptation
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Background

1. In order to be registered with us, applicants must demonstrate to us that they hold a recognised qualification or should be treated as holding a recognised qualification, that is, that they meet the *Osteopathic Practice Standards* which are our core standards for registration.
 - UK qualified applicants demonstrate this by obtaining a 'recognised qualification' from an educational institution which has been quality assured by the GOsC.
 - Internationally qualified applicants must go through a process to satisfy the registrar that they have reached the required standard of proficiency (ie our *Osteopathic Practice Standards*) and therefore should be treated as holding a 'recognised qualification' (See The General Osteopathic Council (Recognition of Qualifications) Rules Order of Council 2000 as amended). This then entitles the applicant be registered subject to satisfying health and character requirements and some other matters.
2. For internationally qualified applicants in general, we have a three stage approach to assessment to allow them to demonstrate to the registrar that they should be treated as holding a 'recognised qualification' because they satisfy the registrar that they have met the required standard of proficiency (the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*). This process is broadly:
 - An assessment of the equivalence of a qualification
 - Provision of additional written evidence about practice
 - An assessment of clinical performance (an observed assessment on real patients conducted in English) – Test of competence / Aptitude test
3. Our approach to assessing EU applicants for registration is, governed by EU Directive 2005/36 as implemented by the European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2007, and also The European Qualifications (Health and Social Care Professions) Regulations 2007 which amended the Osteopaths Act and various rules underneath it.
4. For EEA and Swiss qualified applicants or those claiming mutual recognition rights as set out in the regulations (applicants with EU rights), the degree to which we use the process, outlined in paragraph 2, will vary depending on the applicants qualification, their experience and the state of regulation in the country of qualification. Osteopathy is not regulated in all European States.
5. It may not be deemed necessary for an applicant to undertake all of the stages outlined above should they be able to demonstrate that they meet the required standard of proficiency (the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*) at an earlier stage
6. Applicants with EU rights are also entitled to undertake a period of adaptation under the Directive should they choose to do so instead of the aptitude test.
7. In making a decision about whether an applicant has demonstrated that they meet the standard of proficiency (the *Osteopathic Practice Standards*), the

registrar should also take into account, in certain circumstances, that a person is regulated in another European State.

8. Legislation requires us to set out detailed rules about the adaptation period and its assessment having regard to the circumstances of each applicant and the fact that he is a qualified professional.
9. This paper outlines the approach that we are proposing to take in defining how adaptation periods work in osteopathy.
10. The approach is being discussed with the Osteopathic Educational Institutions at the GOsC / OEI meeting on 7 May 2013 and we will feed in the content of those discussions to inform the thinking of the Committee at its meeting on 14 May 2013.

Discussion

11. Given that we have a very low number of applicants with EU rights in any year our practical experience of these matters is limited. However, it has become clear that Guidance about the mechanisms of Periods of Adaptation in osteopathy is necessary.
12. In developing the guidance attached, we have borrowed heavily from, and acknowledge the assistance of, the HCPC Period of Adaptation Guidance. We have adapted this guidance to the osteopathic context whilst ensuring that the relevant legislation is complied with. However, any areas of error, remain ours. Ahead of consultation, we will also ensure that our Guidance is legally checked to ensure that our obligations are fulfilled effectively.
13. The draft Guidance for Periods of Adaptation is designed for both applicants and also Osteopathic Educational Institutions and is attached at Annex A. It is set out as follows:
 - Background – an outline of the whole registration process for any applicant who does not have a 'Recognised Qualification' from an Osteopathic Educational Institution.
 - Mutual recognition rights – an outline of who is entitled to claim mutual recognition rights and have their registration application processed as an EU application.
 - The registration process for applicants who demonstrate mutual recognition rights.
 - What is a period of adaptation – an explanation of what a period of adaptation is.
 - How a period of adaptation is organised.
 - Guidance for Osteopathic Educational Institutions about what a period of adaptation is and how it might be managed.
 - Confirming completion of a period of adaptation – the process to be completed by the Osteopathic Educational Institution.

14. It is envisaged that consultation will take place over the remaining Spring and Summer period with a view to the guidance being finalised in Autumn 2013.

Recommendation: To agree to consult on Guidance about Periods of Adaptation.