



General  
Osteopathic  
Council



**QAA**

# **General Osteopathic Council review of osteopathic courses and course providers**

**Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost)  
BSc (Hons) Osteopathy**

**Renewal of recognition review  
The European School of Osteopathy**

**November 2013**

## Foreword

Under the *Osteopaths Act 1993* the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) is the statutory regulatory body for osteopaths and osteopathic education providers. The GOsC advises the Privy Council on which programmes of osteopathic education merit Recognised Qualification (RQ) status. The Privy Council grants RQ status to programmes where the governance and management of the course provider and the standards and quality of the programme meet the requirements laid down by the GOsC. In particular, students must meet the practice requirements of GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards.

Decisions concerning the granting, maintenance and renewal of RQ status are made by the Privy Council following reviews of osteopathic courses and course providers. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) manages certain aspects of these reviews on behalf of GOsC. The role of QAA, by its conduct throughout the UK of reviews of higher education provision and providers, is to maintain public assurance that the standards and quality of higher education are being safeguarded and enhanced. In developing its methods for reviewing higher education provision, QAA has published the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) and associated materials designed to provide a background against which scrutiny can take place.

## GOsC review

GOsC review is a peer-review process. It starts when institutions evaluate their provision in a self-evaluation document. This document is submitted to QAA for use by a team of review 'visitors' who gather evidence to enable them to report their judgements on governance and management, the clinical and academic standards, and the quality of learning opportunities. Review activities include meeting staff and students, observing teaching and learning, scrutinising students' assessed work, reading relevant documents, and examining learning resources. Full details of the process of GOsC review can be found in the *GOsC review of osteopathic courses and course providers: Handbook for course providers*, QAA 2011.

GOsC review may take one of three forms:

- review for the purpose of granting initial RQ status
- review for the purpose of renewal of RQ status
- review for the purpose of monitoring the operation of governance, management, standards and quality. Such 'monitoring review' normally explores the content of an annual report on provision, the fulfilment of conditions attached by the Privy Council to RQ status, or some important development in the provider or the osteopathic programme.

In initial recognition review, in renewal review, and in some instances of monitoring review, visitors make one of the following recommendations to GOsC:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>approval without conditions</b></li><li>• <b>approval with conditions</b></li><li>• <b>approval denied.</b></li></ul> |
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The recommendation made is that of the review visitors to the GOsC. In making its own recommendation to the Privy Council the GOsC may choose not to follow the recommendation of the visitors.

In some monitoring reviews the GOsC does not require the visitors to make a formal recommendation for the programme.

## Introduction

This report presents the findings of a renewal of recognition review of aspects of the governance and management, the academic standards achieved, and the quality of the learning opportunities provided in osteopathy at the European School of Osteopathy (the School). The programmes reviewed were the Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost), incorporating the BSc (Hons) Osteopathy. The review was undertaken by visitors appointed by the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) in accordance with GOsC's regulatory responsibilities for safeguarding Recognised Qualification (RQ) criteria under the *Osteopaths Act 1993*. A prime focus of the review was the relationship of the programmes to the Osteopathic Practice Standards professional competence standard of the GOsC. The review was completed in the academic year 2013-14. The review visitors were Mr Seth Crofts, Mr Manoj Mehta, Ms Rachel Ives, and Mr Michael Ridout (Review Coordinator).

## A Formal recommendation

The recommendation given below is the recommendation of the review visitors to the GOsC. In making its own recommendation to the Privy Council the GOsC may choose not to follow the recommendation of the visitors.

The recommendation of the visitors for the BSc (Hons) and M.Ost programmes is:

- **approval with conditions**

In the case of 'approval with conditions' the conditions are:

- collate information relating to modules, intended learning outcomes, and schemes of work and assessment into a format that is accessible to students together with completing the mapping of all module intended learning outcomes and grading criteria presented in the Examiner Handbook to Osteopathic Practice Standards by September 2014 (paragraphs 9 and 10)
- develop strategies and approaches for the improved utilisation of teaching assistants in practical teaching sessions by July 2014 (paragraphs 29, 30 and 38).

## B Findings

The following is a summary of the visitors' main conclusions:

### Strengths

- the grading descriptors used for measuring different categories and level of achievement (paragraph 17)
- the introduction of the Learning Journal (paragraphs 22 and 25)
- the comprehensive and effective review of progression statistics and achievements (paragraph 24)
- the level of support provided to staff to undertake the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Higher Education and higher study (paragraph 33)
- the approachable and supportive staff and the School's 'open door' policy (paragraph 37)
- the provision of audio-visual equipment and wireless access across both sites (paragraph 39)
- the highly effective financial planning and budgetary controls (paragraph 46)

- the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees and Senior Management Team (paragraphs 46, 47 and 48)
- the effective use of external examiners to support the achievement of academic standards (paragraph 53).

## **Good practice**

- the enhanced clinic induction for students undertaken during the summer (paragraph 11)
- the development of the Practitionership course, across all years of the programme (paragraphs 12 and 25).

## **Areas for development**

- clearly communicate programme themes in the School's documents (paragraph 11)
- complete the project to reduce the summative assessment load for students (paragraph 13)
- continue the development of formative assessment across all modules of the programme (paragraph 15)
- investigate the use of online plagiarism detection software to support students in their academic writing (paragraph 16)
- ensure consistency in the moderation and computation of the final mark awarded to dissertations (paragraph 20)
- establish processes to monitor and ensure the timely return of coursework (paragraphs 21 and 31)
- promote the distribution of teaching plans prior to the relevant class (paragraph 27)
- take steps to ensure that all staff engage with the virtual learning environment to meet student expectations (paragraph 28)
- strengthen the links between the theory/practical teaching and clinical teaching to improve the students' learning experience (paragraph 32)
- strengthen the systems for measuring and managing the performance of staff (paragraphs 38 and 55)
- embed further the Quality Code into the academic management systems at the School (paragraph 49)
- enhance and develop the level of partnership and communication with the student body and improve the effectiveness of obtaining and responding to the student voice (paragraph 50).

## **C Description of the review method**

The following section gives a general description of the GOsC review method. The full method is given in the *Handbook for course providers*.

The GOsC review method combines off-site consideration of written evidence by the visitors with at least one visit of two days to the provider. For recognition and renewal review, the review period is typically of six weeks.

The visitors are selective in their lines of enquiry and focus on their need to arrive at findings and a recommendation against clearly stated criteria. They refine emerging views on the provision against as wide a range of evidence as possible. For example, the perceptions expressed in meetings by students or by staff are tested against other sources of evidence. Documentary evidence typically used includes financial accounts, strategic plans, financial projections, insurance schedules, student work, clinic management records, internal reports

from committees, boards and individual staff with relevant responsibilities, and external reports from examiners, verifiers, employers, and validating and accrediting bodies. A protocol exists for staff, students and patients to submit unsolicited information about the provision to the review team. Submissions can remain anonymous to the provider if preferred. The School publicised the protocol appropriately and one piece of unsolicited information was received. A response was prepared by the School. This information was considered by the review team during the visit.

Meetings with students are strictly confidential between the students attending and the visitors; no comments are attributed to individuals. Teaching and learning observation is governed by a written protocol.

Visitors respect the principle of proportionality in their enquiries and emerging conclusions. Key features of GOsC review include:

- an emphasis on the professional competencies expected of osteopaths and expressed in GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards
- peer review: review teams include currently registered osteopaths and frequently at least one lay visitor with higher education interests
- a focus on the students' learning experience, frequently to include the observation by visitors of clinical and non-clinical teaching
- flexibility of process to minimise disruption to the provider; there is negotiation between QAA and the provider about the timings of the review and the nature of evidence to be shown
- a process conducted in an atmosphere of mutual trust; the visitors do not normally expect to find areas for improvement that the provider has not identified in its own self-evaluation document (SED)
- an emphasis on governance and management, to include the maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality
- use of the SED as the key document: this should have a reflective and evaluative focus
- an onus on the provider to supply all relevant information: any material identified in the SED should be readily available to visitors
- a protocol for unsolicited information
- evidence-based judgements
- ensuring that the amount of time taken to conduct a review is the minimum necessary to enable visitors to reach robust findings and recommendations
- providing transparency of process through the use of published GOsC criteria
- the role of the Institutional Contact, a member of the provider's staff, to assist effective communication between the visitors and the provider
- the facility to engage a further specialist adviser where necessary
- close monitoring by QAA officers.

## D The overall aims of the provider

1 The School was founded in 1951 and originally operated in Paris. In 1965 it relocated to the UK, first to London and then, from 1971, to Kent. The franchise agreement with the College International d'Osteopathie was phased out in 2007. The School's main site, used for administration and teaching, is located at Boxley, near Maidstone, Kent. Its teaching clinic is some four miles away in Tonbridge Road, Maidstone. At the time of the review there were 240 students enrolled on the M.Ost programme which is studied full-time and is of four years' duration. Students enrolled on years 1, 2 and 3 of the programme are following the revised curriculum validated by the University of Greenwich in January 2011. Students in year four are following the programme predating the newly validated scheme.

2 The School has 84 teaching staff, of which three (four per cent) are full-time and 81 (96 per cent) are part-time. Of the part-time staff, 23 are lecturers and 30 are classroom assistants.

3 The School's mission statement states that:

The European School of Osteopathy is dedicated to the provision of the highest quality in:

- osteopathic under and postgraduate education
- clinical care to the community
- osteopathic research.

The School is committed to:

- concern for the individual
- respect for the origins and philosophy of osteopathy
- the need to embrace the wider community of Europe and the world.

The School motto is: Tradition with Vision in Osteopathy.

4 The aims of the M.Ost are, as stated in the SED:

The Integrated Master's Degree in Osteopathy, and the main fall-back award, the BSc (Hons) Degree in Osteopathy, aim to fulfil Osteopathic Practice Standards and comply with the Benchmark Statement. In satisfying these two standards, the School is concerned that both degrees maintain an osteopathic breadth, combining traditional philosophies with current research and models of practice.

With this in mind the educational aims of the two programmes may be summarised as follows:

- provide the student with knowledge, skills and clinical-training reflective of advancing healthcare standards in osteopathy
- develop the student's competence in applying clinical skills to osteopathic practice
- develop the reflective, critical and analytical powers of the student allowing them to deal in a self-directed manner with complex issues, making sound judgements in the absence of complete data, dealing with the unpredictable
- develop general problem-solving and research skills
- provide the students with the skills to respond positively to change
- enhance interpersonal skills, enabling clear communication with all audience levels
- develop the skills for autonomous practice and team-working

- develop the skills to advance knowledge and understanding by independent life-long learning.

5 All students enrol on the Integrated Master's Degree in Osteopathy. The award of the BSc (Hons) Degree in Osteopathy is made where a student fails the level 7 Research Dissertation, but passes all the other elements of the master's programme and submits a modified dissertation at level 6.

## **E Commentary on the provision**

### **An evaluation of the clinical and academic standards achieved**

#### **Course aims and outcomes (including students' fitness to practise)**

6 Programme aims and intended outcomes are appropriately articulated. The programme specification outlines the educational aims of the programme. Intended learning outcomes are also presented in the programme specification, categorised into the following subheadings: Knowledge & Understanding; Intellectual Skills; Subject practical skills; Transferable/key skills; and Graduate attributes.

7 The programme is aligned to the University of Greenwich guidelines, the subject benchmark statement for osteopathy, the South East England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (SEEC) descriptors and *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) level descriptors. The Examiner Handbook gives full details of the level descriptors to which the programme is aligned as well as details of assessment grading criteria in a range of modules.

8 The programme is modular, and the modules are designed according to University of Greenwich guidelines. A range of courses, each of which has specific assessments, is embedded within each module. Lists of the courses contained within the modules and details of the syllabus are available on the School's virtual learning environment (VLE).

9 Each programme outcome is mapped to the GOsC Osteopathic Practice Standards in the programme specification. Further mapping of Osteopathic Practice Standards has also been undertaken and Osteopathic Practice Standards capabilities are mapped to various courses that sit within individual modules. Various other areas require mapping to Osteopathic Practice Standards, including all intended learning outcomes of individual modules as well as grading criteria presented in the Examiner Handbook, which refer to the superseded *Standard 2000* professional standards.

10 Intended learning outcomes of modules are communicated in module specifications. The student handbook, which includes module specifications, is distributed to students through the VLE along with details of course profiles that sit within the modules. Staff complete assessment outline forms which identify learning outcomes, assessment criteria and a task summary, including dates for provisional results and feedback. Students report that the information regarding intended learning outcomes and assessments is not clearly communicated. Information regarding assessment lacks clarity.

#### **Curricula**

11 The structure of the M.Ost and BSc was devised by the programme team following consultation with staff and students. The SED refers to various themes that run through the programme, though the nature of the themes is not clearly communicated in the School's documents. The programme is well designed to develop students' skills gradually in order to

ensure academic progression. For example, clinical learning is introduced in years 1 and 2 of the programme, when students complete clinical observations, they then undertake a clinic induction in the summer prior to year 3, after which they start to take responsibility for patients in the teaching clinic. The enhanced clinic induction was introduced in 2012-13 and provides a valuable introduction to clinical work in the latter years of the programme. Students report a high level of satisfaction with this programme and agree that it has improved over two consecutive academic years.

12 The Practitionership course, which runs across all four years and is embedded in the Personal and Professional Development modules, provides valuable guidance on issues relating to professional practice. The scope of this course has been expanded to enhance students' preparedness for practice with a greater emphasis on business development. Students reported that they had noticed improvement in this area.

13 The new curriculum was designed to reduce the assessment load for the students and the School has identified the need to continue this task. Several modules continue to be heavily assessed. For example, Anatomical Studies 1, a 35-credit level 4 module, and Anatomical Studies 2, a 15-credit level 5 module, are both assessed with a 1,200-word essay and a 2.5 hour theory examination, despite the significant difference in their credit ratings. In the Personal and Professional Development 1 and 2, which are 15-credit modules, year 1 students are required to complete a 1,000-word critical thinking essay; a 2,000-word research methods essay and a 1,500-word reflective write-up, whereas year 2 students are only required to complete a 1,000-word critical thinking/research methods essay and a 1,500-word reflective write-up.

14 At the previous review, the existing programmes were found to be largely consistent with the subject benchmark statement for osteopathy and *Standard 2000* and as such can be mapped to the Osteopathy Practice Standards. Consideration of the M.Ost and the BSc (Hons) fall-back award shows that they are also consistent with the Osteopathic Practice Standards, as indicated in the following summary.

Standard A: Communication and patient partnership is represented across years 1 to 4 in the courses offered. Clinical Practice contributes to all elements of this standard and Practitionership contributes to A1, A2, A4, A5 and A6. Case History Taking and Psychology contribute to elements A1 and A2; and Nutrition and Sports Osteopathy to A5 and A6.

Standard B: Knowledge, skills and performance is similarly represented across years 1 to 4. Clinical Practice contributes to elements B1, B2 and B3; and Practitionership to B3 and B4. Anatomy, Physiology, Neuroscience, Fundamentals of Osteopathy, General Osteopathic Treatment, Osteopathic Technique, Osteopathic Tutorials, Introduction to Involuntary Mechanism, Involuntary Mechanism Studies, Indirect Techniques, Balanced Ligamentous Tension, Specific Adjustment Technique, Osteopathic Care of Children and Pregnant Women, Muscle Energy Techniques, Physical Evaluation, Sports Osteopathy, Visceral Osteopathy, Critical Thinking and Research Methods contribute to B1 and B2. Clinical Neurology, General Medical Screening, Medical Imaging and Reporting and Pharmacology contribute to B2.

Standard C: Safety and quality in practice is emphasised within the programme. Clinical Practice contributes to all elements and Practitionership to all elements with the exception of C2. Osteopathic Technique, General Osteopathic Treatment and Physical Evaluation contribute to C1 and C2. Fundamentals of Osteopathy, Introduction to Involuntary Mechanism, Involuntary Mechanism Studies, Indirect Techniques, Balanced Ligamentous Tension, Specific Adjustment Technique, Osteopathic Care of Children and Pregnant Women, Muscle Energy Techniques, Sports Osteopathy and Visceral Osteopathy contribute

to C2. Osteopathic Tutorials contribute to C2 and C7.

Standard D: Professionalism is dealt with primarily within two courses across years 1 to 4. Practitionership covers all elements with the exception of D3 and Clinical Practice contributes to all elements with the exception of D2 and D3. Research Methods contribute to element D3.

## **Assessment**

15 The School makes use of a wide range of appropriate assessment methods, including written examinations, coursework, practical assessments, portfolios, learning journals, case presentations, clinical assessments and a research protocol and dissertation. The School has increased its use of formative assessment, following a suggestion from an external examiner. Neither the module specifications in the student handbook nor the assessment profile information on the virtual learning environment mention formative assessment. However, students reported an increase in this area and staff confirmed that year 4 students receive regular tutorial support with feedback for their dissertation and Learning Journal, and the latter is accompanied by details of tutorial support on the VLE.

16 Students are made aware of the requirements for academic writing and the consequences of plagiarism. The School does not currently use online plagiarism detection software to support students in their academic writing.

17 The Academic Registrar monitors the linking of module learning outcomes to student assessments and the provision of assessment criteria. The programme team has developed a set of grading descriptors to aid in the measuring of different categories and level of achievement. These are presented in the Examiner Handbook. The grading descriptors are thorough, helpful and are specific to the various types of assessment.

18 The School does not produce module handbooks, as the University of Greenwich does not require them to do so. Students are able to access information regarding assessments, including past papers, through the VLE. Assessment outline forms identify intended learning outcomes, assessment criteria and a summary of the assessment task with a date for publication of feedback.

19 The Examiner Handbook gives details of assessment grading criteria. Marks under 50 per cent are classed as a fail. A pass is considered to be equivalent to a lower second class performance and there is no third class degree. The Examiner Handbook provides a useful overview of issues relating to practical examining, which was an area of concern highlighted by the School following an analysis of progression statistics.

20 The School implements an effective range of quality assurance measures in its assessment processes, including double-marking in dissertations, sample marking, moderation and use of internal observers in all practical examinations. The School identified the dissertation marking process as an area of good practice, whereby a group of experienced assessors are provided with mark sheets supported by specific descriptors which are completed by two markers. There has been a suggestion that marking standards vary considerably between markers and scrutiny of recent dissertations revealed that, in one case, there was a wide disparity between markers and that effective moderation had not taken place.

21 The SED does not make reference to the return of student work with feedback. Staff stated, however, that coursework should be returned to students with feedback within

four weeks and that the date that feedback is due to be given on individual assessments is published on the assessment outline. A detailed schedule of coursework submission dates is available on the VLE. Students report that the return of work with feedback is variable, with some coursework being returned after the end of term.

22 The School supports students in the development of their skills of self-awareness, self-criticality and reflective practice by the use of a student portfolio, which contributes to the assessment of all four Personal and Professional Development modules. Furthermore, the Learning Journal introduced in year 4 provides valuable support to students in developing their reflective skills and has been cited as good practice by an external examiner.

## **Achievement**

23 The School's SED states that external examiner feedback shows that intended learning outcomes have been achieved and that standards, as measured against the Quality Code, have been met. Progression rates generally exceed 90 per cent and over 90 per cent of students successfully graduate.

24 The School, through its Programme and Award Board (PAB) and the Student Performance, Attendance and Support Committee (SPASC) engages in a comprehensive and effective review and analysis of the progression statistics and achievements. This process highlighted the high referral rates in year 1, particularly in practical examinations for osteopathy. This led the School to produce an Examiner Handbook and arrange examiner training days, resulting in improvement of first take pass rates. However, the referral rate in year 1 practical osteopathy remained relatively high. The referral rate for year 1 practical examination in 2011-12 and 2012-13 were 45 per cent and 26.7 per cent respectively.

25 As noted in paragraph 22, the School has introduced assessments that are designed to develop students' skills of self-awareness and reflective practice. Students' work demonstrates that they are actively engaged in the process of self-reflection and that they achieve well in this area.

## **The quality of the learning opportunities provided**

### **Teaching and learning**

26 The Teaching and Learning Strategy reflects the overall aims of the programme and is based on a series of modular learning outcomes, linked to the assessments. The School encourages a wide range of appropriate teaching and learning activities. Lectures are used to deliver key knowledge and understanding, while tutorials and small group work are used to promote critical enquiry and problem solving skills in years 3 and 4. Teaching observations in lectures and clinic showed that lecturers actively encourage participation and interaction.

27 The School requires every lecturer to produce a teaching plan for each lecture to ensure adequate progression and to monitor delivery of the curriculum. These teaching plans indicate learning outcomes and the level at which the material is taught and assessed. Although this is regarded as a good practice, teaching plans and some lecture handouts are not made available to students prior to the relevant sessions, which limits the opportunity for students to engage in self-directed/independent learning.

28 Students and staff are appreciative of the development of a virtual learning environment platform to enhance communication and provide a central source for all material relating to the programme. However, its full potential as a teaching and learning tool has yet to be realised. Staff are encouraged to post their lecture materials and teaching plans on the virtual learning environment but to date only a small number of staff have uploaded this material.

29 The School provides a staff-to-student ratio of 1:10 in classroom-based practical work and usually 1:6 in the clinic, and this was evident during the observation of practical osteopathy lectures and in the clinic. Students, however, were of the view that there were insufficient numbers of tutors in osteopathic technique lectures to provide effective supervision. In their observations of practical teaching sessions, visitors noted variability in the level of supervision and support provided by teaching assistants.

30 The vast majority of the teaching faculty is part-time and the School recognises that this can lead to limited availability of staff for students. The School reports that this is largely overcome by the use of communication through email and the input of the teaching assistants and members of the programme team. There is, however, no established process through which teaching assistants can keep the lecture leaders informed of their interactions with students outside scheduled teaching sessions.

31 The School has well established processes for students to provide and receive feedback, for example, through the Staff Student Liaison Committee and programme team meetings. Students also receive feedback on their coursework, normally within four weeks, continuous informal feedback following each patient interaction and formal six weekly assessments in clinic. The quality and timeliness of feedback on course work, however, is variable.

32 Students apply the integrated knowledge and skills gained in theory and practical classes in a clinical setting in years 3 and 4. Although the School encourages cross-fertilisation between those staff teaching theory and practical classes and those teaching and supervising clinical sessions, there is no formal process to ensure effective communication between the two staff groups.

33 The School encourages staff development by offering financial support for in-house postgraduate events, staff development activities offered by University of Greenwich and by providing funding for staff members wishing to enrol on the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Higher Education programme offered by University of Greenwich. Eleven members of the part-time faculty have completed this programme and seven are currently enrolled. In addition to this, three members of faculty have enrolled on a professional doctorate in education (EdD) and the Undergraduate Research Dissertation Coordinator is being supported by the School to complete a PhD at the University of Kent.

### **Student progression**

34 The School has recently completed a review of its admissions policy which complies with all of the indicators of sound practice presented in Chapter B2: *Recruitment, selection and admission to higher education* of the Quality Code. The Admissions policy, reviewed annually, contains both complaints and appeals procedures for use by prospective students. The School has certain minimum entry requirements such as three A-levels to include two science subjects, Extended Diploma and International Baccalaureate. The School also operates a one-month bridging course covering biology, chemistry and physics for mature candidates who have formal qualifications obtained in the past. The School has independent membership of UCAS and operates an equal opportunities

policy. All applicants are interviewed and all offers are conditional upon a satisfactory criminal records check by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

35 The School attracts home and international students. Approximately 50 per cent of students are from outside the UK and the School has implemented appropriate processes to ensure that the requirements of the UK Border Agency (UKBA) are met. Students whose first language is not English are normally required to provide English Proficiency certification, for example, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) 6.5 or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) 6.0.

36 The School operates an effective week-long induction process for new students during which issues relating to disability, health and fitness to practice are discussed. Students confirmed during the meeting with the review team that their expectations were met during the recruitment and induction phases, and that they were satisfied with the information given and the process of recruitment and admission.

37 Students receive a Student Handbook that contains basic guides to learning resources and other external facilities. Students were appreciative of the availability of staff through the School's 'open-door' policy. This enables them to receive guidance and support from the Programme Team that includes the Academic Registrar, the Programme Leader, the Welfare Officer, the Clinic Manager, the Vice-Principal and the Head of Learning and Quality. Students also commented positively about the approachability and supportive nature of teaching staff.

38 Students reported that academic support outside of formal teaching sessions is variable. Although teaching assistants make themselves available for early morning tutorials in practical osteopathy, punctuality and level of support is variable. Issues relating to the availability and punctuality of lecturers have also been raised by students in the Student Staff Liaison meetings.

## **Learning resources**

39 The programme is delivered on two sites. The majority of class-based learning takes place at Boxley House which has six classrooms. Clinical teaching and practice takes place at the Tonbridge Road site which has one classroom and 26 treatment rooms. Following a recent refurbishment, teaching accommodation was enhanced, with all classrooms given audio-visual equipment and both sites being provided with wireless internet access. The class rooms have manually adjusted plinths which are also used as desks. During observation of practical osteopathy teaching, it was evident that not all students adjust the plinths to suit their own or the patient's morphology.

40 The School has fit-for-purpose clinical facilities. The clinic has 26 treatment rooms with a hydraulic plinth each, one classroom and a large tutorial room. Clinic staff have a dedicated room which is used for administrative activities and meetings with students.

41 The School clinic is well established and attracts sufficient numbers of patients from an extensive catchment area to provide appropriate clinical experience for students. Clinic managers monitor patient numbers and allocation of patients to students. Average annual patient numbers for 2010-11 to 2012-13 inclusive were 19,837. This includes an average of 2,746 new patients and 17,097 returning patients per annum. This has ensured that 2011-12 and 2012-13 graduating students have seen the recommended minimum number of 50 new patients cited in the subject benchmark statement for osteopathy. In addition to the general out-patients clinic, the School also offers special interest clinics, namely Maternity and Children's Clinic, Sports Injury Clinic and

Diagnostic Ultrasound Clinic. An average of 14 per cent of new patients and 11 per cent of returning patients attended the special interest clinics during the academic years 2011-12 and 2012-13.

42 The Library in Boxley House contains relevant texts and subscribes to 15 journals. The Library also houses a variety of anatomical models and DVD recordings available to students for loan. In addition to the 10 computers in the computer laboratory, five computers are also available for student use in the dining area at the Boxley site and five computers at the clinic site. Students also have access to University of Greenwich's online resources.

43 A VLE was introduced in 2012 to 'facilitate the creative and effective use of technology to enhance the student learning experience and to enable students to develop as confident and digitally literate individuals and professionals'.

44 Staff are well qualified; 35 per cent have a level 7 qualification and 20 per cent have a teaching qualification. The research department is served by three osteopathic faculty members with research experience.

### **Governance and management (including financial and risk management)**

45 The School is a registered charity established as a company limited by guarantee in the name of Osteopathic Education and Research Limited. The ultimate accountability for the management and governance of the School rests with the Board of Trustees. The Board delegates the executive and operational management responsibilities to the Principal and Senior Management Team.

46 The Board of 10 trustees consists of a range of established professionals who contribute external expertise of high-level financial management and corporate governance. The trustees have a background in both public sector and commercial organisations. The Board has completed a comprehensive review of organisational and deliberative structures within the School. This has resulted in major improvements in corporate governance with particular focus on improved financial controls and risk management. The School has developed highly effective financial planning and budgetary control, resulting in a significant improvement in the financial position and sustainability of the School, which now has contingency provisions to mitigate against unexpected financial challenges. The School completes a detailed risk assessment which is continually monitored by the Board of Trustees to ensure that effective risk controls are in place.

47 An effective committee structure has been established, with committees guided by clear terms of reference. The School has a highly effective and well established Academic Board which has ultimate responsibility for the quality assurance of the provision. Detailed deliberations take place in relation to a wide range of data on student progression and achievement. The Academic Board focuses upon the performance of the School in terms of the student experience and receives feedback from student evaluations. It also considers external examiners' reports. Its meetings are recorded in considerable detail and action points are followed up from meeting-to-meeting.

48 An effective Senior Management Team is led by the Principal. This Team takes overall responsibility for budget planning, the academic strategy for the School and overseeing the delivery of the programmes. It also coordinates the allocation of learning resources. The Team has been enhanced by the appointment of a Director of Corporate Services who has a major role in resource management and financial planning. In addition, a new Head of Learning and Quality has been appointed and a vacancy is being established for a new post of Programme Leader for the M.Ost programme. The governance and

leadership framework for the School has been established to facilitate overlap between the major deliberative forums and the Senior Management Team and The Board of Trustees. This supports enhanced communication and allows for proactive and responsive decision making.

49 The School has established a clear mission statement and has an agreed strategic plan which runs up until 2014. The School objectives are developed jointly between the Senior Management Team and the Board of Trustees and signed off by the Board. The Senior Management Team are at an advanced stage in preparing the next strategic plan which will run from 2014-19. Regular meetings ensure that staff are made aware of strategic plans and the decisions made at trustee meetings, while minutes of committees are published on the VLE to enhance communication. The School has made some effort to apply external reference points to guide academic practice. There is evidence that the FHEQ and the subject benchmark statement for osteopathy have been considered in the process of curriculum development. Staff are aware of provisions of the Quality Code, and key staff were able to make a link between the provisions of the Quality Code and practice at the School. However, members of the Senior Management Team acknowledge that further work is needed to embed the Quality Code more fully into the academic management systems of the School.

50 The School has established an effective system for obtaining feedback from students and establishing a closer relationship with the student body. A Staff Student Liaison Committee is supported by the School and students feel it is important to contribute and bring issues to the committee. However, students feel that the Committee was not always able to resolve issues of concern. Further development is needed to ensure that issues raised at this Committee are promptly addressed. Student representatives act as non-voting members of programme committees and Academic Board. In response to a requirement of the University of Greenwich, the School is currently preparing training to support student representatives in their role. An annual informal meeting is scheduled between student representatives and trustees to seek student feedback. Representatives of the Senior Management Team reported that plans are being developed to enhance the level of partnership with the student body and to develop more effective ways of encouraging the student voice.

51 The School has a well established collaborative relationship with the University of Greenwich, formalised through a collaborative agreement which has been signed by both parties. The University requires annual programme monitoring, and there is frequent contact between the two institutions. A University link teacher works closely with the School and supports staff development activities. The School has access to a full range of central departments at the University to support the delivery of the M.Ost programme.

### **Governance and management (the maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality)**

52 The School has well established and systematic processes that monitor the student experience and review student achievement and academic standards. Detailed and analytical monitoring reports covering student performance and progress are produced annually. They include feedback from students and external examiners, and provide comprehensive and detailed action plans in relation to enhancement activity. The reports are considered in detail by the Academic Board and are fed into the Principal's report, which is considered by the Board of Trustees.

53 The School has three external examiners who are recruited by the School and approved and appointed by the University of Greenwich. A detailed joint School and

University preparation and induction process ensures that external examiners are well prepared for their role. Academic Board gives careful consideration to feedback from external examiners which forms a major theme of annual programme monitoring reports. Effective use is made of external examiners to support the enhancement of academic standards and professional issues relating to the programme.

54 The School uses several mechanisms to obtain feedback on programme operation, including student focus groups, online programme evaluation and Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings. Overall there is a systematic approach to collecting student feedback, however, key staff acknowledged that there is further work to be completed in relation to strengthening the communication lines with students, and developing the collaboration with the student body that will support enhancement.

55 The School has transformed the operation of academic staff contracts to ensure that academic resources are managed more effectively. Staff have been given new contracts based on Higher Education Role Analysis (HERA). There is currently a process for the peer review of teaching; however, the outcomes are not disclosed to School managers. The School has a system of staff appraisal but some of the appraisals have not been undertaken. The School acknowledged that further development is needed in relation to strengthening the performance management systems for staff and linking teaching observation, staff appraisal and the systematic identification of staff development plans.

## Meetings and documentation

### Meetings held

- ME1 College presentation
- ME2 Corporate management and governance
- ME3 Students
- ME4 Intended learning outcomes, curricula, assessment and student achievement
- ME5 Teaching and learning, student progression and learning resources
- ME6 Management and enhancement of standards and quality
- ME7 Teaching and clinical staff
- ME8 Tour of facilities
- ME9 Demonstration of virtual learning environment

### Major documentation

- SE1 Self-evaluation submission for the RQ Renewal Review of the Integrated Masters Degree in Osteopathy (5 - 7 November 2013)
- SE2 Annex 1 Student entry profile
- SE3 Annex 2 Rates of progression and student achievement in summative assessment
- SE4 Document 1 Integrated Masters Degree Submission Document (with nine annexes as follows):
  - SE5 Annex A Library journal holding, book lists, models etc
  - SE6 Annex B Subject benchmark statement for osteopathy
  - SE7 Annex C Level descriptors
  - SE8 Annex D Committee structure
  - SE9 Annex E Integrated Masters Degree course/module specifications (revised curriculum)
  - SE10 Annex F Annual Research Report
  - SE11 Annex G Entry level recruitment profiles for 2009-10 to 2012-13
  - SE12 Annex H External examiner reports : 2009-10; 2010-11; 2011-12
  - SE13 Annex I Admissions Policy 2013-14
  - SE14 Document 2 Programme and course/module specifications for the "old" curriculum
  - SE15 Document 3 Examiner Handbook
  - SE16 Document 4 The Student Handbook
  - SE17 Document 5 Curriculum OPS mapping document
  - SE18 Document 6 PGCert HE - outline content
  - SE19 Document 7 Admissions Policy (duplicate of Doc 1 Annex I)
  - SE20 Document 8 University of Greenwich graduate attributes
  - SE21 Document 9 SED of 2009
  - SE22 Document 10 Teaching Faculty (2012-13) and key non-teaching staff
  - SE23 Document 11 ESO Research Report (duplicate of Doc 1 Annex F)
  - SE24 Document 12 The ESO Employee Handbook
  - SE25 Document 13 Committee structure (Duplicate of Doc 1 Annex D)
  - SE26 Document 14 Student charter
  - SE27 Supplementary document relating to ESO responses to QAA feedback on the ESO (GOsC) Annual Report.
  - SE28 Also includes two not yet endorsed external examiner reports for session 2012-13
- AE1 GOsC Review - European School of Osteopathy information requests and responses
- AE2 Ref 2 (a) Progression statistics 2011-12 and 2012-13
- AE3 Ref 2 (b) Summer clinic programme development
- AE4 Ref 3 (d) 1 Curriculum assignment EBM
- AE5 Ref 3 (d) 2 Critical review assignment

AE6 Ref 3 (f) Draft Student Equality and Disability  
 AE7 Ref 3 (g) Steven Bettles - Conference Presentation  
 AE8 Ref 4 (b) CA6 Form plus OPS  
 AE5 Ref 4 (d) M.Ost dissertation assessment form  
 AE6 Ref 4 (e) Examining guidelines CCA1 & 2  
 AE7 Ref 4 (i) Full student portfolio  
 AE8 Ref 5 (c) Copy of ESO DHLE  
 AE9 Ref 6 (b) New patient data  
 AE10 Ref 8 (a) Student support and the part-time faculty  
 AE11 Ref 9 (a,b,c) Governance and management  
 AE12 Ref 9 (e) The use of the Quality Code and external reference points  
 AE13 Ref 9 (f) Information on staff development relating to the Quality Code  
 AE14 Staff Student Liaison Committee Notes  
 AE15 Assessment template  
 AE16 T20 Teaching and learning observation - feedback forms  
 AE17 T21 Student work and assessment note - assessed work  
 AE18 5(d) Student support evidence  
 AE19 5(e) Programme Monitoring Report  
 AE20 7(a) Fitness to Practice Regulations  
 AE21 7(c) DHLE/NSS  
 AE22 Patient profile age and sex  
 AE23 4(a) Course modification process  
 AE24 Student representative training  
 AE25 Curriculum Assessment Committee  
 AE26 UoG Partner College Financial Memorandum  
 AE27 Exams and assessments summary  
 AE28 Minutes of Academic Board  
 AE29 Minutes of Trustees  
 AE30 Probationary Review (Clinic Tutors)  
 AE31 Appendix 4 Useful information student support  
 AE32 Staff CVs  
 AE33 BSc M.Ost/Programme Committee file  
 AE34 Clinic Handbook  
 AE35 Clinic grading information  
 AE36 Introduction to clinic document  
 AE37 Patient numbers  
 AE38 Student feedback on clinic tutors  
 AE39 M.Ost Research dissertation guidelines  
 AE40 ESO Learning Zone  
 AE41 Prospectus - course structure  
 AE42 Telephone conversation Quality Officer, University of Greenwich  
 AE43 Unsolicited information and School response

**The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**

Southgate House  
Southgate Street  
Gloucester  
GL1 1UB

Tel 01452 557000  
Fax 01452 557070  
Email [enquiries@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@qaa.ac.uk)  
Web [www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)

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