

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL

Education Committee

Confirmed Minutes of the 149th Meeting of the Education Committee, held on 1
February 2007.

Present:	Prof. R Anderson	Mr K Lewis
	Miss R Bailey	Mr D Pyle (Chair)
	Mrs J Brower	Dr S Roxburgh
	Mr D Cartwright	Prof. M Salmon
	Mr K Cavaye	Prof. A Tomlinson
	Dr G Harris	Miss J Underwood
	Dr P Kyle	Mr C Wass
Advisers:	Mr R Carswell	Dr A Jennings
In Attendance:	Mr P Coe	Mrs H Robinson
	Miss A Knapik	Mrs J D Taylor
	Ms LS Oakley	
Apologies for Absence:	Mr P Carroll	Mr B Rogers

Apologies for absence

4931. Apologies were received from Mr Brad Rogers and Mr Paul Carroll.

Election of Chairman

4932. Miss Rosemary Bailey nominated Mr David Pyle as Chairman of the Committee. The nomination was seconded by Dr Peter Kyle.

4933. There being no other nominations Mr David Pyle took the Chair.

Election of Deputy Chairman

4934. Professor Alan Tomlinson nominated Dr Peter Kyle as Deputy Chairman of the Committee. The nomination was seconded by Mr David Pyle.

4935. There being no other nominations Dr Peter Kyle took the Deputy Chair.

Declaration of Interests

4936. Members and Advisers were reminded that any interest in an issue for consideration by the Committee which could have, or may be perceived as having an influence on their judgement must be declared pursuant to standing orders 2.7 to 2.10

Confidentiality

4937. Members and Advisers were reminded that the proceedings of the Committee are Confidential under Standing Orders 6.23 to 6.26

Minutes of the 148th Meeting (28:09:06)

4938. Minutes of the 148th Meeting, held on the 29 September 2006 were attached for Members consideration.

4939. The Committee noted that Mrs J Brower attended the last Education Committee Meeting and her name was added to the attendance list.

Matters Arising

Minute 4879 – Project ED01- Movement of Professionals across Boundaries

4940. The Chairman reported that the Group was progressing its work on identifying the entry requirements and details of regulations in other EU Member States. This work is being led by Mr Richard Carswell. Also the piece of work being carried out by representatives of the BUCO Universities on outline training for undergraduate optometry courses was progressing well. The final draft would be presented to BUCO prior to the next meeting of Education Committee. A report will be made to the next meeting of the Committee with a view to presenting proposals to Council.

Minute 4882 – Project ED02 – Entry Standards for Dispensing Opticians (ESDO)

4941. The Chairman reported that a further meeting of the ESDO Working Group would take place later that afternoon and that a further report would be submitted to the May Education Committee Meeting.

Minute 4892 – Project ED05 – Overseas Qualifications

4942. It was reported that a letter was expected from the COpt. outlining their proposals for the future of the examination for non EEA qualified Optometrists. This would be considered by the Overseas Qualification Sub Committee when received.

Minute 4900 - Project ED07 – ECOO Diploma

4943. It was reported that Professor Roger Anderson and Dr Mary Clegg had been appointed as External Examiners to the ECOO Diploma Examinations. It was confirmed that the November meeting of Council had re-affirmed its partial approval of the examinations and that further visits to the practical examinations would take place in the summer of 2007.

Minute 4905 - Independent Prescribing (writing of Handbook)

4944. The Registrar reported that the consultation period for proposals on optometric independent prescribing had now come to an end. The Registrar said that initial indications showed a spread of support but that option two was marginally favoured. The Department of Health (DoH) had said that they were preparing a report for the Commission for the Safety of Medicines and this will be submitted in April 2007.

Minute 4909 - Monitoring Training Institutions and Qualifying Examinations

4945. It was reported that a project plan for this new initiative will be presented to the May 2007 Education Committee for its consideration.

Minute 4914 - Foster Donaldson Consultations

4946. The Registrar reported that Ministers were still to publish a White Paper following the consultations on the Foster Donaldson Reports. It was anticipated that the White Paper would be published sometime towards the end of February.

Minute 4918 - ABDO QCA Decision

4947. The Registrar had been unable to meet with the Chief Executive of the QCA and therefore there was nothing more to report on this item.

Composition of Working Groups

4948. The Committee received for its consideration paper ED(1)07 being a paper on the composition of the Education Committee's Working Groups. Dr Jennings' name was added to the COpt. Visitor Group. Professor Roger Anderson's name was added to the Education Committee's Therapeutics Visitors Group. With these two additions the composition of the Working Groups was approved.

4949. **RESOLVED:** that [a] Dr Jennings' name be added to the COpt. Visitor Group and [b] Professor Roger Anderson's name be added to the Education Committee's Therapeutics Visitor Group. With these additions the composition of the Working Groups was approved.

Bradford College Foundation Degree

4950. The Committee received for its consideration Appendix ED01 being a submission from Bradford College for a Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing. Concerns were raised by members about the resource implications for the College in establishing this degree. Concerns were also raised about resource implications for the GOC in terms of time scales for the consideration of the proposal which it was noted that Bradford College wished to implement by September 2007. While the Committee was keen to promote this new initiative by the College, it was sensitive to the fact that there was no provision for staff and committee time for this initiative within the Education Committee Work Plan for 2007/8.

4951. **RESOLVED:** that the ESDO Working Group be asked to give initial consideration to the proposal at its next meeting. The ESDO Working Group was requested to critically evaluate the resource implications for the GOC and if that evaluation was not positive, that the College be warned that a September 2007 start might not be achievable.

PQE 1

4952. The Committee received for its consideration Paper V-Copt. PQE1(1)07 being an options paper for the future of PQE 1. It was reported that BUCO had an initial discussion at its last meeting and had agreed in principle to support the proposals. However, BUCO had not seen the final paper.

4953. **RESOLVED: The Committee agreed to forward the Paper to BUCO and that a further report be made to the May Meeting of the Committee.**

Contact Lens Handbook ED(2)07

4954. The Committee received for its consideration paper ED(2)07 being the draft Contact Lens Handbook for Visiting Contact Lens Fitting Examinations. It was reported that the Handbook had been piloted at a recent Education Committee Visit to ABDO Examinations Contact Lens Examination in January 2007. The Visit was Chaired by Professor Mike Salmon who reported that the Visitor Group had found the Handbook to be very helpful.

4955. After consideration the Committee agreed that the index of the Handbook needed updating. The Committee noted that the Contact Lens Competencies will be reviewed by the Standards Committee in due course. Comments were made regarding section 2.1.1 of ALL GOC handbooks and the need for some amendments in due course.

4956. The Committee questioned why the GOC did not visit training programmes to prepare candidates for the Contact Lens Examination. It was reported that the Contact Lens Qualification rules stipulated that the ability to fit contact lenses was solely dependent upon the possession of an approved qualification (and under a grandfather clause GOC certification). Therefore there is no statutory requirements to visit the training programmes.

4957. **RESOLVED: The Committee agreed that the Contact Lens Handbook index be updated and with this amendment that the Handbook be submitted to the June Council for ratification.**

Student Representation on Council and GOC Committees – Paper ED(3)07

4958. The Committee received **Paper ED(3)07** being a discussion paper on the issues to be considered if Council is to introduce student representatives onto Council and Committees.

4959. Members considered various options to keep students informed of GOC matters:

- a. producing a student newsletter
- b. holding an annual student forum
- c. that students be encouraged to write to the GOC with any concerns.
- d. that University Student/Staff Consultative Committees be used as a forum for raising and passing on any students' concerns relating to GOC matters.

4960. The Committee struggled to identify the value student representation would bring to the Committee or to the Council itself.

European Judgement on Language Competency

4961. The Committee received an oral report from the Registrar on the European Judgement on language competency in the case of Wilson v Luxembourg Bar Council.

Institute of Optometry Intern Programme

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

College of Optometrists, Scheme for Registration

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

Appointment of Advisers

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

Any other Business

4962. The Committee agreed that Mr Richard Broughton (recently retired Council Member) be appointed a Panel Visitor.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

4963. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place at 10.30 a.m. on 10 May 2007.