

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL

Education Committee

Unconfirmed Minutes of the 150th Meeting of the Education Committee held on
10 May 2007.

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

Apologies for absence and Chairman's Announcements

- 4964. Apologies were received from, Professor R Anderson, Dr G Harris, Mr K Lewis and Professor A Tomlinson.
- 4965. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Rowena Shipley, as the new Adviser to the Committee on the training of Dispensing Opticians.
- 4966. The Chairman also welcomed Mr Ian Hamer, a recently appointed lay member to the GOC who was observing the Committee as part of his induction.

Declaration of interests

- 4967. 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

- 4968. Members and Advisers were reminded that the proceedings of the Committee are Confidential under Standing Orders 6.23 to 6.26

Minutes of the 149th Meeting

(01:02:07)

4969. Minutes and Strictly Confidential Minutes of the 149th meeting held on 1 February 2007 were attached for Members' consideration. These were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising

Minute 4950-4951 - Bradford College Foundation Degree

4970. The Committee was reminded that at its last meeting it received for consideration a submission from Bradford College for a Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing. Concerns were raised by members about the resource implications for the College and the GOC, in considering such a submission at short notice.
4971. The Chairman reported that a meeting had taken place with representatives of the College at which the GOC had been informed that the start date for the course has been delayed until 2008. The College has submitted the new proposal to its validating body (Leeds Metropolitan University) and if this has a successful outcome a proposal will be submitted to the Education Committee in September 2007.

Projects/Working Groups

4972. The Committee received oral updates on the progress of the Education Working Groups which are still active.

Project 1 – Movement of Professionals Across Borders

4973. Professor Salmon as Chairman of the Group reported that consideration has been given to a draft new stage 1 competency document for undergraduate training in optometry which has been prepared by BUCO.
4974. Professor Salmon said that the purpose of the document was to modernise documentation relating to optometry education and training and to provide a benchmark against which to compare other programmes from the rest of the world.
4975. A further meeting of the GOC Members of the Group will take place on the 24 May 2007 to consider the documentation.
4976. Since the last Committee Meeting GOC Members of the Group had also been invited and had visited the optometry programme at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Professor Salmon said that this was not a formal GOC Visit but a fact finding exercise.
4977. Since the Visit, Utrecht has written to the Registrar and asked for their course to be considered for approval by the GOC. The meeting on the 24 May 2007 will consider what recommendations to make to Council on mechanisms for GOC approvals of training programmes offered outside the UK.

4978. Professor Salmon said that the Group was still trying to make contact with the Irish Registration Board, with a view to establishing a fact finding meeting with the GOC's Irish counterpart.
4979. It was also reported that Richard Carswell was preparing a document giving details of the optometry and ophthalmic dispensing professions in other EU member states.
4980. Professor Salmon told the Committee that this was a very important piece of work, which would allow the GOC to compare the qualifications it approves with those offered elsewhere in Europe.

Project 2 – ESDO

4981. The Chairman reported that the ESDO Group is in the second stage of the visits to the revised programmes and scheme for registration.
4982. Mr Pyle said that the Visitors had identified a number of teething problems with the new programme and the Group is consequently re-visiting a number of the training institutions. It appeared that the main issue is tracking (or the lack of) the student's achievement of core competences. The Group is therefore intending to check the systems to ensure that they are more robust and fit for purpose and ensuring that the core competencies are clearly visible to students.
4983. A workshop is planned for the 10 October 2007, and Mr Pyle invited any member of the Committee with an interest to attend.

Project 3 – Scheme for Registration

4984. The Chairman reported that this project was nearing its conclusion. The Visit Group has attended a number of practice placements in the high street. Some issues have arisen from these visits but on the whole the outcomes have been positive. Supervisors have welcomed the new scheme.
4985. The Visitors have suggested amendments to the Final Assessment procedures which the COpt is taking on board. A further Visit to the Final Assessment is planned for July this year. The Visitors are anticipating revisions following the Visit and a further report will be made to the Committee in September.
4986. The Visitors complimented the College on their efforts in bringing about the successful implementation of the new scheme.

Project 5 – Overseas Routes to UK Registration (OQ Sub Committee)

See Strictly Confidential Minutes SC[07]2M

New Initiative – Accreditation of Programmes and Qualifications

4987. The Committee received a project plan for the new initiative on a review of the GOC's processes for accrediting programmes and qualifications.

4988. **RESOLVED:** The Committee accept the project plan as detailed in Paper ED(5)07.

Joint Initiatives with the Standards Committee

Independent Prescribing

4989. The Chairman reported that the Commission on Human Medicines will soon meet to make its decision on its recommendations to Ministers on Independent Prescribing (IP) for Optometrists. Consequently the Chairman of Standards Committee had proposed that a joint working group of Education and Standards Committees should be constituted to take forward this initiative following Minister's consideration.
4990. The Chairman said that he had agreed that the Education Committee representation on the Working Group should be Professor Roger Anderson, Dr Peter Kyle, Professor Alan Tomlinson and Mr David Pyle.
4991. The Registrar indicated that the Council had been grateful to those that had developed the mechanisms on additional supply (AS) and supplementary prescribing (SP). The speed with which these two specialisms had been established had put a considerable amount of pressure on the GOC's resources. It was therefore intended to learn from the AS and SP experiences and to introduce the Independent Prescribing mechanisms at a more measured pace.
4992. It was not anticipated that IP development would be in place before 2008.

Competencies Draft Consultation Paper

4993. The Committee received **Paper SD(21)07** being a draft consultation paper on Competencies.
4994. The Chairman reported that at its January 2007 meeting Standards Committee considered a report from its Competencies Working Group which proposed a timetable for reviewing the competencies. It was agreed that the Working Group be expanded to include representatives from a wider range of stakeholders, i.e. the College of Optometrists, ABDO, BUCO, the dispensing training institutions and the Companies Committee, and that it should begin work on preparing a consultation paper to allow for early consultation on the formal character of any revised sets of competencies, before detailed work on the content of the competencies began in 2008.
4995. The expanded Working Group met on 1 March 2007, and considered how any future sets of competencies might be structured. The Working Group noted the current structural and terminological differences between the current sets of competencies, and taking into account the work of Optometrists Association Australia and the World Council of Optometry, proposed a way in which the competencies might be set within a unified framework.

4996. Since the Working Group's meeting of 1 March, 2007, a draft consultation paper has been circulated to the Working Group members for comment.
4997. The Education Committee was asked to consider the draft consultation paper and proposed the following amendments;
- [i] Questions 1 and 2 be renumbered as 1a] and 1b] (other numbering following on).
 - [ii] That clinical skills be incorporated as part of the performance criteria and that the 'indicators' would then detail how many episodes were expected.
 - [iii] That the GMC approach to boundary issues, communication with patients etc, be brought into the framework.
 - [iv] That the framework clarifies what activities are reserved activities under the Opticians Act (1989) as amended.
4998. **RESOLVED:** That the above amendments be forwarded to the Director of Standards for consideration by the Working Group at its meeting on the 6 June 2007.

Trust Assurance and Safety – White Paper

4999. The Committee received **Paper SD(17)07** which summarised the recommendations of the Government White Paper and the GOC's immediate reaction to it. The Council had established four work streams entitled 'Governance', 'Revalidation', 'Tackling Concerns' and 'Registration'. The Council proposed to develop its thinking in response to the White Paper through each of these work streams.
5000. The Committee was reminded of the decision taken by Council at its March 2007 Meeting, that in line with the recommendations of the Governments White Paper, the size of Council should be reduced to a Board of no more than 13 members. Members were already aware of the White Paper recommendation that there should be at least parity of lay and professional membership and all members of a future board will be appointed.
5001. Further information received from the DH suggested that an enabling Act of Parliament would be introduced in 2008 which will allow Government to formally introduce the changes proposed in the White Paper.
5002. The Registrar reported on the GOC's knowledge of the implementation timetable, known to date. There will be an immediate Section 60 Order to ensure that all the health regulators have the same function and there will be an emphasis in this order on Stakeholder Consultation; there will be responsibilities to monitor diversity; age discrimination issues; safeguarding vulnerable groups.

5003. On constitution and governance the Registrar emphasised that the function of the GOC will not change but rather the way the GOC will carry out its work. The role of the governance work stream initially under the Chairmanship of Stuart Heatherington will be to consider how the GOC's current functions will be done with a smaller Council and the implications for the underlying Committee structure.
5004. The Registrar urged the Committee to consider how the Council will deliver on its education function in the future and to debate the requirement of a statutory education committee, the size and function of such a committee.
5005. **RESOLVED:** That [i] a small group of the Education Committee be appointed by the Chairman to make recommendations to Council as to how Council will fulfil its responsibilities for professional education in the future [ii] that a draft paper be prepared for consideration at an extended meeting of the Committee in September.

Directive on Professional Qualifications

5006. The Committee received **Paper SD(19)07** being a position paper on the implementation of the EU Directive 2005/36.
5007. The Registrar reported that EU Directive 2005/36 will be implemented in law in the UK from October 2007. The GOC has received drafts of the implementing legislation from the DH and the DfES and the Director for Standards is liaising with the GOC's solicitors to review this. The Council's officers have regularly attended briefing meetings concerning the implementation of the directive in recent months.
5008. The Registrar said that there were some significant issues of details which continued to cause concern particularly the new provision in the directive allowing EU professionals to provide temporary and occasional services in the UK. There are some safeguards within the directive for ensuring that professionals operating within the health professions are safe to practise on a temporary basis. However it would appear that there is ambiguity about the interpretation of 'temporary provision of services' and the GOC has been advised by the DfES that those seeking temporary registration would not be required to provide prospective details of the services they are to provide, nor the periods in which they expect to provide them. The GOC has also been advised that temporary registrants may not be subject to UK CET requirements.
5009. The Registrar said that he and his colleagues from other regulators had recently met Lord Hunt, Minister for Health and raised the fact that there is a lack of synergy in the approach of the DfES with regards to implementing the Directive and the approach of the DH in implementing greater regulation of the health professions following the publication of the White Paper, **Trust Assurance and Safety**.

5010. Lord Hunt accepted most of the points of concerns expressed by the Registrars. Notes of that meeting with Lord Hunt will be available shortly and will be circulated.
5011. The DH solicitors are currently in the process of drafting amendments to the Opticians Act and Rules to accommodate the Directive and this will be copied to members of the GOC. The Registrar said that there will be associated costs falling to the GOC but that the final amount is not yet known.

The Supervision and Teaching of Dispensing Opticians and Optometrists

See Strictly Confidential Minutes SC[07]2M.

PQE 1 Updates

5012. The Committee was reminded of the discussion that took place at its last meeting for the future arrangement for entry to the optometry pre-registration period.
5013. The Committee considered **Paper V-COpt PQE1(1)07** at its last meeting and accepted the proposals made in that paper. The Committee subsequently agreed to forward the paper to BUCO for its consideration and that a further report be made to this meeting of the Committee (minute ED4953 refers).
5014. Having considered the paper the Committee received for consideration an email from BUCO which proposed that the wording for formal resolution B1 of **Paper V- COpt PQE1(1)07** be amended to read as follows:
*'these students to be allowed to progress to the PRP provided they retake the final year of the BSc programme **with attendance** (excluding the final year project) and provided they achieve a year average of at least 50% taking account of the normal module weightings and regulations (such as compensation) applied to the programme.'*
5015. BUCO further confirmed that students will not have to take the final year of the undergraduate programme in their current university; no mark elements from previous years of the course may be included; and only one re-sit will be allowed. However students who fall into the formal resolution B2 of **Paper V-COpt PQE1(1)07** who have failed to achieve stage 1 core skills will be allowed multiple attempts to successfully complete the core skills element of the course within two years.
5016. **RESOLVED:** That [a] the Committee accept the proposal from BUCO and that the amended proposal be submitted to Council for ratification; and [b] that as of September 2007 students will be informed that the new arrangements (if approved by Council) will come into effect from October 2008 onwards.
5017. The Committee also noted that BUCO had suggested that this route could be adapted for Non-EEA students who wished to practise in the UK.

5018. **RESOLVED:** That BUCO's suggestion for the use of this route by Non-EEA students be referred to Project 1 Group for consideration and the O/Q Sub Committee.

Handbook for Optometry Courses – Review

5019. The Chairman said that a review of the Handbook for Optometry Programmes was now planned and that representatives of all optometry programmes have been invited to a meeting on the 21 June to discuss.
5020. Three main issues have been identified for discussion:
- a. Problems with Patient Numbers and Breadth of Patient Experiences
 - b. Experience of Abnormal Ocular Conditions
 - c. Student achievement and tracking of Core Competencies
5021. The Chairman reported that associated with this review is the development of stage 1 competencies by BUCO and the interplay between these competencies, their achievement and what is written in the Handbook.
5022. The Chairman reported that Dr Adrian Jennings had been invited to map the BUCO Draft Stage 1 Competency document against Core Curriculum 2000 document.
5023. The Chairman also reported that he had considered the most appropriate mechanisms for chairing future GOC Panel Visits. Having taken advice from colleagues he had concluded that it would be appropriate in the future for Chairmen of Visits to be identified from the Panel Visitors and that identified individuals should receive suitable training. In addition he proposed that a member of the GOC's Education Committee should attend Panel Visits in an 'Observer' capacity..
5024. **RESOLVED:** that the [i] Committee note the arrangements made for a review of the Handbook for Optometry Programmes; [ii] the Committee accept the Chairman's proposal for future chairing of Panel Visits; and [iii] that Council be informed of the names of the Visitors identified as Chairs.

City and Islington College (CANDI) request re professional qualifications

See Strictly Confidential Minutes [SC(#)]07

Funding e-assessment

5025. The Committee received for consideration **Appendix ED04** being an application from the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers for a grant from the Education Development Fund to help with the cost of developing and introducing an online-assessment system for optical staff.
5026. Having considered the proposal, the Committee agreed that the Education Development Fund was to support optometrists and dispensing opticians and therefore did not meet the requirements for a grant.

5027. **RESOLVED:** That the application from the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers for a grant from the Education Development Fund to help with the cost of developing and introducing an online-assessment system for optical staff be refused on the basis that it did not meet the criteria for consideration for fund monies.

Cardiff University – BSc Optometry Programme

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

ARU Foundation Degree

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

City University - BSc Optometry Programme

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

Therapeutic Prescribing Programmes – City University/Institute of Optometry/Glasgow Caledonian University

See Strictly Confidential Minutes

Dates of Education Committee 2008

5028. The Committee was asked to note for information the dates for Education Committee in 2008:
- **7 Feb 2008**
 - **8 May 2008**
 - **2 October 2008**

CET Scheme

5029. The Committee received for information Paper **REG(08)07** being a paper from Registration Committee on Retention and CET.
5030. The Committee commended the AOP and Vantage Technologies Ltd for their efforts in ensuring a successful conclusion to the first three year cycle.

QAA Benchmark

5031. The Committee received an oral report from the Chairman on a review of the Benchmark Statement for Optometry. The Committee was informed that Professor Barry Winn had been invited by the QAA to chair a review of the benchmark statement for Optometry.
5032. The Chair reported that Mrs Dian Taylor, Deputy Registrar and Dr Adrian Jennings, Education Advisor were representing the GOC and that further reports would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

General Social Care Council Consultation

5033. The Committee was informed of a statement received from the General Social Care Council giving notice of a consultation on the statement of values on inter-professional work with children and young people. The Committee was informed that copies of the statement were available upon request.

Date and time of next meeting

5034. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place at 10.30 a.m. on **20 September 2007** – the business meeting to take place in the morning with an additional afternoon session to discuss the implications of the White Paper. It was agreed that Mr Stuart Heatherington should be invited to join the Committee for this discussion.