

**GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL**  
**Visit to**  
**University of Manchester**  
**MOptom Clinical Assessment**

**17-18 April 2007**

**Visitors:**

**Professor Mike Salmon (Lay person/Educationalist)**

**Mrs Lisa Gerson (Optometrist)**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Visitors thank Professor Chris Dickinson and the staff for their welcome and assistance in preparation for and during the time of the visit. In particular thanks are due to Doctor Caroline Thompson for the documentation which made the visit so much easier and effective.

## **BACKGROUND AND PROCESS**

1. The visit was a follow up to that undertaken by Stephan Reilly in April 2003.
2. The Assessments took place over two days, Appendix 1 provides the timetable. Both Visitors observed all the elements of the Assessment separately and our detailed observations are set out in Appendix 2. In addition there were:
  - a. Two meetings with the Programme Director, Professor Chris Dickinson
  - b. Meetings with two of the four candidates were held at the end of the process
  - c. A meeting with the newly appointed External Examiner, Professor Rachel North; and
  - d. Informal discussions with all the examiners.
3. There were only four candidates sitting the examination. Apart from the oral examination of Ocular Disease on the second day, all the examiners were internal staff. The External Examiner attended for part of the second day; it was her first visit to the faculty.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

4. The primary conclusion is that the students completing this programme are more than adequately prepared for independent practice and therefore for registration.
5. This course, demanding on staff time and resources, is excellent. There is no doubt that if further quality placements could be found, the numbers would increase to the agreed twelve. However the staff will only do this, despite pressure from the Faculty, if the quality can be maintained.
6. The students emerging from the course are of an extremely high calibre – far beyond that expected of “entry standard”.
7. The staff involved on the course are highly motivated, dedicated and very professional and give freely of their time to the students.
8. There is little which requires attention in the Clinical Assessment process. Perhaps the team could reflect on the consistency across the elements as to how they arrive at their marks.
9. However, even with small numbers involved, there does not appear to be a sufficiently structured way of demonstrating that all the core competencies have been addressed and signed off. Thought needs to be given to this deficiency at least by designing a checklist sheet, a process signed by a Faculty staff member rather than the External Supervisor but ideally by a more formal structured log book (cp. The College of Optometry log book).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

With the condition referred to in (15) above, the Visitors recommended:

- a) That the course now be given full approval of 5 years.
- b) That as soon as feasible, the future re-timing of GOC approval should coincide with that of the BSc Optometry course.