

## **COUNCIL**

### **Accreditation and Quality Assurance**

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**Meeting:** 11 July 2018

**Status:** For decision

**Lead responsibility:** Philippa Mann (Head of Operations, Education)

**Paper author:** Lisa Venables (Education Manager)

#### **Purpose**

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1. For Council to approve the Education Committee's recommendations in relation to Cardiff University and Bradford College.

#### **Recommendation**

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2. Council is asked to:
  - 2.1 **grant full approval** to the Post-graduate Certificate in Therapeutic Prescribing at Cardiff University without conditions and agree the proposed changes to the duration of the programme; and
  - 2.2 **grant full approval** to the BSc (Hons) Ophthalmic Dispensing and Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing at Bradford College without conditions.

#### **Role and remit of Council and Education Committee**

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3. Section 12(7) of the Opticians Act 1989 ("the Act") empowers Council to approve establishments and/or qualifications for training as an optometrist or dispensing optician. Sections 12(1) and 12(6) require Council to establish minimum competencies and educational content, and to notify these requirements to approved establishments. Section 13 makes provision for ongoing supervision and potential withdrawal of approval.
4. Education Committee's powers are mainly to be found in Section 12 of the Act and in the GOC's Scheme of Delegation. Education Committee has the power to approve quality assurance reports, conditions and recommendations from the Education Visitor Panel (the Panel), and make recommendations to Council on whether provisional approval or full approval should be given to programmes.
5. It is Council's role to make decisions on granting/withdrawing full approval or provisional approval to/from an educational establishment or qualification. Education Committee's role is to make recommendations and advise Council in the exercise of these powers.

### Strategic objective

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6. Targeted approach to regulation – to achieve our strategic objective we must apply our regulatory levers proportionately to ensure protection of the public.

### Risks

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7. (Risk ED1): public protection could be adversely affected if the GOC is unable to deliver its Accreditation and Quality Assurance statutory function satisfactorily. The public protection risks associated with the recommendations regarding these programmes is low.

## Cardiff University: Post-Graduate Certificate in Therapeutic Prescribing for Optometrists

### Background

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8. Cardiff University submitted an application to the GOC in 2015 for approval for a part-time, distance learning Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) in Therapeutic Prescribing for Optometrists to be delivered over three semesters (18 months). This programme is based on an existing GOC accredited programme owned by Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), purchased in its entirety and to be delivered at Cardiff University.
9. Council granted provisional approval to the programme at its meeting on 26 July 2016 subject to five conditions, and the programme subsequently commenced in September 2016.
10. The Panel conducted visits to Cardiff University in July 2017 and February 2018 to review the programme against the requirements of the GOC Handbook for Optometry Specialist Registration in Therapeutic Prescribing and consider whether the institution is ready to be granted full approval for this qualification.
11. The Education Committee also considered a proposal from Cardiff University to reduce the duration of the programme from three semesters (18 months) to two semesters (12 months).
12. The Panel produced the report presented at **annex one** which was considered by the Education Committee on 25 June 2018.

### Analysis

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13. The Panel found that the University had met all of the previous conditions of provisional approval and recommended full approval without any further conditions. The Panel also supported the change to programme duration.

14. In June 2018, the Education Committee considered the visit report and the proposed change to the duration of the programme to determine whether full approval can be granted. After consideration, Education Committee **recommends** to Council that the Postgraduate Certificate (PgCert) in Therapeutic Prescribing for Optometrists is given full approval and the programme duration change is approved.
15. On the basis of Council's approval, the next quality assurance visit is to be scheduled for spring 2023.

### **Bradford College: BSc (Hons) in Ophthalmic Dispensing, and Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing**

#### **Background**

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16. Bradford College is a provider delivering a route to registration for dispensing opticians in conjunction with ABDO Examinations. The College delivers the training element of the route and ABDO Examinations delivers the practice based learning and qualifying examination elements of the route.
17. The Education Committee recommended provisional approval to the programmes in 2008. Between 2008 and 2018, a series of approval visits were conducted regularly by the GOC.
18. The Panel conducted audit visits on the 15 June 2017 and 7 March 2018 to review the completion of the outstanding condition set by the Education Committee and consider readiness for full approval.
19. The Panel produced the report presented at **annex two** which was considered by the Education Committee on 25 June 2018.

#### **Analysis**

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20. From the March 2018 audit visit, the Panel noted that the College had met all of the previous conditions of provisional approval (including the one outstanding condition) and recommended the College should be granted full approval without any further conditions. The Panel gave very positive feedback regarding the College's system for tracking competencies.
21. In June 2018, the Education Committee considered the visit report to determine whether full approval can be granted. After consideration, Education Committee **recommends** to Council that the BSc (Hons) in Ophthalmic Dispensing and Foundation Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing is given full approval.
22. On the basis of Council's approval, the next quality assurance visit is to be scheduled for spring 2021.

**Impact assessment**

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23. The following implications have been identified:
- 31.1 GOC reserves – none;
  - 31.2 GOC budget – planned visits within Education budget;
  - 31.3 Legislation – none;
  - 31.4 Resources – none;
  - 31.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – none;
  - 31.6 Human Rights Act – none;
  - 31.7 Sustainability – none;
  - 31.8 Devolved nations – the GOC carries out its accreditation and quality assurance function in relation to education providers throughout the UK.

**Communications**

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24. The outcomes of all accreditation and quality assurance reviews are communicated to providers within a reasonable period.
25. Visit reports are published on our website in line with our policy.

**Attachments**

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26. The annexes are strictly confidential until approved by Council.