

## COUNCIL

### Approvals and Quality Assurance: Anglia Ruskin University

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**Meeting:** 15 May 2019

**Status:** For decision

**Lead responsibility:** Subo Shanmuganathan, Director of Education

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

#### Purpose

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1. For Council to consider and approve the Education Committee's recommendations in relation to the approval of a new programme at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU).

#### Recommendation

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2. Council is asked to **consider and approve** the recommendations of the Education Committee, namely to **grant provisional approval** to the Postgraduate Certificate (Contact Lens Optician) programme (subject to conditions being met) to commence in September 2019 **noting**:
  - a maximum cohort of 16 students;
  - 7 conditions are set;
  - 0 recommendations are made.

#### 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. Section 2(1) requires Council to establish an Education committee for the purpose of giving advice and assistance on matters relating to optical training, education and assessment.
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. The paper relates to our targeted approach to regulation – to achieve our strategic objective we must apply our regulatory levers proportionately to ensure

protection of the public.

7. Through the process of accrediting and quality-assuring optical education, training and qualifications, we will seek to ensure that registrants joining the register are fit to practise.

### Risks

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8. The main risks associated with the accreditation and quality assurance functions are as follows – ED1: The risk of the GOC being unable to deliver statutory function of Approval and Quality Assurance satisfactorily could expose the GOC to legal and reputational risks, and could negatively impact public safety.

### Background

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10. Anglia Ruskin University is an established training provider currently delivering Dispensing and Optometry programmes and is now seeking to deliver a Postgraduate Certificate (Contact Lens Optician) programme.
11. The University is proposing to deliver all elements of training, including the delivery of the academic programme, the accompanying quality assurance processes including those related to course delivery, audit of the clinical placement and assuring robust qualifying assessments for registration (i.e. certification of CLO). Students will be eligible for entry onto the Specialist Contact Lens register following successful completion of this programme.
12. The University aims to begin delivery of the programme in **September 2019** (subject to Provisional Approval being awarded by Council) with an initial intake of **16** students for the first cohort.
13. A GOC approval visit was undertaken by an EVP on 11 & 12 December 2018.

### Analysis

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14. Following the visit, the EVP recommended to the Executive that Council grant provisional approval to the Postgraduate Certificate (Contact Lens Optician) programme.
15. The Panel recommended that **seven conditions** be set for the qualification. These relate to:
  - the development of teaching materials and content;
  - the development of an assessment strategy;
  - appointment of external examiners;
  - updating of student documentation;
  - training of supervisors;
  - training and support of auditors; and

- training and preparation of staff for delivery of OSCE style examinations.
16. Since the EVP visit, the University has taken steps to meet the conditions and has submitted documentary evidence. The EVP has reviewed this evidence and is satisfied that the University is making the necessary progress to continue with its recommendation of provisional approval.
17. Based on the findings of the visit, subsequent document submission and on recommendation of the EVP, the **April 2019** Education Committee recommends to Council that the Postgraduate Certificate (Contact Lens Optician) programme is granted provisional approval, with the first cohort to start in **September 2019**.
18. The findings of the EVP are set out in the visit report at [annex one](#).

### Impact assessment

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19. The following implications have been identified:
- 19.1 GOC's reserves – none;
  - 19.2 GOC budget – planned visits within Education budget;
  - 19.3 Legislation – none;
  - 19.4 Resources – none;
  - 19.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – none;
  - 19.6 Human Rights Act – none;
  - 19.7 Sustainability – none;
  - 19.8 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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20. The outcomes of all approval and quality assurance reviews should be communicated to training providers within a reasonable period and approval reports from the GOC Education Visitor Panel and decisions by the Education Committee and Council should be clearly published on our website. The GOC policy is currently not to publish reports on provisional approval.

### Attachments

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**Annex one** – GOC Visit report – ARU PGCert in CL – Dec 2018 ([available here](#))