

Codes of Conduct

Purpose:

To approve for consultation proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants and the Code of Conduct for Business Registrants.

Summary:

1. In January 2008, Standards Committee established a working group to review the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants and the Code of Conduct for Business Registrants. The working group was tasked with considering the feedback that had been obtained from the Committee's previous annual reviews of the codes and benchmarking the codes against those issued by other regulatory bodies. In the light of this, it was asked to put forward proposals to Standards Committee as to how the codes should be amended.

2. The membership of the working group was as follows:

Professor Roger Anderson
Mr Michael Bateman
Mr David Cartwright
Mr Ray Curran
Mr Ian Hamer (Chair)
Mr James Russell
Mrs Sheila Wild

3. The working group reported to Standards Committee in September 2008. The working group presented a draft consultation document – **Annex 1**. The Committee resolved to recommend to Council that the document be issued for consultation. The draft consultation document was also considered by Companies Committee at its meeting in October 2008. Companies Committee was supportive of the content of the document.

4. The GOC is obliged to consult 'groups which, in the Council's opinion, are representative of registrants or of persons with an interest in the subject matter of the guidance' (section 13A(3) of the Opticians Act 1989). A three month consultation is planned, with the document being issued to the optical representative and professional bodies, a wide range of patient and consumer groups, universities and training establishments, and other regulatory bodies.

The document will also be posted on GOC's website with an open invitation for responses.

5. The Standards Department has begun work with the Communications Department to ensure that the consultation is appropriately targeted, and that opportunities to obtain feedback from stakeholders (e.g. through presentations at appropriate events) are maximised during the consultation period.

5. Following the consultation, the working group will review the responses and make proposals to the Standards Committee. Standards Committee will then recommend to Council what amendments should be made to the codes. It is anticipated that amended codes will be presented to Council for approval in the summer 2009.

Council is asked to approve for consultation the proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants and the Code of Conduct for Business Registrants.

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