

GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL
Education Committee

Unconfirmed Minutes of the 157th Meeting of the Education Committee held on
11 March 2010.

Present:	Miss R Bailey Dr A Jennings Dr P Kyle Mr D Pyle Dr N Sheen Miss J Underwood
In Attendance:	Miss L Kennaugh (Chair) Mrs H Robinson Mrs L Sparkes Mr P Gavin

Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements

5397. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new Committee and noted apologies from Dr Brendan Barrett and Dr Michael Yates.

Declaration of Interests

5398. 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

5399. Members and Advisers were reminded that the proceedings of the Committee are Confidential under Standing Orders 6.23 to 6.26

Committee Induction

5400. The Committee received for its information **Paper ED(1)10** which included information on the role and work of the Committee and a presentation which was presented to Council at its last meeting.

5401. The Chairman informed the Committee that the Education Department budget for 2010/11 had been agreed by Council.

5402. The Committee discussed the presentation which went to Council and it was agreed that for continuity all the working groups would remain the same for the time being.

Minutes of the 156th meeting (01:10:09)

ED(09)2M

5403. The Committee received the Minutes from the 156th Meeting of the Education Committee from the 1 October 2009.

5404. The Minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Report from the Project Groups

Project ED01 – Professional Crossing Borders

5405. The Committee were informed that the Professional Crossing Borders project group visited Hogeschool Utrecht in January 2010 to progress accreditation of that programme.

5406. The Chairman confirmed that the Project Group had requested more detailed documentation from the University regarding evidence of competencies and the number of patient experiences being tracked. The University had been requested to provide the documentation by 30 June and the Committee were informed that if the information was sufficient and met the requirements this programme should receive full accreditation.

5407. Miss Underwood informed the Chairman that she was a member of the Project Group but had not been able to attend the Visits.

5408. The Committee agreed that the Project Group should remain the same and that the members who were no longer on the Committee remain on the Group until the programme has been accredited.

5409. The Committee were informed that the Director of Education and the Education Policy and Project Officer met with Mary O'Donnell CEO of the Irish Opticians Board in November 2009 to scope the remit of a visit.

5410. The Irish Opticians Board had been asked to provide some documentation and the Chairman confirmed that an Education visit would then take place.

Project ED02 – Entry Standards Dispensing Opticians (ESDO)

5411. The Committee were informed that the ESDO Working Group recently visited Bradford College and would be visiting Canterbury Christchurch University/ABDO College in May. These were the only two live courses under the ESDO Working Group.

5412. The Chairman informed the Committee that Anglia Ruskin University would be submitting an application to be a scheme provider.

5413. The Committee agreed that when the proposal from Anglia Ruskin was received the ESDO Working Group would review the document and make its recommendations to the next education committee meeting as to whether the programme could be given initial approval.

5414. It was also agreed that the review of the dispensing qualification framework would be delegated to this working group and the education committee would formulate its recommendations on that project.

5415. The Chairman informed the Committee that for continuity the members of the working group would remain the same until the projects had been completed.

Project ED03 - Scheme for Registration

5416. The Chairman reported that the Scheme for Registration would be fully implemented for all students this summer.

5417. The Working Group had recently visited the second pilot of the new OSCE assessments and the only work the Group had left to complete was to visit the first sitting of the live OSCE. It was expected that the recommendation to this Committee after this visit would be that subject to quality assurance monitoring the Scheme would go to full panel visits.
5418. It was agreed that the Working Group would continue to visit practices in the months prior to the live OSCE.
5419. The Independent Prescribing Panel were now quality assuring the education and training for Independent Prescribing. The Chairman proposed that at a future committee meeting a project board be made up from members of the committee to review the training of the handbook be conducted to discuss any difficulties which have arisen as a result of the requirements that are in place.
5420. The Committee were informed that the Registrar had agreed that because the earliest that the IP registrants could register was December 2009 they would be retained on the register for the year.
5421. It has been confirmed that once the retention period was over the registration department will send the IP registrants retention papers to the IP Panel so they could build a picture of level of activity and build some guidelines that the Panel will be able to use for future retentions processes in terms of what is reasonable activity.

Project ED04 - Education & Panel Visits/Accreditation Review

5422. The Committee received for information a summary of visits that are scheduled and have taken place. They also received the new policies in respect of the publications of Visit reports and policy documents.
5423. The Chairman confirmed that Council has approved the policy that a list is published showing when an institution was last visited and when the next visit will take place. Council also agreed that there would be a slight change to how visits would be conducted. A Visit will include closed and open sessions which would be agreed mutually in advance with the Institution and that two reports would be produced following the visit. Anything dealt with in the open session report would be subject to publication under the freedom of information act and would be made available on the GOC website. .
5424. The Committee were informed that in order to facilitate the publishing of the visit reports and to be able to comply with the obligations under the freedom of information act a proforma had been developed for the chair of each visit to complete giving the rationale behind any conditions or recommendations.

Project ED05 – Overseas Routes to UK Registration

5425. The Committee received for its information a copy of the updated EU directive application forms for overseas Optometrists.
5426. The Chairman informed the committee that the forms for Dispensing Opticians were also being updated and would be available at the next Committee meeting.

CET

5427. The Committee received for information a full end of cycle report for 2007/2009 and an update paper on the CET scheme.

Standards Update - ED(9)10

5428. The Committee received for its information the minutes from the last Revalidation and Competencies Working Group meetings.

5429. The Chairman reported that the revised competencies were going to the next standards committee and would then be brought to the next Education Committee meeting.

5430. It was also reported that there had recently been a number of stakeholder events as part of the GOC's consultation on its revalidation proposals. These events had been well attended and some useful feedback gained.

Visit Reports

Aston

5431. The Committee received for its information a copy of the Visit Report to Aston University together with the formal response from the University.

5432. The Committee supported the recommendation of the Visitor Panel that Aston University maintains its GOC approval with the next Visit taking place in 5 years.

Glasgow Caledonian University

5433. The Chairman reported that the Visit to Glasgow Caledonian University had taken place quite a while ago but the GOC had not yet received a formal response from them. There had been some disputes between individuals in the University regarding the report.

5434. In the absence of a formal response from the University, the Committee supported the recommendation of the Panel that the Dispensing programme at GCU continue to be approved with the next visit taking place in April 2011.

5435. The Chairman informed the Committee that there are some issues at Glasgow Caledonian University in that they cannot recruit a Head of the Optometry Department. The Chairman had written to the Vice Chancellor at Glasgow Caledonian University and asked for a response by June on how they will deal with this issue.

City and Islington College

5436. The Committee were informed that there had been further issues with this institution since the last Education meeting and there had been a substantial number of complaints received regarding the distance learning programme.

5437. The Chairman reported that a Visit would take place on 22 March and it that unless these matters can be resolved it may be necessary to withdraw approval from this Institution. Council are also retaining an interest in developments with this institution.

Anglia Ruskin University

5438. The Chairman informed the Committee that Anglia Ruskin University had submitted a notice of intention to submit an application for a register able dispensing course. When the GOC receives the formal application it will be circulated to the Committee.
5439. The University have informed the Council that they will not be recruiting to their dispensing courses (with the exception of the Foundation Degree which is sponsored by Specsavers) in September 2010 due to funding problems. They will instead divert resources to the development of a new programme with the intention of starting it in the September 2011 academic year.

ABDO Exams Exemptions

5440. The Chairman reported that at the ABDO Board meeting in February the board made a decision that unless certain conditions were met they would be withdrawing exemptions from each of the training institutions for their theory examinations. ABDO had asked the institutions to submit their assessments and standard operating procedures which the ABDO external examiner would compare and grant formal exemption.
5441. A number of meetings have taken place between the Institutions and ABDO at which the Chairman had attended as an impartial observer. With the exception of Bradford College who did provide the required documents and were subsequently granted continued exemption which will be reviewed every 2 years, the other institutions failed to cooperate and have therefore been given until the end of March to submit their paperwork. Failure to do so will result in their students being required to sit the ABDO Theory papers in order to obtain their FBDO qualification as no further exemption will be granted.
5442. The Chairman reassured the Committee that this will only apply to new intakes of students and she was satisfied that the GOC had done everything they could to ensure co-operation and that the students already on the programmes would be protected.

ABDO/Canterbury Honours Programme

5443. The Chairman reported that a Visit to the ABDO/Canterbury honours degree in ophthalmic dispensing programme would take place in May 2010.

Annual Monitoring Submissions

5444. The Committee were informed that due to the vast amount of documentation received from the Universities the annual monitoring submissions were not yet available and a report of the statistics will be sent to the Committee in due course.

Healthcare for people with disabilities: the role of health professional regulators

5445. The Chairman reported that following a report from the CHRE it was recommended that the Council should be more aware of learning disabilities. As part of a quality assurance the Council needs to ensure that the Colleges and Universities have a process on dealing with disabilities and the making of reasonable adjustments.

BUCO – Advice regarding Students

5446. The Committee received for consideration an email from City University asking for advice on the wearing of Bhurkas by students working with patients.
5447. The Chairman explained that her response has been that it is the GOC's expectation that institutions have a process in place to satisfy themselves that any student on a programme can adequately perform all of the functions required to demonstrate their competence and fulfil the requirements of the programme. If a barrier is identified the individual must be given opportunity to have reasonable adjustments made i.e. females working on females etc.
5448. It was queried whether even if they are allowed adjustments in their education and training would they be accepted onto the register if they cannot deal with all types of patient. The Chairman explained that the Registrar would have to make a judgement as to whether they were fit to practice when considering their registration application.
5449. It was the general view of the committee that if is a problem that is serious enough that they cannot complete the functions they are required to do on the course then they cannot complete the course and have to be advised that they are not suitable to attend the programme at the point of enrolment.
5450. Ultimately, the training institutions must take the decision at the point of enrolment for the course on the basis that that the student has to demonstrate competence in all elements of the Core Competencies and if the student cannot do the tasks then they cannot demonstrate competence.

CHRE Performance Review

5451. The Chairman reported that the Council had received a very good report from the CHRE and it was agreed that a copy of the report would be available at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meetings

- 10.30 a.m. – 8 July 2010
- 10.30 a.m. – 14 October 2010
- 10.30 a.m. – 10 February 2011