

GDC Education Committee

16 October 2008

Members Present

Paul Cook

Edward Attenborough
Denis Toppin
Mike Martin
Barry Cockcroft

Lesley Kant
Hew Mathewson
David Herbert

By Invitation:

Item 4: Elizabeth Davenport

(Chair of the OREB)

Staff present for some or all items: Duncan Rudkin, Paul Feeney, Frances Garratt, Ewen Macleod, Pravat Bhattacharyya, Peter Butler, Carmen McLeod, Ross Scales.

Minutes

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Mabel Slater. Barry Cockcroft had to leave the meeting after Item 4.

Minutes of meetings on 21 and 24 April 2008

2. It was agreed that the matters for action log will form part of the minutes. The reference number in the left-hand column of the log shall refer to the related item number in the minutes.

Declarations of interest

3. None were declared.

Matters arising from previous minutes

4. It was agreed that arranging in-depth training for those assessing new submissions should be added to the matters for action log (paragraph 7 of the July 2008 minutes).
5. After the workshops on the Strategic Review of Education are completed and the outcomes have been considered, it was agreed that the consideration of a specialist

list in implantology will be added to the matters for action log (paragraph 25 of the July 2008 minutes).

6. The Committee felt that there are arguments that a dentist is the best person to undertake certain non-surgical procedures and that discussion in this area was still ongoing. They felt that this point should be taken back to Standards/Registration Committee (paragraph 28 of the July 2008 minutes).
7. The Committee asked to see the guidance on training standards in implant dentistry communicated to stakeholders as soon as possible. The Committee and the President agreed that efforts should be made to include an article in the Autumn 2008 GDC Gazette (paragraph 32 of the July 2008 minutes).
8. Mike Martin gave a verbal report on the Public Conference on Corporate Strategy in Birmingham. He stated that he felt the organisation and the content of the conference were excellent. The Committee indicated that it wished to see the full report of the conference when published.

Policy Report

Annual Report of the OREB

9. Elizabeth Davenport, chair of the OREB, introduced the annual report of the OREB. It was confirmed that all members of the Board had been appointed. Sue Morison was appointed as the Educationalist member and Mike Martin as the Education Committee representative.
10. The developments that had been made by the Board were outlined. These included tightening of the reporting timelines between diets, adjustment of the blueprinting methods, improving the standard setting for Part 2, developing candidate feedback systems, and maintaining the quality cycle of external examiner reports. Additionally, training on feedback mechanisms and blueprinting for external examiners is scheduled to take place on 28 November 2008. Elizabeth Davenport and the GDC staff team are carrying out visits to suppliers to ensure that all stakeholders are working together correctly.
11. The Committee was notified that the number of candidates applying for the exam was in decline. The OREB agreed to reduce the number of diets to 2 per year for Part 1 and 5 per year for Part 2. The benefits of the reduction in diets were a reduction in capital costs, more time available between sittings to finish all aspects of the exam and more time to invest in work on the exam's robustness.
12. The Board have undertaken work on improving the standard setting for Part 2 and made recommendations to the suppliers. Additionally, the Board have changed the way that the blueprint is presented to make it easier for the suppliers to show the learning outcomes covered by a diet.
13. An additional annex to the report, containing the most recent results, was tabled. The Committee was informed that the reliability of Part 1 has been tested and is very high. King's College London intends to use some questions in the undergraduate exams to test the questions and compare the results. The ORE Board felt that those involved at King's College London have worked hard to find suitable questions and should be congratulated. The scheduling for Part 2 has changed and the exam is held over three days, rather than two. However, this does not appear to have improved the results that candidates achieve.
14. Elizabeth Davenport stated that she was satisfied with the exam and felt that it was robust, but recognised that there was still some work to be done to ascertain exactly how robust. The educators on the Board, Roger Murphy and Sue Morison, will work to ensure that the exam is completely robust and can be proved to be so.

15. Ways to ensure that the standard required to pass the exam is the same as the standard required to pass the UK BDS were discussed, as a driving force for the exam was for it to be equivalent to the BDS. Prof Davenport explained that in addition to including ORE questions in undergraduate exams, the Board hope to also include the same OSCEs and diagnosis and treatment planning exercises in undergraduate exams. It was felt that running a pilot with UK students would be ideal, but it was acknowledged that were issues with the logistics and implications of such an exercise.
16. Frances Garrett commented that it was important that all routes to registration were rigorously quality assured to the same standard.
17. It was agreed that when the annual report of the ORE Board was published it should include biographies of the members.
18. The work of Elizabeth Davenport and the ORE Board were praised. The Committee expressed its gratitude for all of the work that had been successfully completed.

Operational Decisions

University of Manchester – BSc Oral Health Sciences

19. Pravat Bhattacharyya notified the Committee that the orthodontic therapy award, which formed part of this qualification, had been removed as there were insufficient hours in the programme for the graduates to register as orthodontic therapists.
20. The Committee discussed the observations on the report received from the institution. It was felt that the responses in the observations were inadequate as they did not adequately address the recommendations and requirements in the report. The Committee agreed that a decision on the sufficiency for registration purposes of the BSc programme be deferred until full details of the changes to be made to the programme and final examination, in response to the requirements and recommendations, are received by the GDC.
21. The final examination is scheduled for inspection in 2009. The Committee stated that it expected all of the recommendations and requirements contained in the 2008 inspection reports to be addressed by the time of the 2009 inspection.
22. It was agreed that a letter from the Chief Executive should be sent to the programme leader and copied to the Vice-Chancellor of the University. The letter will state that the Committee does not accept the course as sufficient and that the onus is on the institution to prove that it is sufficient.
23. Frances Garratt stated that the options available to the Committee in situations where they have not agreed to award sufficiency should be put into the process document. It was agreed that work needs to be done on planning and defining the options available in the inspections process and communicating these to schools and to inspectors.

Dental Defence Services – Diploma in Dental Hygiene

24. The Committee was impressed with the response received to the report and granted sufficiency to this programme.

University of Sheffield – Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

25. Pravat Bhattacharyya informed the Committee that, in contrast to Manchester, issues lay with the programme rather than the response received. The institution requested that a re-inspection takes place in 2010, rather than 2009, in order for them to address all the requirements in the report.

26. The Committee agreed with the inspectors that as students were able to graduate without having completed some specific procedures key to the work of a dental therapist, several important learning outcomes in Developing the Dental Team (DDT) had not been met. As these parts of DDT were missing from the programme, the course was insufficient. The learning outcomes which were not met will be specified to the school for them to address.
27. The Committee confirmed that the registration of the students who graduated from the programme in June 2008 will not be affected by this decision.
28. The Committee decided that a re-inspection of the final examination would take place in 2009.

Policy reports

Update on the Strategic Review Workshops

29. Frances Garratt provided an update on the three workshops that had been held before the meeting. The Committee members who attended praised the design of the workshops, which they felt had been a very worthwhile exercise. Duncan Rudkin stated that it was important that the questions at the workshops had been asked and discussed openly and honestly. Denis Toppin felt that it was very important that the GDC had listened to key stakeholders on these issues.
30. Frances confirmed that the issues that were included in the workshops would be addressed with the public using a variety of methods.

Developing new outcomes-based guidance to dental schools

31. Paul Feeney introduced a paper outlining the development plans for new outcomes-based undergraduate guidance to dental schools. This guidance would replace The First Five Years (TFFY).
32. Mike Martin questioned why there would be a working party and what the implications of the changes would be. Lesley Kant said that she felt external people need to be brought in to give the project credibility and because the GDC does not have all the knowledge to undertake this task.
33. It was agreed that there was a need for this work to be done quickly, but it was more important that it was done correctly. It was important to involve key stakeholders.
34. Duncan Rudkin stated that much of the proposed structure for new guidance could be found in the interim First Five Years document and in the four domains of standards: Communication; Professionalism; Clinical; Management and Leadership. There was a need to draw a distinction between what dental experts say and to give space to what the public are entitled to expect. The Committee felt that DDT should be looked at, at the same time as TFFY. Frances Garratt agreed with this approach, but asked the Committee to be aware that this would mean that the process might take longer. There was support from the Committee to synchronise the outcomes for the dental team.
35. Some members felt that there needed to be a decision about the graduating level for the professions before the working party commenced. It was argued that it should be possible to articulate the level at graduation without needing to have developed the process of how best to reach it or what might come after it. There was some support for mapping the complete path to full registration immediately.
36. The Committee agreed that the development of outcomes-based guidance for the whole of the dental team should be done at the same time. This item should be

brought back to the Committee at a later date with the plans for DCP guidance added, as well as a revised proposal for how the work will be delivered.

Interim version of The First Five Years

37. Paul Feeney explained that certain parts of the existing version of TFFY were out of date. Although the development of new guidance had begun, it was felt that an amended version of the existing guidance was needed for the interim period. It was argued that a complete reinvention of the document and its outcomes should not be undertaken. This was because institutions were familiar with the outcomes contained in the document and plans were in place for new guidance to be introduced within two years. The Committee agreed that the important change to the guidance was the information that had been removed.
38. Lesley Kant suggested two changes to the format and wording of the document. These were accepted.
39. The Committee approved the interim version presented and agreed that this document will be active until the new guidance is introduced.

Update on specialist lists

40. Ewen MacLeod provided a brief update on the specialist lists. He notified the committee that the list in Special Care Dentistry had been opened. In addition, a memorandum of understanding with the Joint Committee of Specialist Training in Dentistry (JCSTD) had been published.

Items for report

Inspection update – Peninsula Dental School

41. Peter Butler explained that the inspection found no major problems with the programme.
42. There was some discussion about the clarity of the response received from the school, but the Committee felt that overall the findings of the report were good.

Re-inspection – University of Portsmouth BSc in Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy

43. The Committee were pleased with the improved situation concerning the assessment of the final unit of the programme. The programme was found to be sufficient.

Inspection update – Cumbria and Lancashire Medical and Dental Consortium

44. The Committee noted the progress made in the programme.

Inspection update – Aberdeen Dental School

45. Pravat Bhattacharyya provided an update on the progress of the Aberdeen Dental School. The report of a videoconference between GDC inspectors and Aberdeen and Dundee university staff which took place in August will be presented to the Committee at its December meeting.

New course submission deadlines

46. Paul Feeney alerted the Committee to issues with the timing and standard of new course submissions. He proposed that all submissions should be sent to the GDC a minimum of six months in advance of the course start date. Several courses had

been submitted at very short notice, causing great pressure to be put on the staff and the Committee.

47. The Committee acknowledged that it had no statutory powers to stop a course beginning and if a course begins before it receives provisional approval, there is pressure to approve it for the graduates' sake.
48. It was recognised that the course providers should inform students accepted on a course that it has not been granted GDC provisional approval.
49. The Committee accepted the proposal, but recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances that they have to take into account. The Committee requested legal advice regarding whether it has a duty to inspect a course that commences before it has received provisional approval.

Any other business

50. Paul Feeney briefed the Committee on a piece of work being undertaken on the quality assurance of higher education by the Department of Health, through the Higher Education Regulatory Reform Group (HERRG) and the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE).

Date of next meeting

51. The next meeting will be held on **8 December 2008**. The meeting will start at 9.30am.