

Recognition of Comparable International Qualifications under Article 12 (2) (a)

Executive Summary and Recommendations

1. Introduction

This paper outlines a procedure for assessing comparable international qualifications under Article 12 (2) (a) of the Health Professions Order 2001.

The Committee is asked to agree the principle, process and decision set out in this paper. Table 1, below lists the comparable qualifications which the Education and Training Committee are asked to approve under Article 12 (2) (a). The background information section explains the procedure which the committee is asked to approve.

The table below shows qualifications that have been recommended as comparable and registerable listing the number of applications in which the qualifications have been listed. The committee is asked to consider this table as the first publishable list of comparable qualifications meeting the requirements of Article 12 (2) (a).

PROFESSION	COUNTRY	NAME OF INSTITUTION	NAME OF QUALIFICATION	YEAR OF GRADUATION	TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES APPROVED FOR HPC REGISTRATION
PHYSIOTHERAPY	NEW ZEALAND	Auckland University of Technology	BSc Health Science (Physiotherapy)	2001	10
PHYSIOTHERAPY	AUSTRALIA	Queensland University	BSc Physiotherapy	2000	11
PHYSIOTHERAPY	AUSTRALIA	Queensland University	BSc Physiotherapy	2001	12
PHYSIOTHERAPY	AUSTRALIA	University of Sydney	BSc Physiotherapy	2001	16
PHYSIOTHERAPY	AUSTRALIA	University of Sydney	BSc Physiotherapy	2002	11
PHYSIOTHERAPY	SOUTH AFRICA	Stellenbosch University	BSc Physiotherapy	2002	13
PHYSIOTHERAPY	SOUTH AFRICA	University of Witwatersrand	BSc Physiotherapy	2002	21

2. Background Information

Article 12 (2) (a) of the Health Professions Order 2001 states,

“The Education and Training Committee shall determine procedures to: assess whether a qualification awarded outside the United Kingdom is of a comparable standards to a qualification mentioned in paragraph (1) (a) and it shall, where it sees fit, keep a list of qualifications which are of a comparable standard which it shall publish and keep under review.”

The principle will be based on the historical work undertaken by Registration Assessors who have already reviewed these qualifications and deemed them comparable for registration purposes. It is advised that, in future if any of the above listed qualifications are presented to the HPC that they are approved without the need to use the professional judgement of Registration Assessors to re-check comparability.

This process is not about approving individuals for registration, it is about establishing a list of comparable qualifications based on a cumulative, retrospective procedure.

The list of comparable qualifications will be limited to specific countries, from which HPC received the majority of international applications. On the basis of current statistical trend analysis of the nationality of applicants applying via the International route it is not likely to be more than 15 - 20 institutions globally from approximately six countries of origin.

On analysis of the current application data, the majority are concentrated from specific countries. The list below is taken from detailed analysis of the management information for 2004/2005:

Country
India
Philippines
Ireland
South Africa
Australia
New Zealand

Indeed, the application data can be analysed further to show which professions the HPC receives the majority of international applications, see table below taken from management information for 2004/2005:

PROFESSION	TOTAL APPLICATIONS
Arts Therapists	13
Biomedical Scientists	517
Clinical Scientists	41
Chiropodists/Podiatrists	69
Dieticians	184
ODPs	1
Occupational Therapists	554
Orthoptists	2
Paramedics	25
Physiotherapists	1540
Prosthetists/Orthoptists	9
Radiographers	753
SLTs	183
	3891

The proposed procedure for establishing the list of comparable qualifications is laid out as follows:

1. Executive collects data from the HPC Registration database (LISA) on qualifications
2. Executive checks data for total registrations and sifts from the list of approvals those qualifications that have appeared at least 10 times
3. Executive then cross matches the above list with the data for total rejections to ensure that none of the qualifications appear in applications which have been rejected from registration
4. Registration Committee reviews list and recommends to the Education & Training Committee that the list of comparable qualifications is updated to include the new additions

The proposed process will require a qualification to appear in HPC registration data ten times before it is deemed comparable and before it is recommended to be included on the list.

Ongoing monitoring of continued comparability of the list will take place every five years. This will mean that an application will be tested for comparability by a Registration Assessor. If it is approved for registration it will remain on the list, if it is not, all future applications will be sent out to Registration Assessors and the qualification will be removed from the list. The Committee will be notified of any changes.

Finally, the committee is advised that there are differences in the way an application is handled depending on the type of route they are following to seek registration. This is all clearly defined within the legislation. A list of frequently asked questions is included with this paper for note. These will be added to the website to provide a full explanation to employers, educational institutions and applicants on how HPC operates the procedure of Article 12 (2) (a) comparable qualifications.

3 Financial Implications

The financial implications of this process are:

- 3.1. Over time it is estimated that only 75% of applications will need to be sent out for assessment. A direct impact will be a decreased reliance on Registration Assessors to undertake the entire workload of reviewing applications.
- 3.2. Further improvement in turnaround time to process international applications (currently 25 working days from point of application to point of registration, estimated improvement 10 working days from receipt of application to point of registration).

3.3. A reduction in the cost of assessing international applications

4. Resource Implications

None

5. Appendices

Frequently Asked Questions – communicating why and how HPC has implemented the procedure laid out in Article 12 (2) (a)