

Education and Training Committee, 6 September 2018

Comparable Qualifications List

Executive summary and recommendations

### **Introduction**

At its meeting on 12 June 2017 the Education and Training Committee (ETC) discussed and approved the Comparable Qualifications List (CQL; the List), included within the paper 'International Professional Equivalence'.

The Committee agreed a new comparability model, the first Comparable Qualifications List and instructed the Executive to develop the List further.

### **Background information**

The Executive acted on the ETC's recommendations to:

- Proceed with publishing and application of the first Comparable Qualifications List;
- Develop the List further in line with the proposed model.

The Executive has also gathered data regarding the use of the CQL to date, carried out fitness to practise checks and undertaken an annual information gathering exercise with the relevant overseas bodies.

### **Decision**

The Committee is invited to:

- Approve the revised list of comparable qualifications as per Appendix A;
- Consider the information on the functioning of the CQL to date;
- Instruct the Executive to develop the List further in line with the approved Comparability Model.

### **Resource and financial implications**

Resource and financial implications are accounted for in the Registration Department planning for 2018 – 2019 and detailed in the ETC paper 'International Professional Equivalence' dated 24 November 2016.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A Comparable qualifications – Updated List to be approved and published.

### **Date of paper**

## **1. Functioning of the CQL**

### 1.1 Statistical data

From 12 June 2017, when the Comparable Qualifications List (CQL) was first approved up to 12 June 2018, the Executive has used the CQL provision in 198 cases.

The use of CQL during the first full calendar year of operation delivered a saving of £32,076 in partner assessment fees alone. There are other associated resource and cost savings, relating to the assessment of the professional qualifications process. For those applicants who we registered using CQL, the application process was considerably shorter – taking just 26 working days on average rather than 45 working days for international applicants.

### 1.2 Annual monitoring of the CQL – Fitness to Practise (FTP) data and information exchange with relevant regulators.

At the end of the financial year 2017-18 we requested an annual FTP check on all applications which we considered using the CQL. No FTP cases were raised in connection with these applications.

We have also contacted all the relevant regulators connected to the current comparable qualifications – CORU in Ireland, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand. These checks confirmed that there were no changes in regards to the structure, approval or content of the comparable qualifications on the List.

## **2. Research carried out based on ETC's recommendation since June 2017**

2.1 In the meeting on 12 June 2017, the Committee instructed the Executive to carry out a comparability exercise on physiotherapy qualifications from South Africa, United States and Cyprus.

2.2 The Executive applied the agreed comparability criteria and the findings are described below along with the Executive's recommendation.

### 2.3 South Africa

Physiotherapists are regulated in South Africa by the Health Professions Council South Africa (HPC SA). The Executive tried to establish a good communication channel with HPC SA; however the information received to date does not provide sufficient confidence to progress with this piece of work. The communication is ongoing and it is possible that with new information becoming known the Executive will return to scrutinising the suitability of physiotherapy qualifications from South Africa being added to the CQL.

## 2.4 United States of America (US)

We met (Skype call) with the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy (FCCTP). The regulation of physiotherapy is not consistent across the US, a national exam in physiotherapy is executed by individual states with a degree of freedom regarding professional recognition and licensing rules. None of the US professional qualifications currently assessed by HCPC met the Comparability Model criteria of successfully assessing at least three applications per qualification in the test period. We recommend not to progress with this piece of work.

## 2.5 Cyprus

Cypriot qualifications did not meet the Comparability Model requirement of receiving at least 25 applications in the test period, despite the high consistency of assessment outcomes. This piece of work has therefore not progressed but we will continue to monitor the volumes of applications against the threshold requirement of the Comparability Model.

### **3. Further application of the Comparability Model**

3.1 Following the June 2017 ETC meeting the Executive carried on applying the comparability test and on that basis conducted additional research into physiotherapists, diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers from Portugal, diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers from Australia and diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers from New Zealand. We have also initiated additional streams of research, some of which we would like to develop in the future. The findings are outlined below.

#### **Completed research.**

### 3.2 Portugal

On 19 April 2018 the Executive met the representatives of the Portuguese Ministry of Health (Administracao Central do Sistema de Saude; ACSS) in Lisbon. As a result of this meeting it has been established that a robust regulatory system is in place for physiotherapy and radiography, with a publically available list of approved qualifications and professional licensing in place. ACSS representatives are committed to ongoing cooperation and exchange of information with HCPC.

On that basis the Executive carried out a detailed qualification check of 102 physiotherapy applications and 237 radiography applications. They achieved a 97 per cent and 100 per cent assessment success rate respectively, gaining registration with HCPC.

A list of additional comparable qualifications has been proposed, and it is outlined in Appendix A.

## **Current research and application of the Comparability Model**

The ongoing research relates solely to diagnostic and therapeutic radiography at this stage.

### **3.3 Australia and New Zealand**

Diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers are regulated in both countries, by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in Australia and by the Ministry of Health in New Zealand. Both regulators are working closely with the national Medical Radiation Boards.

The Executive has established good cooperation channels with both regulators and Medical Radiation Boards.

The Medical Radiation Practice Board of Australia (MRPBA) and the New Zealand Medical Radiation Therapy Board (MRTB) have agreed mirroring professional capabilities/scopes of practice in both countries, effectively working with the same set of standards.

In addition, AHPRA has confirmed that the MRPBA has approved any program currently listed as an approved qualification on the HCPC website. This was implemented following an assessment exercise undertaken by MRPBA, showing substantial equivalence with the MRPBA's professional capabilities for medical radiation practice and approved accreditation standards for programs of study.

On that basis, the Executive carried out a detailed qualification check on 252 Australian radiography applications and 93 New Zealand radiography applications received during the period 2014-2016, showing 100 per cent registration assessment success rate in both cases. We are currently in the final stages of preparing a list of comparable qualifications.

### **3.4 Italy**

We received 241 applications in the 2 year test period, with a 96 per cent registration assessment success rate. The profession is regulated by the Italian Ministry of Health. To date it has been difficult to establish good communication channels with the Italian regulator and this piece of work is ongoing.

### **3.5 India, Philippines, Nigeria**

The Executive selected these three countries for closer analysis due to the high volumes of applications received and corresponding high assessment success rates. We made initial enquiries with relevant regulators in these countries, however we have not been able to establish good communication channels.

#### **4. The updated List of Comparable Qualification for approval**

4.1 As a result of the detailed analysis of historical application registration data relating to the above professions/countries, supported by the regulatory information obtained, the Executive proposes an updated List of Comparable Qualifications for Committee's approval.

In addition to previously approved physiotherapy qualifications from Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, the list now contains 17 qualifications in physiotherapy from Portugal, and 1 qualification in diagnostic radiography from Portugal.

Appendix A outlines the full list of qualifications to be added to the Comparable Qualifications List.

#### **5. Future steps and recommendations**

5.1 The Executive proposes to finalise the list of Australian and New Zealand comparable radiography qualifications for Committee's approval.

5.2 The Executive proposes to conduct further research in the suitability of adding South African qualifications in physiotherapy and also radiography qualifications from Italy, India, Philippines and Nigeria to the CQL. These qualifications suggest a high degree of comparability, however, at present it has not been possible to establish reliable information regarding the regulatory process in these countries. The Executive proposes to keep this piece of work open and to de-prioritise it at present.

5.3 The Executive proposes to stop further research work into physiotherapists from the US, and monitor whether the numbers of incoming Cypriot applications meet the Comparability Model threshold.

5.4 The Executive proposes to begin a process of researching information in regards to the next largest population of incoming applicants, in line with the agreed comparability criteria.

#### **6. Decision**

The Committee is invited to:

- Approve the List of Comparable Qualifications as per Appendix A;
- Consider the information on the functioning of the CQL to date;
- Instruct the Executive to develop the List further in line with the Comparability Model.

## Comparable Qualifications

The Education and Training Committee (ETC) has assessed the qualifications included in this list as being of a comparable standard to an equivalent HCPC-approved qualification awarded in the UK.

The assessment of a qualification's comparability is based primarily upon the outcome of applications for admission to the HCPC register made by holders of that qualification. The comparability process does not involve the detailed approval or monitoring of an educational programme, but the ETC does keep the comparability of qualifications under review. The publication of this list is discretionary and the ETC reserves the right to remove a qualification from this list at any time.

This list was published on 6 September 2018 and supersedes all previous lists.

### Physiotherapists

#### **Australia**

Australian Catholic University  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

Bond University, Gold Coast  
Doctor of Physiotherapy

University of Canberra  
Master of Physiotherapy

Charles Sturt University  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy

Curtin University  
Bachelor of Science (Physiotherapy)  
Master of Physiotherapy

Flinders University  
Master of Physiotherapy

Griffith University  
Master of Physiotherapy

James Cook University  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy

La Trobe University  
Bachelor of Applied Science and Master of Physiotherapy Practice  
Master of Physiotherapy Practice

University of Melbourne  
Doctor of Physiotherapy

Monash University  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

University of Newcastle  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

University of Notre Dame  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

University of Queensland  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)  
Master of Physiotherapy Studies

University of South Australia  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)  
Master of Physiotherapy (Graduate Entry)

University of Sydney  
Bachelor of Applied Science (Physiotherapy)  
Bachelor of Applied Science (Physiotherapy) (Honours)  
Master of Physiotherapy (Graduate Entry)

## **Ireland**

Royal College of Surgeons  
Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy (Honours)

University College Dublin  
Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy (Honours)

University of Limerick  
Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy

Trinity College Dublin  
Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy

## **New Zealand**

The Auckland University of Technology  
Bachelor of Health Science in Physiotherapy

The University of Otago  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy  
Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours)

## **Portugal**

Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra - Escola Superior de Tecnologia da Saúde de Coimbra  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa - Escola Superior de Tecnologia da Saúde de Lisboa  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Instituto Politécnico do Porto - Escola Superior de Saúde  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal - Escola Superior de Saúde  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Universidade de Aveiro - Escola Superior de Saúde de Aveiro  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

CESPU - Instituto Politécnico de Saúde do Norte - Escola Superior de Saúde do Vale do Ave  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

CESPU - Instituto Politécnico de Saúde do Norte - Escola Superior de Saúde do Vale do Sousa  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde do Alcoitão  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde da Cruz Vermelha Portuguesa  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde Egas Moniz  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde Jean Piaget de Algarve  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde Jean Piaget de Vila Nova de Gaia  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde Jean Piaget de Viseu  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Escola Superior de Saúde de Santa Maria  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

ISAVE - Instituto Superior de Saúde

Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Universidade Fernando Pessoa / Fundação Ensino E Cultura "Fernando Pessoa"  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

Universidade Atlantica  
Licenciatura em Fisioterapia

### **Diagnostic Radiographers**

#### **Portugal**

Instituto Politécnico De Coimbra, Escola Superior De Tecnologia Da Saúde De  
Coimbra  
Imagem Medica e Radioterapia