

HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

REPORT ON ASSESSORS FOR INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS

THE PAST

Originally all International applicants were assessed by their respective Boards at CPSM. Each Board undertook these assessments slightly differently, usually by committee. Where they were undertaken by Board members they were not paid for these assessments. However, with an increase of applications some of the Boards began to change these arrangements because the workload falling on Board members was becoming too onerous.

The first Board to advertise for and train new assessors was the Physiotherapists. These assessors were paid and asked to conform to certain guidelines on turnround times and quality of assessment. These assessors are still all in place and are paid.

The next Board to change its procedures was the Occupational Therapists Board. This Board decided to ask all International applicants to sit a written examination while all EU applicants were assessed by assessors who had been recruited through an advertisement and had been trained and are paid. Currently some of these assessors have moved etc and one Board member has stepped in to make up assessor numbers.

The Dietitians have moved from assessment by Board committee to assessment by assessors who have been recruited through an advertisement, trained and are paid.

Other professions have either ex-Board members undertaking assessments, assessors appointed by Boards or assessors who have been recruited through advertisements etc. or a mixture of all three methods.

THE PRESENT

Currently assessors undertake different tasks and are paid differing fees but not necessarily as a logical progression from one to the other. The difference in fees has been as a result of unilateral applications by various professions to the finance committee.

Generally speaking the mixture of easy to hard assessments is difficult to evaluate. For every 15 easy assessments there may well be 5 difficult ones. Some assessments may also take a long time and assessors are paid nothing extra for appeals, further verifications, queries, additional correspondence with applicants, supervisors or managers etc.

Some professions have developed their assessment procedure to include a considerable amount of documentation. Other professions have an embryo application system in place and do not even ask for references. Such differences can also make assessments longer or shorter.

Some professions would like to move to the paid, advertised assessor scheme.

The Orthoptists currently have no assessors at all and have very few applications (one a year?).

Assessors have to undertake grandparenting assessments (for the newest Boards that are undertaking grandparenting at the moment) as well as international assessments.

Current assessors are as follows:

PH – 10 recruited
OT – 4 recruited + 1 Board member
RA – 14
CH – 2 Board members
AS – 6 nominated by board members
OR – 0
PA – 14 Recruited
MLS – 2 Board members (now being undertaken by the professional body)
CS – 33 nominated by professional body
DT – 12 recruited
PO – 2 board members
SL – 15 recruited

Current figures based on applications from July 2001 to July 2002

profession	Applicants	Periods of Adaptation*	Further Verification*
PH	977	142	78
OT	65	14	8
RA	449	48	27
CH	35		4
AS	4	3	
OR	0	0	
PA	50	10	16
MLS	302	302	30
CS	4		
DT	156	9	22
PO	5	2	2
SL	205	10	53

*These refer to non-standard applications where additional work has been necessary.

THE FUTURE

In the future the assessors will all be properly recruited and trained. They will have to undertake both grandparenting and international assessments. Grandparenting will by its nature be much more difficult and contentious than International assessments.

I think there is an argument for paying a similar fee to all assessors since in due course their work will be similar in nature and complexity. Although some cases are relatively easy there are also protracted and difficult assessments to deal with. Additionally, if assessors have to pay tax and NI out of their assessment fees then there is a case for giving them say, £60 across the board since their net pay may well be in the region of £40/45. Further, as some assessors have already received £60 fees, it would be difficult to reduce them now.

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