

Page 2: Information about the person or organisation completing this submission

Q1 This submission was completed by:

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Q2 Are you making this submission

on behalf of a company or organisation ,

If group, company or organisation, please specify::

Oral Health Department - AUT

Q3 Please tell us which part of the sector your submission represents

an education provider

Page 3: Area one: new core recertification programme

Q4 What, if anything, do you like about our proposed core recertification programme?

The oral health department at AUT agrees with the four Areas proposed by the Council as new recertification programmes. The Council's proposals to put the responsibility on each practitioner to identify areas within their practice requiring discussion, reviewing, and learning in a form of Professional Development Plan is a good initiative and encouraging. However, there are a few aspects of the proposed Areas that require careful consideration as explained further in the survey.

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Q5 Is there anything about our proposed core recertification programme you would change?

Yes,

Please explain.:

The Department disagrees that every practitioner should undertake an assessment every year. Instead, the Department suggests that this should be taken every two years with the option for any practitioner to do it annually if they wish. The reason for this is because practitioners are busy with their practices and will be stressed about identifying a potential professional peer, develop a PDP and participate in PDAs and on top of that completing the annual open book assessment. People have different levels of learning and the Council should consider that there might be people who require more time settle down about the new proposals. Perhaps when the new proposals have been implemented for the first 2 – 3 years, then an annual Open Book Assessment would be feasible. Support will be needed for those who have been identified/chosen as the professional peers such as guidelines on how to develop the PDP, create PDAs, designing the learning outcomes or objectives and guidance on how to write the reflective statements. Some practitioners may not have all these skills and lack of support and guidelines will put pressure on them. Professional peers will also need some advice/help from the Council on how to deal with difficult peers.

Q6 Do you support our proposal to change the recertification cycle to 12 months?

No,

Please explain.:

No, the Department does not support the recertification to occur every 12 months. Academic staff at universities will not find this difficult to achieve as academic staff constantly is upgrading their knowledge in all aspects of the scopes of practice. However, oral health professionals not engaged in the academia will find this difficult and feel the pressure to do 'something' quickly to meet these requirements. More time will be required for some practitioners to identify areas requiring improvements in their own space and time. Some practitioners may not even be aware they need support. There is also the additional workload that this requirement will place on the chosen professional peers. A 12-month cycle has the potential to place a more work and responsibility on them.

Q7 Do you think our proposed core recertification programme should include a requirement for practitioners to complete an online open-book assessment of their technical and clinical knowledge and skills?

Yes,

Please explain.:

Yes, this model of learning will also encourage practitioners to review some of the basic theoretical concepts or practical knowledge each practitioner should maintain within their scope of practice. Some practitioners tempt to concentrate in the practical aspect of their practice and pay less attention to the theory and research that supports the practicality of their scope of practice. Therefore, the Department supports this proposal. The challenge for the Council will be to maintain these assessments up to date, so they are changed regularly and are motivating for practitioners to see the next assessment. The online open book will also allow practitioners to maintain professional contact with the Council and to keep up to date with any updates the Council may do. This could also be an approach to see the Council as a supportive entity that cares about its practitioners.

Q8 If a proposal about an online open-book assessment of a practitioner's technical and clinical skills and knowledge is supported, how often should practitioners be required to complete an assessment?

Every two years ,

Please explain.:

Every two years would be an appropriate time for practitioners to respond to an online open-book assessment. Keeping in mind that practitioners will be working with their professional peers in the identification of topics for discussion about their practices, developing their PDP, engaging in PDAs, and writing their reflective statements. The Department is with the view that open book assessments every three years or more is not a good length of time for practitioners to keep up with their basic knowledge or skills as this may encourage practitioners to relax in their responsibility to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.

Q9 Do you have other proposals about our proposed core recertification programme you would like us to consider? Please explain.

Perhaps the Council should develop a committee that is well prepared and trained to help those professionals identified as the professional peers to support them in conducting PDP and PDAs.

Some professional peers might need support to guide other practitioners to write their PDP and to participate in PDAs.

Q10 What, if anything, do you like about our draft proposals for supporting new registrants?

The oral health department agrees and supports Area two of this proposal. New registrants require support from well experienced practitioners in their early stages of their professional practice. The department agrees that a two-year mentoring system/programme gives adequate time to support new registrants in their new profession. There are some skills that new registrants need to develop in their first years of practicing and this could be well achieved with the support and guidance of a mentor.

Graduates might have the knowledge and skills and be competent in their own in their scope of practice, however, they might lack of confidence if working on their own.

The two-year mentoring model could be implemented and make it compulsory to all new registrants to ensure there is consistency with the support given to the new registrants.

Q11 Is there anything about the draft proposals for supporting new registrants you would change?

Yes,

Please explain.:

Yes, the Department is with the view that the responsibility for new registrants to participate in mentoring programmes should be of the employers rather than of the registrants. New registrants, as new members of a practice, may not have the knowledge, experience or capacity to identify a suitable or appropriate mentor. Registrants will require time to get to know their colleagues first before they can identify a mentor. If the responsibility is placed on the new registrants to identify a suitable mentor, they might select a 'friend' to be the mentor who they feel comfortable with. The risk is that the 'mentor' might be a practitioner who does not have the skills, knowledge or capacity to mentor a new registrant and consequently failing to identify areas of improvement. Mentors should ensure that their mentoring programme offers, supports and covers all the Core Subjects the Council is proposing the new registrant should identify if they are enrolled in a mentoring programme. The responsibility on offering the mentoring programmes and ensuring that new registrants participate in these programmes should be of the employers rather than on the new registrants. The implementation of a two-year mentoring model will also encourage some practitioners to take some leadership roles within their organisation and to maintain peer contact with other mentors so there is consistency with the mentoring systems. Universities or educational institutions could help mentors to develop mentoring programmes with learning objectives/outcomes and assessment tools.

Q12 Do you think the proposed two year minimum period for the mentoring relationship is:

just right,

Please explain.:

The Department's view is that a two-year mentoring programme is just right and appropriate length of time for a new registrant to be supported. The department supports this initiative. All oral health providers and private practices should be made compulsory to have a two-year mentoring programme if they intent to employ a new registrant. Currently, some practices offer different levels of mentoring in their organisation and it is obvious that those who are mentored for only few weeks the confidence of the new registrants is not as strong as those who are mentored and supported for a year. Learning does not stop in a year and support still needed for those graduates even if they have been mentored for a year. Therefore, the department strongly supports the two-year mentoring.

Q13 Do you think all new registrants should participate in a mentoring programme, or are there some new registrants who should not be required to participate in a mentoring programme?

Yes,

Please explain.:

Yes, the department is with the view that all new registrants should participate in mentoring programmes regardless of the new registrants' levels of competency and skills. This is to ensure that the Council is consistent with this proposal and to ensure that employers have systems in place to support new registrants. There should not be exceptions for new registrants to participate in mentoring programmes. Perhaps the level of mentoring could be different in some situations but after all this should be compulsory to all employers to have mentoring programmes and for new registrants to participate in these programmes.

Q14 Do you have other proposals about supporting new registrants you would like us to consider? Please explain.

Yes, new registrants should not select or identify their mentors. It should be the employers' responsibility to designate a mentor for the new registrants. The reason for this is to prevent new registrants to identify or select a practitioner who does not have mentoring skills.

Page 5: Area three: addressing health-related competence decline concerns

Q15 What, if anything, do you like about our draft proposals for addressing health-related competence decline concerns?

The department does not support the Council's proposal for practitioners over 40 years of age, to prove that their vision is adequate to perform the tasks associated with their scopes of practice. The reason for this is because young practitioners under the age of 40 may suffer from vision problems that they might not even be aware of, therefore putting patients at risk.

If the Council is proposing this Area, then it should be consistent with all practitioners regardless of their age. This is to ensure that all practitioners and new registrants are visually fit to practise.

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Q16 Is there anything about the draft proposals for addressing health-related competence decline concerns you would change?

Yes,

Please explain.:

Yes, it should be compulsory to all practitioners regardless of their age. Just the same way it is mandatory to wear gloves, mask and safety glasses. This will also be taken as a proactive measure to help practitioners to be aware of and identify eye problems in time to take corrective measures.

Q17 Do you have other proposals for addressing health-related competence decline concerns you would like us to consider? Please explain.

Yes, it should be mandatory to all practitioners or alternatively make it compulsory to wear/use dental loupes.

Page 6: Area four: addressing recurring non-compliant practitioner behaviours

Q18 What, if anything, do you like about our draft proposals for addressing recurring non-compliant practitioner behaviours?

The oral health department strongly supports Area four. Addressing recurring non-compliant practitioner behaviours.

Q19 Is there anything about the draft proposals for addressing recurring non-compliant practitioner behaviours you would change?

Yes,

Please explain.:

Yes, the department supports this Area. However, one thing the department would like the Council to consider is that the responsibility to identify and work with a mentor to provide support should not be the practitioner's decision/responsibility. If a practitioner chooses his/her mentor, this could be a 'friend' who may not have the capacity or skills to provide support to the practitioner. The chosen mentor also may not be a strong, committed, reliable or dedicated practitioner with the skills to support a practitioner with recurring non-compliant behaviours. The oral health department is with the opinion that this could be the Council's decision to identify and provide a mentor that is unbiased, fair and transparent in supporting a practitioner with recurring non-compliant behaviours. The mentor will require strong support from the Council to deal with a difficult colleague.

Q20 Do you have other proposals for addressing recurring non-compliant practitioner behaviours you would like us to consider? Please explain.

No that we can think of.

Page 7: Final thoughts and comments

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Q21 Do you have any other comments, suggestions or information you want to share with us about the draft proposals for improving our approach to recertification?

Good effort from the Council to ensure practitioners are up to date with their knowledge and skills.
