

Education and Training Committee – 10 March 2010

Hearing Aid Dispensers – list of approved programmes

Executive summary and recommendations

This paper seeks to agree the list of approved programmes for hearing aid dispensers, which will become effective from the date of the register opening (1 April 2010). The Education and Training Committee is asked to agree a list of currently approved programmes as well as a list of programmes which were approved historically for specific periods. The recommended lists are based on the approval information available from the Hearing Aid Council (HAC).

Introduction

Article 15(8) of the Health Professions Order provides that:

- “(8) The Council shall maintain and publish a list of the courses of education and training, qualifications and institutions –
- (a) which are for the time being approved under this Order: or
 - (b) which have been approved under this Order but which are no longer approved, together with a record of the periods in respect of which they were approved.”

Paragraphs (1) and (2) of Article 6 of the Health Care and Associated Professions (Hearing Aid Dispensers) Order 2009 provides that:

“(1) The HPC and the HAC shall enter into arrangements (which may include financial arrangements) to facilitate the introduction of arrangements for the regulation of hearing aid dispensers by the HPC arising out of this Order.”

“(2) The arrangements entered into under paragraph (1) shall include arrangements to ensure that all the names in the HAC register which are to be entered in the HPC register with effect from 1st April 2010 are so entered.”

In turn, paragraph 7 of the Health Care and Associated Professions (Hearing Aid Dispensers) Order 2009 outlines amendments to paragraph 1A of schedule 1(6) of the Health Professions Order 2001. The amendment of schedule 1(6) refers to the following definition:

“the HAC Register” means the register of dispensers of hearing aids maintained by the Hearing Aid Council under section 2(1)(a) of the Hearing Aid Council Act 1968.”

Therefore, it is necessary for the Committee to maintain and publish lists of approved programmes for hearing aid dispensers. These lists should take into consideration the register transfer arrangements outlined above.

Current arrangements with the HAC

The HAC has a recent history of approval of programmes leading to eligibility to apply to their register. The HAC approves a number of programmes which lead directly to eligibility to apply to their register.

In line with the register transfer criteria, it is proposed that only those programmes which currently allow individuals to gain eligibility to apply to the HAC register should be granted open ended approval by the HPC.

Appendix 1 provides a list of these current programmes. This list was based on information provided by the HAC on 5 February 2010.

Historical arrangements with the HAC

The HAC has a long history of owning and setting examinations for entry onto their register. Traditionally, there have been two historical routes known as:

- Company or trainee route
- Aptitude route

The “company” or “trainee” route comprised a period of employment followed by an examination set by the HAC. Following successful completion of the examination an individual was able to undertake a period of supervised practice during which a log book would be completed. Satisfactory completion of all elements of the route granted eligibility to apply to the HAC Register for a period of 60 days after which point eligibility expired (extensions were granted). If eligibility expired individuals reverted back to trainee status and had to undertake the HAC examination. Current information from HAC indicates no individuals failed to register within the required time-frame.

The aptitude route was designed to allow individuals with relevant experience a more expedient route to registration. Individuals if accepted onto this route on the basis of relevant prior qualifications and experience would undertake a one written and one practical examination. Successful completion of these examinations granted eligibility to apply to the HAC Register for a period of 60 days after which point eligibility expired (extensions were granted). If eligibility expired individuals had to undertake the HAC examinations again. Current information from HAC indicates no individuals failed to register within the required time-frame.

Appendix 2 provides a list of these historic programmes. This list was based on information provided by the HAC on 28 October 2009.

HPC’s list of approved programmes

The HPC’s ‘register of approved programmes’ is only available on-line. It is proposed that the list of approved programmes for hearing aid dispensers is published, with the relevant caveats, ahead of the register opening on 1 April

2010. This would ensure that education providers who are currently unclear whether their programme will be approved by the HPC or not, receive clear and effective information at the earliest opportunity. Once the register is opened, the list would adopt the same format as the existing fourteen professions.

Decision

The Committee is asked to agree the following:

- To grant open ended approval to the programmes outlined in appendix 1 (subject to receiving the final data from the HAC and any subsequent editing);
- To approve the programmes for the historical periods outlined in appendix 2 (subject to receiving the final data from the HAC and any subsequent editing);
- To confirm that the programmes outlined in appendix 2 are no longer approved (subject to receiving the final data from the HAC and any subsequent editing);
- To publish the appropriate lists of approved programmes; and
- To agree that the above decisions will become effective from the date of the register opening (1 April 2010)

Background information

None

Resource implications

Accounted for in 2009-2010 Education work plan and budget.

Financial implications

Accounted for in 2009-2010 Education work plan and budget.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of currently approved programmes

Appendix 2 – List of historically approved programmes

Date of paper

22 February 2010

Appendix 1 – List of currently approved programmes

EP NAME	VALIDTOR	PROGRAMME NAME	MODE OF STUDY
Anglia Ruskin University	Anglia Ruskin University	FDSoc in Hearing Aid Audiology	Distance Learning with residential periods as appropriate
Aston University	Aston University	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full time
Aston University	Aston University	Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology	Full time
University of Bristol	University of Bristol	BSc Audiology	Full time
University of Bristol	University of Bristol	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full time
De Montfort University	De Montfort University	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full-time
De Montfort University	De Montfort University	Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology	Full-time
University of Manchester	University of Manchester	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full-time
University of Manchester	University of Manchester	MSc Audiology (with clinical competency certificate or certificate of audiological competence)	Full-time
Swansea University	Swansea University	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full-time
University College London	University College London	BSc Audiology	Full-time
University College London	University College London	BSc (Hons) Audiology	Full-time
University College London	University College London	MSc Audiology (with clinical competency certificate or certificate of audiological competence)	Full-time
Mary Hare	Oxford Brookes University	Foundation Degree in Hearing Aid Audiology	Full-time
Anglia Ruskin University	Anglia Ruskin University	Aptitude Test	N/A
De Montfort University	De Montfort University	Aptitude Test	N/A

Appendix 2 – List of historically approved programmes

EP NAME	VALIDTOR	PROGRAMME NAME	MODE OF STUDY	EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT APPLICATION
Hearing Aid Council	N/A	Trainee Route / Company Route	N/A	<p>Certified copy of letter from HAC stating eligibility to apply to their Register following completion of written examinations and period of supervised practice.</p> <p>In absence of this evidence and if the applicant was previously registered with HAC, the applicant can be cross-referenced against hardcopy HAC Registers in archive. Date of Registration is required to perform this check. As HAC controlled all routes to the register, presence on a historic register is evidence of completion of an approved programme.</p> <p>All usual returners to practice requirements are in place.</p>
Hearing Aid Council	N/A	Aptitude Route	N/A	<p>Certified copy of letter from HAC stating eligibility to apply to their Register following completion of practical and written examinations.</p> <p>In absence of this evidence and if the applicant was previously registered with HAC, the applicant can be cross-referenced against hardcopy HAC Registers in archive. Date of Registration is required to perform this check. As HAC controlled all routes to the register, presence on a historic register is evidence of completion of an approved programme.</p> <p>All usual returners to practice requirements are in place.</p>