



# ACCREDITATION PROPOSALS

# ACCREDITATION PROPOSALS

## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 *What is the purpose of accreditation?***

The purpose of accreditation is to create a process through which the quality of homeopathic education can be evaluated against agreed criteria. It aims to stimulate the development of learning programmes that are in keeping with the ethos of homeopathy and its diversity and ensure that the programmes are likely to produce safe and competent practitioners. Accreditation is not intended to produce standardised programmes across the UK.

### **1.2 *On what principles is accreditation based?***

Accreditation has been based on a number of principles of which the key ones are:

- a having the support of course providers
- b reflecting the nature and diversity of the homeopathic profession
- c be developmental – ie supportive of course development and the accreditation process itself will be subject to evaluation and review
- d clarity, transparency and stability of criteria for course providers as they go through the process.

### **1.3 *Who decides on the criteria and process for accreditation?***

The criteria by which educational programmes should be judged will be a subject for debate by the homeopathic profession – educators, practitioners and students – as well as patients and others. They will also agree the process by which this should be done and who should be involved. This consultation is one stage in that process of development.

### **1.4 *What will accreditation mean for an individual wishing to be a registered homeopath?***

When the accreditation system is in place, an individual who wishes to become a registered homeopath will be able to have confidence that the course will enable them to develop to be a competent practising homeopath. It will also mean that individuals who successfully complete an accredited programme will be eligible for registration on the single register for the profession (run by the new registering and regulatory body – NRRB), if they choose to do this, rather than having to go through another assessment process.

### **1.5 *What will accreditation mean for the Course Providers?***

CORH is seeking to develop an accreditation process that reflects the diversity of the course providers whilst promoting the development of education within the profession. CORH is seeking to ensure that the accreditation process is valued by course providers and is supportive of course development.

### **1.6 *Is accreditation just for initial education as a homeopath?***

Yes. These proposals only relate to the education process that enables individuals to develop themselves to become practising homeopaths. However it is recognised that this initial professional education should also help individuals continue to develop throughout their professional and personal life. These proposals do not cover programmes of continuing professional development (CPD) – proposals for how CPD should be taken forward are being considered in another strand of CORH's work.

**1.7 Will it be possible to enter onto the new register without going through an accredited course?**

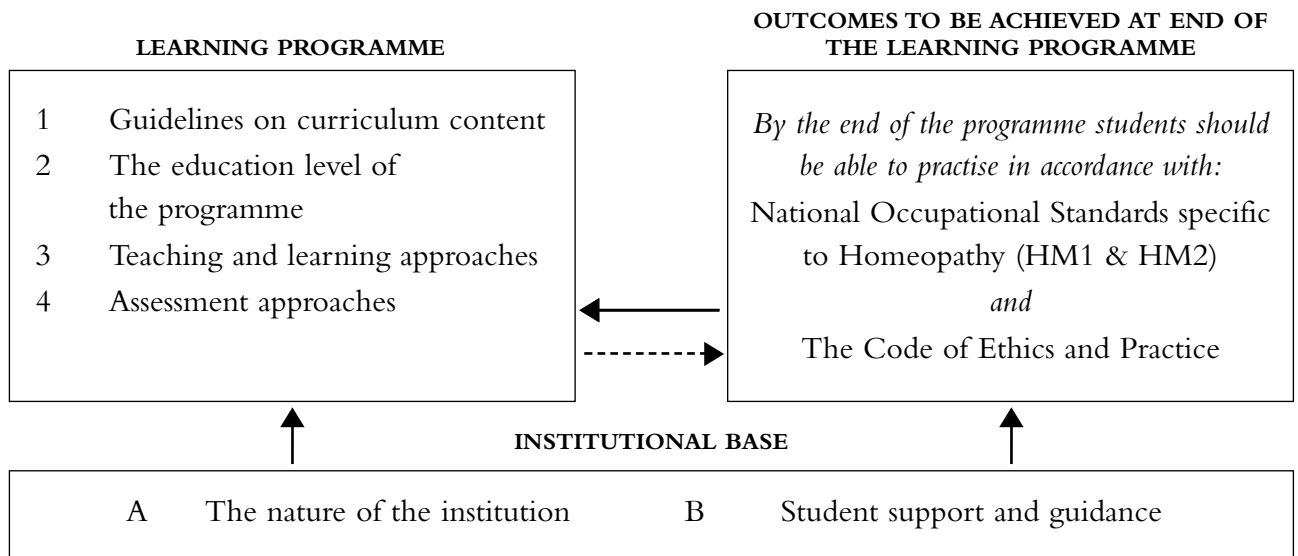
Yes. These proposals only relate to the accredited course route for entry to the new register. There will also be an individual route which will use the same basic criteria for entry as agreed as a result of this consultation. The development of this individual route to entry will be developed once this consultation process has completed.

This paper now gives more information on the draft proposals for the criteria and process of accreditation. It also provides some ideas on how transition processes from current systems to the new system might take place.

## SECTION 2: PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

**2.1 Overview**

The diagram below provides an overview of what follows in the text.



Each of these sections is described in further detail below.

**2.2 Outcomes of the learning programme**

By the end of the programme students should be able to practise in accordance with:

- a the standards of practice specified in the National Occupational Standards specific to Homeopathy (HM1 & HM2)<sup>1</sup>
- and

- b the Code of Ethics and Practice (available on the website, [www.corh.org.uk](http://www.corh.org.uk)).

**Q 1 Do the National Occupational Standards specific to homeopathy (ie HM1 and HM2) and the Code of Ethics and Practice (available on the website, [www.corh.org.uk](http://www.corh.org.uk)) have the right coverage to form the outcomes of programmes to develop students into fully competent homeopathic practitioners? YES  NO**

**If you have answered NO, please explain what else would be needed.**

1. The detail of these national occupational standards can be found on the CORH website, [www.corh.org.uk](http://www.corh.org.uk). In addition wider national occupational standards that are likely to also be relevant to homeopaths can also be found. Respondents might like to consider whether these should also be included in whole, or in part, as the outcomes of courses.

**Q 2** *Are the National Occupational Standards specific to homeopathy (ie HM1 and HM2) at the right level to form the outcomes for the end of courses that aim to develop into fully competent homeopathic practitioners?* YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain your answer.*

**Q 3** *Are the National Occupational Standards specific to homeopathy (ie HM1 and HM2) described at an appropriate amount of detail for use as outcomes of courses that aim to develop into fully competent homeopathic practitioners?* YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please describe the level of detail that is needed.*

## **2.3 The learning programme**

### **2.3.1 Ethos**

The purpose of learning programmes is to enable individuals to develop to practise competently as homeopaths and be eligible for entry to the new single register. Course providers might approach this in a variety of ways. What is important is that the course on offer has internal consistency for students and that the principles on which the course is based follow through consistently into other aspects of the students' experience. To help ensure that this happens, it is proposed that course providers should be encouraged to have an explicit statement of their educational ethos and how this enables individuals to become fit for practice as independent practitioners.

**Q 4** *Do you agree that course providers should be encouraged to have a clear statement of their educational ethos?* YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain your answer.*

### **2.3.2 Course content**

If the outcomes of the course are to be individuals who can practise to meet the requirements stated in the National Occupational Standards for Homeopathy (ie units HM1 and HM2) and the Code of Ethics and Practice, then course content would need to cover the same areas. The National Occupational Standards contain detailed statements about the knowledge, understanding and skills that individuals would need to develop and apply. Respondents will need to look at this detail to evaluate whether this suitable content for courses.

**Q 5** *Do the National Occupational Standards specific to homeopathy (ie HM1 and HM2) and the Code of Ethics and Practice (available on the website, [www.corh.org.uk](http://www.corh.org.uk)) cover the content of the curriculum sufficiently to develop students into fully competent homeopathic practitioners? For example, is there sufficient coverage of research and reflection in action?* YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain what else should be included or what should be taken out.*

### 2.3.3 The education level of the programme

Registered homeopaths are independent practitioners and the education level of the programmes needs to be compatible with this as well as be consistent with the homeopathic associative as well as cognitive skills. Registered homeopaths also need to relate to, and be respected for their professional judgment by other registered healthcare professionals.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education describes degree level programmes (level 3 in the QAA's system) as those that *'on completion of the programme individuals will have developed an understanding of a complex body of knowledge, some of it at the current boundaries of an academic discipline. They will have developed analytical techniques and problem-solving skills that can be applied in employment and be able to evaluate evidence, arguments and assumptions, to reach sound judgments, and to communicate effectively. Individuals should have the qualities needed for employment in situations requiring the exercise of personal responsibility, and decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances'*<sup>2</sup>. (This description focuses on the level of the programme – it does not state the nature of the institution offering that programme.)

**Q 6** *Is this the right education level for programmes that seek to develop students into fully competent homeopathic practitioners?* YES  NO   
*If you have answered NO, please explain the level the programmes should be at.*

### 2.3.4 The length of the programme

Other healthcare professions state an indicative length of an educational programme and it might be helpful if homeopathy considered whether it would be appropriate to do this. A guideline might be in the region of 3,600 hours for the total programme (ie the total amount of teaching and learning time that an average student would need to spend including time in practice and self-study). This number of hours could be formed, for example, on a ratio of 1 direct contact time (face-to-face learning including clinic time) and 3 hours self-study.

**Q 7** *Do you think it would be helpful to state an indicative length of programme?* YES  NO   
*If YES, is 3,600 hours a reasonable indicative time for the total amount of learning time that might be needed?* YES  NO   
*If you have answered NO, please explain your answer.*

**Q 8** *Do you think it might be necessary to specify the minimum number of clinical hours that a student would need to undertake?* YES  NO   
*If YES, please describe what you mean by a 'clinical hour'.*  
*If NO, please explain your answer.*

### 2.4 Teaching and learning approaches

To reflect the diversity of approach in homeopathic education and within the profession itself, course providers will be able to decide their own teaching and learning approaches. Accreditation will look at how colleges' teaching and learning approaches:

- a enable students to meet the agreed outcomes for the programme – at the moment in these proposals that would mean programmes that are capable of producing an individual who is

2. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2001, *The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*

able to practise in accordance with the National Occupational Standards (HM1 and HM2) and the Code of Ethics and Practice

- b promote the personal and professional development of students and their commitment to continuing professional development
- c are consistent with the college's statements and written materials.

**Q 9** *Are these three criteria for evaluating college's teaching and learning approaches appropriate?*

YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed.*

## 2.5 *Assessment approaches*

As with teaching and learning approaches, it is recognised that there is diversity within the profession in relation to the assessment of students within educational programmes. Course providers will be able to decide their assessment approaches. Accreditation will look at how colleges' assessment approaches:

- a assess students as being able to practise in accordance with the National Occupational Standards (HM1 and HM2) and the Code of Ethics and Practice (or whatever are agreed as the outcomes of the programmes)
- b promote the personal and professional development of students and their commitment to continuing professional development
- c are consistent with the college's learning ethos.

In addition accreditation will confirm that:

- d the criteria on which students are assessed are clear and explicit and made available to staff and students
- e students are assessed at the end of the course as being fit to practise as identified in the National Occupational Standards for homeopathy and the Code of Ethics and Practice.

**Q 10** *Are these five criteria for evaluating college's assessment approaches appropriate?*

YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed.*

**Q 11** *Do you think that colleges should be encouraged to have someone external to the college as part of the assessment process (eg someone from the NRRB, an external examiner, a moderator or critical friend)?*

YES  NO

*Please explain.*

## 2.6 *Institutional base*

It is important that students and others can have confidence in the course providers that offer education and training to develop as a homeopath. The criteria in this section focus on the soundness of the institutional base.

### 2.6.1 *The nature of the institution*

- a The course provider has systems and structures appropriate to its size and supportive of its function to produce homeopathic practitioners who can meet the outcomes described in the National Occupational Standards and the Code of Ethics and Practice and are consistent with relevant legal requirements. For example these systems and structures might relate to:
  - i the functioning of the whole institution
  - ii institutional management systems
  - iii institutional policies and practice (including legal requirements and the management of potential conflicts of interest between the financial control of the institution and educational control)
  - iv the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
  - v student progression and achievement
  - vi student representation
  - vii payment, fee and transfer systems
  - viii other aspects of the students' experience
  - ix recruitment, selection and development of staff.
- b Evaluations of the whole institution, its systems and structures, are undertaken on a periodic basis, include input from students and tutors, and actions are taken to address any issues – an audit cycle approach.
- c The course provider has a complaints system that is made clearly known to students and staff which is capable of addressing issues students and/or staff have with the course or the organisation.
- d The course provider holds Public Liability insurance and any other insurance required by legislation.
- e There are sufficient and appropriate resources and facilities to support the learning and development of students to become registered homeopaths (as set out in the National Occupational Standards for Homeopathy and Code of Ethics and Practice).
- f The course provider has systems in place to enable individuals involved with the teaching, learning and assessment of students to develop their competence, knowledge and skills in line with changes and developments in professional practice, evidence and research.

**Q 12** *Are these six criteria for evaluating the course provider appropriate?* YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed.*

**Q 13** *What are your views on how a college's complaint system should link to the accreditation system?*

### 2.6.2 *Student support and guidance*

- a Applicants and students are provided with clear and accurate information on the course. For example on: course content, teaching and learning approaches, assessment criteria and approaches, institutional resources (including staff), accreditation status, fees.
- b Students are offered appropriate personal guidance and support throughout the course and enabled to use other forms of support when they need them.

**Q 14** *Are these two criteria for evaluating student support and guidance appropriate?*

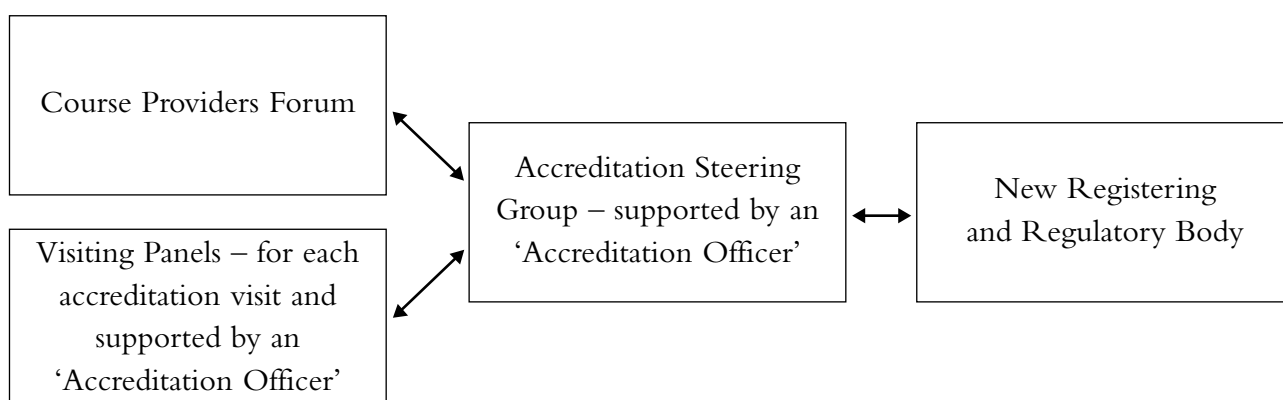
YES  NO

*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed.*

## SECTION 3: PROPOSED PROCESS OF ACCREDITATION

### 3.1 *Proposed structures*

The following structure has been identified as being potentially suitable for accreditation.



It is proposed that a *Course Providers Forum* would be established and open to all providers of homeopathic courses that are designed to develop competent homeopathic practitioners. All course providers would be encouraged to attend and be active members of the Forum. The Forum might meet about twice a year and would need to have sufficient interest for providers to see a value in attending, such as active involvement in the development of accreditation policy and process. The Forum would be represented formally on relevant committees of the new registering and regulatory body ie those that have an impact on accreditation.

It is proposed that *Visiting Panels* will be identified for an accreditation visit of a programme (see below) from a pool of people (eg homeopaths with educational expertise and representatives of the public interest). The Visiting Panels might consist of at least three people, two homeopaths and one non-homeopath. An accreditation officer will support the panels (eg through ensuring that all of the appropriate documentation is prepared and the visit is arranged correctly). Panel members will be acceptable to the course provider being visited. The purpose of the Visiting Panel is to provide an external peer review of the course provider against the agreed accreditation criteria.

It is proposed that an *Accreditation Steering Group* made up of educationists, homeopaths and lay people would be responsible for overseeing all matters to do with accreditation, including the ongoing evaluation and review of the accreditation system itself. The Accreditation Steering Group might exist in its own right or its functions might form one of the duties of another group of the new registering and regulatory body. However the Accreditation Steering Group is constituted, it will link directly into the new registering and regulatory body structure. It has been proposed that the Accreditation Steering Group should have an independent chair ie a non-homeopath not associated with a course provider.

Course providers would have the right of appeal against any decision made on their course.

It is recognised that further work needs to be undertaken on costing the above process and ensuring that it is viable for providers.

- Q 15** *Is this an appropriate structure for the accreditation process?* YES  NO   
*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed and why.*
- Q 16** *Who should form the Course Providers Forum? Please explain.*
- Q 17** *Who should form the Visiting Panels?*  
*Please explain.*
- Q 18** *Who should be represented on the Accreditation Steering Group?*  
*Please explain.*
- Q 19** *Do you think it is appropriate that the Accreditation Steering should have an independent chair?* YES  NO   
*Please explain.*

### 3.2 Proposed accreditation process

It is proposed that the process of accreditation for course providers should consist of three distinct phases.

#### a Application

It is proposed that when course providers submit a ‘notification of interest to develop a course for accreditation with the new registering and regulatory body’ they would be at the start of the application phase. This would mean that they had signed up to the principles, policies and processes of accreditation, have paid the relevant fees and hence are in a formal relationship with the new registering and regulatory body. During the application phase, the course provider would compile an evidence file of any documentation that illustrates how they meet the agreed accreditation criteria. For some course providers this might mean bringing together existing documentation or adapting the documents they have produced for other approval systems; others might need to undertake more work to achieve this. This might take about 1 month to 2 or more years during which time support would be available from the new registering and regulatory body (eg from an accreditation advisor/officer). When the course provider considers that the evidence file is complete, and from this work they have identified ongoing areas for development, and an action plan for addressing these, they will contact the new registering and regulatory body to alert it to the fact. The course provider’s evidence file will be reviewed by the accreditation advisor/officer to confirm that all the necessary information is available for a visit to be arranged. Further information may be requested at this point. Once the application has been accepted, arrangements will be made for a panel to visit the course provider and undertake external peer review.

#### b External peer review – by a Visiting Panel

An external peer review will be undertaken by a Visiting Panel (see earlier) possibly lasting two days. The Panel will review the evidence file produced by the course provider, the course provider’s evaluation and the action plan that has been produced as a result. In addition, the Panel will observe classrooms and clinics; hold discussions with the course team, students and graduates, and with the course provider management. At the conclusion of the external peer review, the Visiting

Panel will meet with the course provider's core team to discuss issues raised during the visit. The Visiting Panel will then write a report which will be sent to the course provider for an accuracy check. The Visiting Panel will then make report and recommendations to the Accreditation Steering Group.

c Accreditation outcome

The Accreditation Steering Group will ensure that the report from the visiting panel is clear and that the recommendations arise from the substance of the report. It is expected that normally the Accreditation Steering Group would ratify the recommendation of the Visiting Panel. Course providers will be informed of the outcome of the Visiting Panel and have an agreed accreditation status (see below).

- Q 20** *Is this an appropriate process for accreditation?* YES  NO   
*If you have answered NO, please explain what you would like to see changed and why.*
- Q 21** *It is assumed that the Visiting Panels would need a leader. Does it matter who they are (homeopath or non-homeopath) if they are selected from the pool of acceptable people?* YES  NO

### 3.3 Accreditation status

It is proposed that there are three forms of accreditation status: applicant, accreditation, accreditation not granted.

*Applicant status* is essentially what it says: the course provider has committed to developing a course for accreditation and in an active relationship with the new registering and regulatory body. A time limit for this process would be set. Students graduating from such courses could apply to enter the new register through the individual route.

*Accreditation* – would be awarded when course providers have gone through an external peer review by a Visiting Panel and is meeting sufficient of the agreed accreditation criteria to be accredited. It is anticipated that all accreditations are likely to include some conditions in the sense that there are actions to which a course provider commits to undertake to improve the programme. All would have a timescale attached to them and this would vary dependent on the conditions. Students graduating from such courses will be eligible for registration through the course accreditation route.

*Accreditation not granted* – this status would be given to those course providers who were not able to satisfy sufficient of the criteria for accreditation to be awarded. Course providers could decide at this point not to continue in the process or could go back through the loop of becoming an applicant. Students graduating from such courses could apply to enter the new register through the individual route.

- Q 22** *Are these three different forms of accreditation status appropriate?* YES  NO   
*Please explain your answer.*
- Q 23** *Should there be an appeals process for course providers going through the accreditation process?* YES  NO   
*If YES please explain why and what it should look like.*

## SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW SYSTEM

It is recognised that a number of course providers are keen to move ahead quickly with the new accreditation process. It would be helpful to know of course providers who would be interested in working with the new registering and regulatory body to test out and improve the system and help consider implications for other partners (eg the professional associations with a course approval process).

**Q 24** *Would you be interested in working with the new registering and regulatory body to be an 'early implementer' of the system and to improve it as necessary?*

YES  NO

*If you answered YES, please give contact details.*



**CORH**

Council of Organisations Registering Homeopaths  
SECRETARIAT

11 Wingle Tye Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9HR

Telephone: 01444 239494

Email: [admin@corh.org.uk](mailto:admin@corh.org.uk)

Website: [www.corh.org.uk](http://www.corh.org.uk)