

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

Paper No ASQEC/19/29c

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

22 October 2019

Agenda Item 6.3.1

EXTENSION OF APPROVAL

Faculty of Life and Health Sciences

BSc Hons Optometry/MOptom

COVER SHEET

Presenter: Professor A McKillop

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below.

To consider a request from the Faculty of Life and Health Sciences for a one-year extension of approval.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
22 October 2019

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

REQUEST TO EXTEND APPROVAL AND POSTPONE REVALIDATION

Form CA6b)

SECTION A: FACULTY REQUEST

FACULTY: LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES

SCHOOL: BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

REVALIDATION UNIT NUMBER AND NAME: UNIT 28Da BSC HONS OPTOMETRY / MOPTOM

MONTH/YEAR CURRENTLY SCHEDULED: 2020/21 (Month n/a on Academic Office schedule)

PERIOD OF EXTENSION REQUESTED: ONE YEAR

COURSE(S): BSC HONS OPTOMETRY / MOPTOM

REASON FOR REQUEST:

The General Optical Council have been undertaking an Education Strategic Review over the last two years and it would be more appropriate to wait until the outcomes from the ESR are published and complete.

The GOC have been consulting on changing the route to optometric registration and are due to have a final version of the new regulations by the end of the current academic year. i.e. 2019/20. The new regulations are likely to have a significant impact on how we deliver our programmes. The GOC have said they will adopt a phased approach to bringing in the new regulations across providers of optometry education. It is unlikely we would have the time to make these significant changes before planned internal revalidation in 2020/21; or be required to do so by the GOC. However, by 2021/22 it might be more appropriate to undertake internal revalidation in line with the new regulations imposed by the GOC.

Further to this, Optometry did revise the programme last year and submit a significant CA3 to bring modules into line with curriculum design principles. In addition, results and feedback from both the recent National Student Survey 2019 and Complete University Guide suggest the programmes remain in a strong position currently.

CURRENCY AND VALIDITY:

(Please confirm that the curriculum remains current and valid and provide evidence of this (eg extract from most recent external examiner reports and those of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body)

From Professor Peter Allen, Anglia Ruskin University, EE Report 2018-19

“The course and modules are fitting and appropriate for Optometry and are consistent with equivalent UK optometry course provision. It was encouraging to frequently observe teaching informed by research. The introduction of the MOptom seemed to go very well.”

“The Optometry course has a first-class team of lecturers. They are extremely committed to providing a first class and innovative teaching experience to the students.”

From Dr Jim Gilchrist, formerly Bradford University, EE Report 2018-19

“The course content is coherent and appropriate to BSc/MOptom Hons level study. It is consistent with the specification in the QAA Benchmark Statement, and the accreditation requirements of the General Optical Council. Course structure is appropriately designed to introduce essential science in the early stages, with increasing emphasis on clinical application and patient management as the course progresses. This principle has now been effectively carried through to MOptom level, with emphasis on Advanced Clinical Skills and Critical Case Review. I am satisfied that teaching in Optometry is underpinned by the involvement of members of staff in research and scholarship, and there is clear evidence that this informs the curriculum.”

National Student Survey 2019 Results: 100% Student Satisfaction
Ranked No1 for Optometry in Complete University Guide 2020

STANDARDS AND QUALITY:

(Please confirm that quality is high and there are no concerns. Provide evidence of this through external examiner reports and annual monitoring datasets and reports)

From Professor Peter Allen, Anglia Ruskin University, EE Report 2018-19

“Overall, I found the standard of work to be good. The degree classification seemed entirely appropriate to the standard of work presented.”

“Standards are at the least comparable to other Optometry schools.”

From Dr Jim Gilchrist, formerly Bradford University, EE Report 2018-19

“The standards of the Optometry course at Ulster compare favourably with those at other institutions across the UK. The standard at Ulster is high, and the relatively small number of students and good staff/student ratio is an important factor in this.”

“These outcomes are comparable with national outcomes, and students leave the course well-prepared to enter pre-registration Optometry practice.”

National Student Survey 2019 Results: 100% Student Satisfaction
Ranked No1 for Optometry in Complete University Guide 2020

PSRB (if applicable):

The General Optical Council do not usually formally participate in the revalidation exercise but may on occasions attend as a visitor. The BSc Hons Optometry and MOptom programmes are due for an approval visit from the GOC in October 2019 as part of their review processes.

DEMAND: Applications and student intake number remains steady and broadly in keeping with GOC recommendations.

Applications: BSc Hons Optometry

2017	163
2018	157
2019	157

Student Intake BSc Hons Optometry

2017	39
2018	34
2019	33

FACULTY PARTNERSHIP MANAGER'S ASSESSMENT (for partner institutions only):

FACULTY CONFIRMATION:

Aine McKee

SIGNED: _____
Associate Dean (Education)

DATE: 7 October 2019 _____

The completed form should be returned to the Academic Office, Room J410, Tower Building, Coleraine.

SECTION B: ACADEMIC OFFICE COMMENTS:

Unit 28Da comprises the BSc Hons/MOptom Hons Optometry and is due for revalidation in 2020/21. The request is for a delay of revalidation until 2021/22 due to a review by the GOC (new regulations are expected at the end of the current academic year). A review of the external examiner reports for the last three years provides assurance that quality and standards are sound, that marking standards and the standards of awards are appropriate and that the courses are performing well. It is noted that a GOC visit is to take place imminently. The Academic Office is content to endorse the proposed extension of approval with a view to rescheduling the revalidation early in semester one of 2021/22 academic year.

Gary Kendall

SIGNED: _____
Academic Policy and Standards Manager or Head of Academic Office

DATE: 2th October 2019 _____

SECTION C: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT ASSESSMENT (reflecting annual monitoring data)

Sandra M H. Mayo

SIGNED: _____
DATE: _____
Head of Quality Enhancement

15 October 2019 _____

SECTION D: ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE (delegated authority from Senate)

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

Late requests (in-year and no imminent Committee meeting) (actioned by Chair on behalf of ASQEC)

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

SIGNED: _____
Chair ASQEC

DATE: _____

DATE REPORTED TO ASQEC:

Academic Office
July 2019