

Revision Process for specialty curricula

Purpose of paper	This paper details the draft process for the revision and approval of specialty curricula.
Action	The Council is asked to approve the draft process for the revision and approval of specialty curricula.
Corporate Strategy 2020-22	<p>Strategic aim 1: Operate a regulatory system which protects patients and is fair to registrants, while being cost-effective and proportionate; which begins with education, supports career-long learning, promotes high standards of care and professional conduct and is developed in the light of emerging evidence and experience.</p>
Decision Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2015, at the Joint Committee for Postgraduate Training in Dentistry (JCPTD) meeting, the GDC's then Chief Executive agreed that the GDC would develop the process to revise all dental specialty curricula. • In 2016, the process began and included an update to the Policy and Research Board (PRB) in July and engagement with key stakeholders that year. • In December 2016, the Council approved the process for the revision of specialty curricula, including the generic framework which would serve as the basis for the various specialty curricula. • In May 2017, the Specialty Working Group (SWG) was first convened to co-ordinate the work of stakeholders relating to specialty training and, to date, has met seven times. • In 2017, a rapid review of specialty curricula was undertaken to ensure that the current curricula posed no patient safety concerns whilst background work was undertaken. This work was completed in 2018. • In 2018, a consultation took place and, further to it, the <i>Standards for Specialty Education</i> were revised, and these were published in January 2019. • In September 2018, the PRB considered the progress of the SWG and noted the plan to consult on principles of specialist listing in 2019. • In October 2018, the EMT reviewed the draft text of the consultation and, subject to minor amendments, approved it for consideration by the PRB and Council.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In November 2018, the PRB reviewed and approved the paper and, in December 2018, the Council approved the consultation for publication. • Between 31 January 2019 and 25 April 2019, a consultation took place on specialist listings and, in June 2019, the PRB were provided with an update on its outcome. • In August 2019, the SLT were given an update on specialty developments. It was agreed that further to the consultation on specialist lists, the process of the revision of specialty curricula would recommence. • In October 2019, the SLT reviewed and approved the response to the consultation.
Next stage	<p>If approved by Council at this meeting, the response will be published at the end of 2019 – beginning of 2020.</p> <p>The aim is then to commence the revision process in January 2020, the approval process in October 2020 and have the new curricula in place by the 2021/22 academic year.</p>
Recommendations	The Council is asked to approve the draft process for the revision and approval of specialty curricula.
Authorship of paper and further information	<p>Manjula Das Head of Education Quality Assurance mdas@gdc-uk.org 020 7167 6113</p>
Appendices	Appendix 1: A practical guide to the process of revision and approval of dental specialty curriculum and assessments.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 In 2019, the GDC agreed to recommence the process of revising all 13 curricula¹ for dental specialty training, the content of which is developed by the Specialty Advisory Committees (SACs²). A review is timely to ensure the curricula reflect the GDC's own revised *Standards for Specialty Education* (2019), and because the current curricula, in some cases, are more than ten years out of date and do not reflect clinical developments in the specialty. In addition, a revision will ensure consistency and standardisation of the format and language used in all 13 specialty curricula.
- 1.2 To facilitate this process, the GDC has developed *A practical guide to the process of revision and approval of dental specialty curriculum and assessments*, a template to serve as the basis for each revised curriculum and accompanying guidance (**Appendix 1**). These have been developed with input from stakeholders, particularly the SACs and Postgraduate Dental Deans across the four nations as well as the General Medical Council.

¹ To note, when curriculum is discussed, this includes high-level learning outcomes and associated assessments used to evidence their fulfilment.

² The SACs are intercollegiate advisory bodies constituted under the Royal Colleges of Surgeons.

- 1.3 Subject to Council approval, we will inform the SACs to begin the process of revising their curricula or curriculum, by issuing them with the guidance document at **Appendix 1** in January 2020.
- 1.4 Further to Council approval, we expect the revision process to take 20 months in total. SACs will have 9 months to draft their specialty curriculum in consultation with their stakeholders and send the revised version to the GDC for approval by 1 October 2020. Subsequently, the GDC will have 6 months to assess submissions, consult with SACs for further input if needed and send the submission with their recommendation for approval to the Registrar early Q2 2021. There will be 5 months for implementation of the specialty curricula so that they will be in place for the 2021/22 academic year (September 2021).
- 1.5 At present, the GDC has no formal mechanism for reviewing submitted curricula and making informed recommendations to the Registrar on their approval. We, therefore, propose developing a Specialty Curriculum Review Team (SCRT) consisting of members of the Education Policy and Quality Assurance teams and selected Education Associates, to review submitted curricula and advise on any matters relating to the dental specialties thereafter. The SCRT will make recommendations to the Registrar who will have final say on approval of the curricula.

2. Introduction and background

The GDC's responsibilities for education and training in specialist dentistry

- 2.1 The GDC is responsible for approving all curricula for education and training in specialist dentistry leading to the award of a Certificate of Completion of Specialty Education (CCST). Specific approval is delegated to the GDC Registrar. The content of the curricula themselves is developed by the SACs who report to the relevant Dental Faculty.
- 2.2 There are currently 13 curricula for training in specialist dentistry¹.
- 2.3 Curricula will be delivered by providers (trusts, health boards, or universities) in a particular area on behalf of Health Education England (HEE), Public Health England, NHS Education for Scotland (NES), Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) or Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).

Revision of dental specialty training curricula

- 2.4 At the JCPTD meeting in December 2015, the GDC's then-Chief Executive agreed that the GDC would lead a review to revise all dental specialty curricula. This was welcomed by the JCPTD. A review was thought to be timely, as:
- curricula will need to reflect the GDC's *Standards for Specialty Education (2015)*, which were approved by Council in April 2015.
 - the specialty curricula should be reviewed every five years to ensure they are fit for purpose and up to date.²

¹ Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology; Dental Public Health; Endodontics; Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology; Oral Medicine; Oral Microbiology; Oral Surgery; Orthodontics; Paediatric Dentistry; Periodontics; Prosthodontics; Restorative Dentistry; and Special Care Dentistry.

² The most recent curricula, Oral Surgery, was written in February 2014.

- 2.5 Although the SACs are responsible for drafting the curricula, they must be approved by the GDC. Therefore, it is in the interests of the GDC to develop and communicate the process of the revision of curricula with the SACs to ensure consistency in approach.
- 2.6 The objectives of the curricula update are two-fold:
- a) to bring the curricula up to date with any professional or clinical developments in the specialty that have transpired since it was last approved
 - b) to translate the curricula from its current format to the format of a new consistent and generic template, ensuring a degree of standardisation, and compatibility with the GDC's *Standards for the Dental Team* and *Standards for Specialty Education*, across all curricula.
- 2.7 Working closely with key stakeholders, we developed a generic template for the revision of specialty curricula and a three-stage process for the revision and approval of curricula, which was approved by Council in December 2016 and intended to commence in early 2017.

Establishment and work of the Specialty Working Group

- 2.8 In March 2017, the GDC, Health Education England (HEE) and the Chief Dental Officer for England convened a meeting of key decision-makers in specialty training to streamline strategy relating to specialty training. This included the identification and resolution of any potential overlaps or links between significant projects developing in the sector.
- 2.9 Those projects included the GDC's review of standards for specialty training, the commencement of the quality assurance of specialty training and the revision of specialty curricula. HEE was at that time beginning work on their own broad review of dental training, *Advancing Dental Care* and considering their own specialty developments. This included reminding the ADC of the GDC's legislative responsibilities.
- 2.10 The first meeting of the SWG¹ in May 2017 noted that there was no real governance mechanism for managing strategic projects across the sector that serve outcomes for specialist training in dentistry across the four nations of the UK. It was also noted that the various parties involved in this area are all responsible for different aspects; suggesting the need for a shared accountability.
- 2.11 There was general interest in a collective enterprise to set a strategic direction for speciality training and education and manage the projects therein.
- 2.12 It was agreed that as those present at that meeting all had significant responsibility and influence over specialty training in the UK, the SWG should continue to meet on an ongoing basis to identify opportunities to align respective projects and seek joint

¹ Membership of the SWG comprises, in addition to the GDC: the Advisory Board for Specialty Training in Dentistry; the Association of Dental Hospitals; the Chief Dental Officers for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; the Committee of Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors; the Dental Schools Council, the Faculty of General Dental Practice; Health Education England; NHS Education for Scotland; the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency; Health Education and Improvement Wales; the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow; the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh; and the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

enterprise, in the interests of general efficiency and to ensure national outcomes of specialist training better serve identified and changing population need.

- 2.13 Until background work had been carried out by the SWG, it was agreed that the revision of specialty curricula would be paused, and in the interim a rapid review of the current curricula was undertaken in 2017-18 to ensure that there were no patient safety concerns in the interim period. This revision was completed in 2018.
- 2.14 The SWG has met seven times since its inception 2017, most recently on 3 July 2019. Generally, the aim of the SWG's work has been to align projects undertaken by different organisations in order to work more effectively together for the further improvement of specialty training and education. We have also sought to use the expertise of the SWG to provide input into matters of specialty policy development and better understand the interconnectivity of the various stakeholder groups responsible for different areas of specialty dentistry.
- 2.15 Since 2017, the GDC has:
- a) Undertaken a consultation (2018) and, accordingly, revised the *Standards for Specialty Education* (2019).
 - b) Commenced the quality assurance of specialty education (2019).
 - c) Undertaken a consultation on the principles of specialist listing, (January-April 2019), the final report and next steps was approved by SLT in October 2019.
 - d) Developed proposals for the revision and approval of specialty curricula (presented in this paper).
 - e) Established a working group in the mediated entry (update to be given in early 2020).

Consultation on the principles of specialist listing

- 2.16 It is worth noting the wider context in which the proposals for the revision of the process for specialty curricula sit. Namely, that further to the input from the SWG, the GDC developed a consultation regarding principles of specialist listing in early 2019. There is nothing in this consultation that should negatively impact on, nor derail the proposed revision of specialty curricula process.
- 2.17 The consultation was three-fold:
- a) Revise the purpose and criteria for specialist lists (last addressed in 2005).
 - b) Propose the development of principles for the process of the addition or removal of a new specialist list.
 - c) Ask fundamental questions about maintaining specialist list accreditation.
- 2.18 The draft response to the consultation was approved by the SLT in October 2019. If approved, it will be published. In essence there was broad agreement regarding the first two parts, and more detailed work is needed on the third part.
- 2.19 If approved, revised purpose and criteria of specialist listing, will be included in the process for the revision and submission of specialty curricula. The current draft version is in **Appendix 1**.

3. Draft proposals for the revision and submission of specialty curricula

- 3.1 Further to the significant background work and in conjunction with key stakeholders listed above, we have developed a process for the revision and submission of specialty curricula and approval process, as detailed in this paper, for which we are seeking Council's approval. The process aims to enable us to have consistency across the revision and approval process, to provide standardisation across the specialties and provide assurance of the process going forward.
- 3.2 We used the generic template developed and approved in 2016 as the basis for the work going forward. This has been revised further to feedback from stakeholders in summer 2019 to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.
- 3.3 We have developed one template for the SACs to complete with revisions to their curriculum. This includes four main areas:
- a) A purpose statement for each specialty – clearly aligned to the revised purpose and criteria as set out in the 2019 consultation.
 - b) Compliance of the requirements of the revised *Standards for Specialty Education* (2019).
 - c) Assessments of the generic components of the curricula.
 - d) Specialty specific high-level outcomes, evidence and assessments.
- 4.1 To accompany the template, we have developed guidance to support SACs on the completion of the four stages and details about how they submit the completed template to the GDC.
- 4.2 We require all SACs to carry out a consultation with key stakeholders during the 9-month revision period, to ensure that proposals are deliverable across the four nations. This consultation must include liaison with the deans and deliverers of education in the four nations, workforce, trainees, patient/lay groups and show equality, diversity and inclusion compliance. Details of this are included in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.3 In the development of **Appendix 1**, we have also liaised with colleagues from the General Medical Council who are currently undertaking the same process with medical specialty curricula. They commenced their process in 2017 and are due to complete by the end of 2020, so we have also been able to learn from the challenges they have faced and streamlined the process where possible. We have also engaged with the Faculty of Medical Management and Leadership.

5 The process for the approval of specialty curricula

- 5.1 In conjunction with the internal Education Policy and Quality Assurance teams within the Strategy Directorate, we will utilise an appropriate group (up to 10) education associates (EAs) to establish a SCRT. Work on this has commenced. All EAs are appointed through an open and competitive recruitment exercise (carried out in 2018). The associates on the SCRT will include dentists (both specialist and generalists) and non-registrant members, including those with an educationalist background. When selecting education associates in 2018, we were mindful of the need for their involvement in this piece of work. If, however, there are any gaps, we will seek to recruit other relevant individuals as appropriate. If this were to be the case, we would seek confirmation from the Registrar before entering into a contract with other individuals.

- 5.2 The SCRT will be established and trained in early 2020 to undertake the approval process in Q4 2020 and Q1 2021. The supporting guidance and templates for this group will be developed within the education policy team in early 2020.
- 5.3 Based on the analysis and review of the submissions, the SCRT will make recommendations to the Registrar in early 2021.
- 5.4 The Registrar will have final approval over the revised specialty curricula.

6 Proposed timescales

- 6.1 Table of proposed timescales for the revision and approval of specialty curricula:

Action	Timescale	Status
Develop process for revision of specialty curricula and guidance.	Detailed above	Complete. Amends to be made further to feedback from Council and if approved, published end of 2019/early 2020.
Develop consultation response for specialist listing	To be discussed for potential approval at December 2019 Council	Complete, subject to amendments from Council.
Approval by SLT	November 2019	Complete
Approval sought from Council	December 2019	
Launch revision process	December 2019/January 2020	
SACs to revise specialty curricula	January-October 2020	
Policy team to develop internal approval process, establish SCRT and deliver training to SCRT	Q1-2 2020	
SACs to submit revised curricula to the GDC	1 October 2020	
SCRT to review revised curricula (seeking clarity from SACs as necessary)	2 October 2020- end of Q1 2021	
Education Policy Team to present the Registrar with proposed revisions of specialty curricula.	April 2021	
Approved curricula to be in use from 2021/22 academic year.	September 2021	

- 6.2 To note, any delays to the proposals above, may lead to the revision process being put back a further year, as the process needs to commence at the start of the academic year.

7 Actions

- 7.1 The Council is asked to **approve** the draft process for the revision and approval of specialty curricula.