



# Accreditation Board Annual Report

**Year 2009 –2010**

[www.ehtpa.eu](http://www.ehtpa.eu)

## **Academic Year 2009-10**

As in previous years, copies of this report will be received by the EHTPA Council and Education Committee following which copies will be made available to all educational institutions for information.

The chair of the accreditation board continues as a member of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, the Education Committee and EHTPA Council, and is a Director of the EHTPA.

### **Revisions to the management of the Accreditation Board**

Meetings continue to be held 4 times per annum; copies of the board agenda and papers are posted to members 10 days in advance of each meeting.

Occasional administrative support is provided by the Accreditation Coordinator, however the post-holder resigned in July 2010 and their responsibilities will be subsumed by the Chair of the Board. At the present time it is not intended to recruit to the vacancy.

The management of the accreditation process continues to adhere to the established systems in place.

### **Changes to Board Membership**

Emma Farrant (Professional Association member vacancy - RCHM) and John Smith (Professional Association member vacancy - URHP) have been recruited to the Board: at the time of writing nominations are being sought from an Educational Institution offering an EHTPA accredited programme.

### **Meeting with RCHM/Staff of CHM Educational Institutions (June 2010)**

Recruitment to CHM accredited programmes and the need for a policy on APEL, especially for Acupuncturists, were raised - matters already highlighted in earlier board reports and acted upon. In addition concerns were voiced about the need for (and cost of) validation; the relevance of the content of the Core Curriculum; the board's variable annual review process and lack of flexibility when applying EHTPA policies.

During the meeting it became increasingly evident that senior staff of institutions were not aware of the rationale underpinning the way the board functions and existing communication channels, nor of the educational developments that had taken place during the preceding 2-3 years initiated by the board following visits to institutions and by collaboration between the Professional Associations and EHTPA Education Committee (e.g. Dispensary Standards, APEL proposals; the Abbreviated Curriculum; Module 9 review of clinical outcomes and hours). Improving communication and understanding will need to be addressed as a matter of priority by all parties.

### **Core Accreditation Board Documentation**

The work to review and update board core documents is a cyclical process. The Accreditation Handbook, Supplementary Guidance and other accreditation-related documents are accessible on the EHTPA website by following the "Standards" link to "Accreditation".

## **Issues arising from accreditation /annual review**

- **Minimum Entry Level to the Profession**

The external higher education environment is turbulent and uncertain: at the present time the EHTPA policy is to continue to support the recommendations of the Pittilo report to government - that entry level to the profession be at honours degree level. At accreditation events this minimum entry requirement is explored and confirmed by panel members.

The board recognises that some educational institutions have had difficulty reconciling both EHTPA and university demands. However, this has been exacerbated by failure of institutions to involve the board at an early enough stage in university negotiations and in some cases problems have been identified too late for the board to be able to contribute to their resolution.

A previous request from the board to the Education Committee for a policy statement on the admission of students with advanced standing (APEL) has been acted upon and will result in an abbreviated curriculum for Acupuncturists from BAAB accredited programmes seeking admission to Chinese Herbal Medicine programmes.

- **External Examiner Reports**

As a qualification awarded from an institution offering an accredited programme is one indicator of Fitness to Practise, it is important that practice issues are afforded sufficient attention within University/College quality systems. This continues to be an issue for the Board, and a challenge for the institutions in terms of variable quality and/or insufficient comments in relation to practice. In some institutions this has not been recorded as an issue within the University's QA monitoring processes and this has been highlighted by board members as a deficit that needs to be remedied.

There has been some limited improvement in the quality of some examiners' reports but on the whole comments on practice standards and quality assurance are either brief or non-existent. Please contact the Chair of the board if further advice is required. The board is aware that universities appoint and pay fees of examiners but nevertheless it is important that board's requirement that External Examiners comment on clinical matters is acted upon. A national review of External

Examining is currently underway in Higher Education and recommendations when published will be considered: in the meantime it is important that every effort is made to seek external assurance of clinical standards.

- **Dispensary Audit**

The Education Committee is responding to the board's request to produce Dispensary Standards based upon current RCHM Guidance. A Dispensary Self Assessment to be used in conjunction with the Standards and has been completed, as described in last year's board report. Educational institutions will be asked to pilot the audit document during the Nov. 2010 annual review prior to the standards and audit record being fully implemented as part of the accreditation/renewal of accreditation process in future years.

- **Annual Review**

Although there has been an improvement, some annual reports submitted by institutions continue to be incomplete and poorly presented. The board's standardised template is being reviewed and shortened and will be issued for use in the current monitoring round (reports due to be submitted no later than 30 November 2010). Following feedback from some institutions the need for a 3 person review team was reconsidered at the July 2010 board meeting: it was decided to continue with the present variable approach, determined, as now, on an institution by institution basis. Influencing factors may include incomplete documentation; poorly presented reports; positive or negative recent quality assurance history; recent validation/accreditation outcomes. Further guidance will be made available following the September board meeting.

- **Guidelines for Validation and Accreditation Events**

These are updated periodically in light of experience and feedback received. During the year a significant investment of time and effort has been made in an attempt to work positively with those institutions seeking both university validation and accreditation. Unfortunately a failure to respond in a timely manner to board involvement and offers of help, combined with short term changes to strategic decisions and timescales was unhelpful to all concerned. A shared proactive approach to establishing effective communication channels would be welcomed.

### **Commendations for the attention of staff in educational institutions (2009-10)**

- Use of practitioners who give of their time and expertise generously to benefit student learning
- Emergence of a research culture and endeavour in some institutions
- Integration of research and theory/practice in students' learning experiences
- Staff CPD in professional and clinical activity

### **Developmental Points for the attention of staff in educational institutions (2009-10)**

- Staff are asked to work with the EHTPA at a much earlier stage in revalidation and/or renewal of accreditation deliberations
- External Examiner role and reports need to include and comment upon to clinical standards
- More comprehensive market research and business planning prior to embarking upon costly new programmes would be valuable
- Utilise staff CPD time to explore and promote awareness of current developments in teaching and learning
- Consider the support and development needs of recently appointed/ inexperienced Course Leaders

### **Summary of Previous Commendations and Developmental Points (2006 – 2009)**

Commendations:

Evidence of explicit teaching and learning strategies for adult learners in both clinical and classroom settings (08/09)  
 Staff appraisal that is clearly linked to staff development programmes (08/09)  
 Staff development opportunities systematically afforded to clinical staff (08/09)  
 Reorganisation of services to promote multi disciplinary sharing of expertise and resources (08/09)  
 Clinical practice being organised in such a way as to provide a variety of learning experiences (07/08)  
 The clear mapping of programme learning outcomes against EHTPA learning outcomes as part of the award of credit for prior learning and/or experience (07/08)  
 The strategic approach adopted towards appraisal and staff development procedures and examples of plans that develop teacher/practitioners as educators. (07/08)  
 Ongoing development of Criterion referenced assessment (06/07)  
 Ongoing development of Reflective Practice Portfolios (06/07)  
 Ongoing development of Peer review of teaching (06/07)  
 Staff appraisal linked to staff development plans (06/07)

### Developmental Points

2008-09	2007-08	2006-07
Ensure that External Examiner reports pay due attention to clinical standards	The External Examiners' remit must include the requirement that they focus upon clinical as well as theoretical standards and outcomes, and that specific reference must be made to both in the External Examiners' written reports.	External Examiners to focus upon clinical as well as theoretical standards and outcomes, and specific reference made to both in written External Examiner Reports
Continue to refine criterion referenced clinical assessment linked to learning outcomes rather than a "pass/fail" task orientated approach	Continue to refine assessment strategies to demonstrate: pass/fail judgements that are transparent and linked to specific criteria; how reliability in the assessment of competence is assured	Further refinement of assessment strategies to include: demonstration of progression from novice to competent practitioner; pass/fail judgements that are linked to specific criteria; demonstration of reliability in the assessment of competence
	Annual Reports submitted by institutions need to provide all of the information specified on the review pro-forma, including an analysis of data presented.	Annual Reports to the Board to provide an analysis of data presented and to present a critique of the year in question, rather than a simple descriptive account of events
	All clinical placements should be formally approved by the institution and audited routinely by the institution against their pre-determined criteria: records should be kept	All clinical placements to be formally approved by the institution and audited routinely against pre-determined criteria
Involve the EHTPA at a much earlier stage in revalidation and/or renewal of accreditation deliberations  Critically review dispensary practises, ensuring patient safety	Institutions offering programmes in TCM/CHM are reminded of the need to adhere to the RCHM Code of Practice for Dispensaries  The Board to consider ways and means of supplementing current	

<p>issues are paramount</p> <p>Analyse attrition rates and make comment on these in annual reports to the board</p> <p>Consider offering qualified herbalists access to individual modules as part of their Continuing Professional Development.</p>	<p>communication channels with College Principals/Deans</p>	
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**Developmental Points for the EHTPA (2009-10)**

- The Education Committee is asked to consider production of a database of potential External Examiners nominated by Professional Associations
- The Education Committee is asked to consider offering (input to be provided from PA members?) short sessions for External Examiners on assessing clinical standards
- PA's and the Education Committee are asked to clarify responsibility and mechanisms for notifying Educational Institutions of EHTPA educational policy decisions
- Accreditation Board to consider and strengthen ways and means of communicating with Educational Institutions
- Educational Institutions to be asked to pilot the Dispensary Self Assessment
- Accreditation Board to produce guidelines relating to the variable annual review system for publication on the website.

Lynn Copcutt,  
 Independent Chair  
 EHTPA Accreditation Board  
 August 2010