

Education and Training Committee, 24 November 2016

International professional equivalence

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

HCPC currently register approximately 2800 applicants each year who have qualified outside of the UK. These applicants are commonly referred to as 'international' applicants. This paper proposes a new approach to scrutinising international applications.

Background information

Article 12(2)(a) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001('the Order')sets out the Education and Training Committee's power to determine procedures in relation to the assessment of international applications:

"12(2) The Education and Training Committee shall determine procedures to—
(a) assess whether a qualification awarded outside the United Kingdom is of a comparable standard to [an approved] qualification and it shall, where it sees fit, keep a list of qualifications which are of a comparable standard which it shall publish and keep under review;..."

Decision

The Committee is invited to:

- Discuss the alternative approach outlined in the attached paper.
- Agree that the alternative approach to the current recognition of international qualifications model should be explored further and the research already initiated should continue.
- Agree that our proposed methodology for creation and maintenance of a list of comparable qualifications is appropriate (see page 9).
- If the above is agreed, to approve the template list of comparable qualifications to be used throughout the approval process and to be updated progressively (see Appendix 3).
- If the above is agreed, to instruct the Executive to create a list of comparable qualifications in relation to the Australian, Greek and Irish qualifications in

physiotherapy, for the ETC's discussion and approval at its next Committee meeting.

Resource implications

The resource implications include the following:

- Progressing the research work as outlined, including maintaining the list of comparable programmes.
- Obtaining professional input to review information relating to various professions in different countries.

The above resource implications are accounted for in Registration Department planning for 2016-2017 and will be accounted for in subsequent years. A small amount of resource may be required from the Policy Department in refining the proposed methodology and assessing results which will be accounted for within normal planning.

Financial implications

The main financial implication is the cost of employing professional experts, to cover current and ongoing research. We initially set aside £10 000 for this purpose. This will be accounted for in Registration Department budgeting in subsequent years as necessary.

Appendices

- Appendix 1. Analysis of Physiotherapy Courses. Greece – Eileen Thornton
- Appendix 2. Analysis of Physiotherapy Courses. Ireland – Eileen Thornton
- Appendix 3. Comparable qualifications – template of the list to be published

Date of paper

16 November 2016

International professional equivalence

1. Background information

1.1 We currently register in region of 2800 non-UK qualified health and care professionals per year.

1.2 In order to become registered professionals must submit an application to HCPC and have their documents scrutinised. These applications are commonly referred to as 'international' applications. Within this group we differentiate two sub-types: applications with European mutual recognition rights (EMR applications) and non-EMR applications.

1.3 The number of international registrations is growing every year:

Financial year 2013/14 – 1994 registered

Financial year 2014/15 – 2790 registered

Financial year 2015/16 – 2871 registered

In the most recent registrant number forecast considered by the Council, it is forecasted that the number of international applications will either stabilise or carry on growing at a steady pace. The report, considered on 7 July 2016, can be found here: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/100050B4Enc01-Registrantnumbers.pdf>

1.4 Currently all applications are scrutinised on an individual basis, and the scrutiny is based solely on the information provided by the applicant in support of their application.

1.5 The Education and Training Committee has discretionary power to determine procedures in relation to the scrutiny of international applications.

1.6 This paper describes work recently undertaken to look at exploring an alternative approach to scrutinising these applications and invites ETC to agree to proceed with the alternative recognition model.

2. About the current international registration process

2.1 All international applicants must complete an application form, which they then send to Registration Department for scrutiny.

2.2 The scrutiny of the application involves two main processes:

- assessment of professional education and training, where we establish whether the applicant meets the standards of proficiency required for practice in the UK;

- character, health and verification checks, where we establish whether they meet the requirements in regards to health and character as well as directly contacting the applicant's training institution, their former supervisors, regulatory bodies, etc in order to confirm the veracity of the information provided within the application form.

2.3 This paper proposes an alternative approach only to the assessment process. The checks in regards to health, character and provided documents will not be changed.

2.4 Currently all applications provide documents such as: information about their professional qualification, transcripts, a course information form or syllabus for the course, information about internships, post-qualification training and any relevant professional experience. If the information provided in their application is insufficient, the applicant is asked to provide more information.

The course information needs to be obtained by the applicant, directly from the institution where they studied. This happens in every case-even if the same course has previously been assessed as part of another application for registration.

2.5 Assessments are performed by a pair of assessors. Assessors do not have access to historical data relating to the assessment of applications from the given profession or country. The fee paid to an assessor for each assessment is £77.

2.6 Assessors analyse firstly the applicant's primary professional qualification. If the initial assessment is inconclusive, assessors will look at the applicant's professional experience and additional training. If this does not allow them to make a decision, additional information is requested from the applicant. We call this a 'further information' ('FI') request.

2.7 An applicant that successfully meets the standards of proficiency is eligible to register, subject to health, character and verification checks and payment of the registration fee.

2.8 The current service standard for providing the initial decision on an international application is sixty working days. A large proportion of this time is used for preparing the application for assessment of qualification and working with the assessors to provide a decision.

3. Choosing our methodology and initial findings

3.1 Article 12(2)(a) of the Health and Social Work Professions Order 2001 ('the Order') sets out Education and Training Committee's power to determine procedures in relation to the assessment of the international applications:

"12(2) The Education and Training Committee shall determine procedures to—

(a) assess whether a qualification awarded outside the United Kingdom is of a comparable standard to [an approved] qualification... and it shall, where it sees fit, keep a list of qualifications which are of a comparable standard which it shall publish and keep under review;...”

3.2 This means that a list of comparable international professional qualifications may be created for the purpose of using it in the process of scrutinising international applications to the Register.

3.3 Currently, the Education and Training Committee does not maintain such a list.

3.4 The new alternative approach to scrutinising international applications would mean that:

- we will keep a list of comparable international qualifications;
- when an application from an applicant is received and their qualification is included in the list at the time, the need for individual assessment is eliminated. The scrutiny of health, character and verification of paperwork will take place as in the current process;
- the currently available route of individual assessment will still be available to all other applicants.

3.5 In 2015, a piece of research was initiated in order to establish whether it would be possible to utilise the historical information which has been gathered in relation to various overseas training courses over the years in the assessment process. This initially involved drawing reports from our system and analysing individual assessment records.

3.6 The highest numbers of international registrations are within the following professional groups:

Financial year	Physiotherapists	Radiographers	Social workers in England
2013/14	613	269	232
2014/15	791	390	391
2015/16	695	425	334

The three professions above consistently represent over 50% of all international registrations.

3.7 As physiotherapists represent the highest number amongst those applying for registration we chose to focus our investigations on this profession.

3.8 Another argument in support of this choice is that this profession seems to be very mobile around the globe, which in turn has led to similar equivalence research exercises being undertaken elsewhere. For example, the Canadian College of Physical Therapist of Alberta commissioned a research paper called ‘Foreign

Qualifications Recognition - A Review of International Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Systems' in 2013, and the Australian College of Physiotherapists (APC) is currently undertaking a similar study. The findings of these activities suggest that it is possible to establish professional equivalency in physiotherapy, and that there is a need for a review of the process of transferring professional qualifications in physiotherapy between different countries.

The mobility of physiotherapists also led to the introduction of the European Professional Card (EPC) by the European Commission for this profession in January 2016. The EPC is an electronic procedure which makes it easier for physiotherapists within Europe to transfer their professional rights between countries.

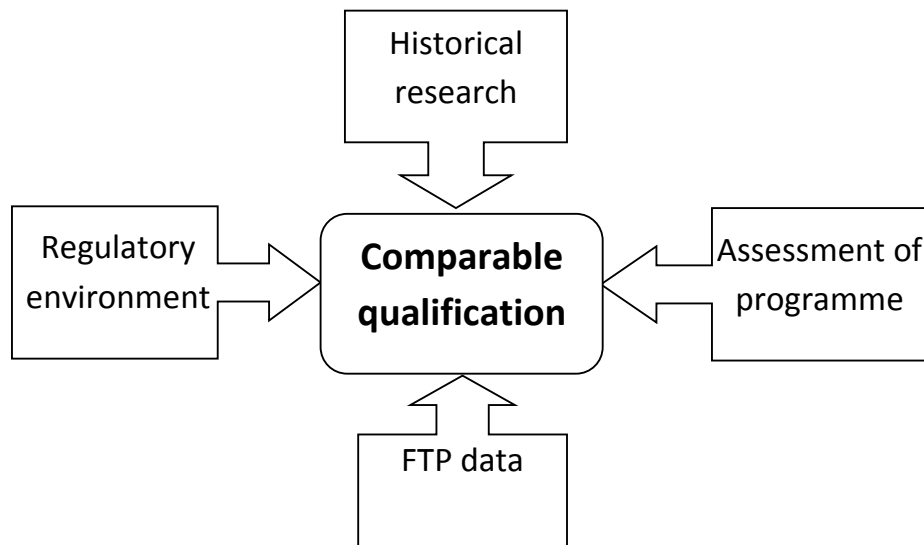
3.9 We propose to develop and test the proposed alternative approach by assessing the comparability of qualifications in physiotherapy from the following three countries:

- Australia,
- Greece,
- Ireland.

These three countries offer the opportunity to test our approach in European as well as non-European conditions. Applications from these countries also represent a substantial proportion of all physiotherapy applications we receive.

3.10 A staged approach has been applied to developing and testing the introduction of a comparable qualifications list:

- I. Historical research – analysis of records of assessments undertaken by us between 2010 and 2015.
- II. Assessment comparability of the comparability of the chosen qualifications by an independent expert.
- III. Assessment of the regulatory environment in those countries.
- IV. Assessment of the fitness to practise data in relation to registrants who entered the register on the basis of an overseas qualification.



I. Historical research

3.11 We gathered information in relation to all applications in physiotherapy which we received between 2010-2015 from applicants who qualified in Australia, Greece and Ireland.

3.12 We analysed and recorded the decisions made in relation to the courses completed by those applicants.

3.13 The analysis of historical research provided background to and fed into the independent analysis carried out by our expert.

3.14 The historical research provided findings which are summarised in the table below:

Country	Number of applications assessed	Successful applications-based on qualifications alone	Unsuccessful applications - additional training required	Comments
Australia	896	895	0	One application successful on the basis of qualification and experience combined
Ireland	221	217	0	Four applications successful on the basis of qualification and experience combined
Greece	122	101	3	18 applications successful on the basis of qualification and experience combined.
Total	1239	1213	3	

3.15 The analysis of historical records shows that certain courses are always deemed to be comparable to the standard required for practise in the UK.

II. Assessment of comparability

3.16 An independent expert in the field of physiotherapy was appointed – Professor Emeritus from the University of Liverpool and former Education and Training Committee Chair, Eileen Thornton.

3.17 The expert carried out analysis of physiotherapy courses in Australia, Ireland and Greece, in relation to our standards of proficiency and a UK approved qualification in physiotherapy. A risk assessment was also completed.

3.18 The expert produced separate reports for the countries where analysis has been completed (please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2).

3.19 The reports show that the assessed courses are comparable to the standard required for practise in the UK.

III. Assessment of regulatory environment

3.20 We made contact with the professional authorities in the three countries, in order to identify who is responsible for the training and regulation of physiotherapy.

- Australia

Physiotherapists are regulated by the Physiotherapy Board of Australia, under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme administered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (APHRA). The Australian Physiotherapy Council (APC) undertakes the approval of education programmes and the assessment of overseas qualified physiotherapists.

The regulatory regime is strong and transparent.

A visit to AHPRA and the APC took place in September 2016.

- Greece

Physiotherapists are regulated by the Ministry of Health. Those qualified must register with the Pan-Hellenic Physical Therapy Association where all universities providing approved qualifications are represented. There are four universities which provide approved qualifications in physiotherapy: Technical Educational Institute (TEI) Athens, TEI Lamia, TEI Patras and TEI Thessaloniki.

The regulatory regime is strong and transparent.

A visit to Pan-Hellenic Physical Therapy Association took place in November 2016.

- Ireland

Physiotherapists are regulated by CORU (Ireland's multi-profession health regulator). There are four universities which provide approved qualifications in physiotherapy: University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, Royal College of Surgeons and University of Limerick.

The regulatory regime is strong and transparent.

A visit to CORU took place in July 2016.

3.21 The assessment of regulatory environment in the three countries visited has shown that the information about the professional courses and the regulation system in place is accessible and reliable.

IV. Assessment of fitness to practise data

3.22 The Fitness to Practise Directorate assisted in checking the applications we looked at against their database, CMS. They analysed all physiotherapy related cases (FTP, Protection of Title, Health and Character, Registration Appeals and Miscellaneous) received in FTP from 1 January 2010 for applicants from Australia, Ireland and Greece. They then reviewed any FTP cases to see the source of the complaint, when it was received, and what the outcome was.

3.23 Of the 865 FTP cases received relating to physiotherapists since 1 January 2010, there were seven matches. Of the seven cases, one applicant was from Australia, one from Greece and four from Ireland. This represents less than 1% of all received applications. FTP advised us that this is representative of the Register as a whole (all professions).

3.24 Six of the seven cases did not proceed beyond initial submission, as they did not meet the standard of acceptance. The seventh was closed by the Investigating Committee which decided that there was No Case To Answer.

3.25 The FTP data raises no concerns in regards to the proportionality of competency or conduct cases of those who entered the Register following their application as internationally qualified applicant.

Initial recommendations following sample testing

3.26 On the basis of the findings of the sample analysis described above the Executive feel that developing a list of comparable qualifications is possible, and would provide a significant and positive change to our current international application process.

3.27 The courses already analysed and included in the reports supporting this paper (see Appendices) could be the first to be added to the list.

4. Developing List of comparable qualifications - methodology

4.1 It is proposed that a list of comparable qualifications is introduced alongside the current individual assessment of international applications.

4.2 Courses will be considered for inclusion in the list of comparable qualifications if the following conditions are met:

- There is a high volume of applications received from a given profession and country;
- HCPC has received and accepted for admission to the Register at least three other applicants from a given course;

- There is a strong regulatory system in place in that jurisdiction and HCPC has a relationship with the regulator, to ensure that we are kept up-to-date regarding any developments in the given profession.
- The fitness to practise data raises no concerns in relations to professionals qualified in a given profession and country.

4.3 Programmes assessed as comparable will be presented to the Education and Training Committee for approval.

4.4 The Education and Training Committee will have the power to remove a qualification from the list at any stage.

4.5 The list will be published, constantly monitored and updated when changes occur or to facilitate the addition of new programmes.

4.6 The Executive proposes to monitor the list in the following way:

- contact the home regulator every two years to ascertain whether the given programme is still approved;
- if the home regulator does not provide a conclusive answer, perform a comparability assessment of the programme;
- perform spot-checks outside of the re-approval schedule, by the means of contacting regulators and carrying out comparability assessments.

4.7 ETC will be asked to allow addition of new programmes to the list as well as approve the removal of those no longer meeting our requirements.

4.8 The list will be published online.

5. Impact of the new approach

5.1 The new approach will improve the access to our Register for incoming professionals.

5.2 Applicants will experience a simplified and quicker application process, similar to the UK-approved programme application route.

5.3 The existing route to registration, individual application and assessment, will still be available to applicants.

5.4 The new approach would make the registration process more efficient and more cost-effective.

5.5 The new approach would also enhance consistency when scrutinising applicants from one course.

5.6 The new approach also offers a potential saving in regards to use of our resources and expenditure. At this early stage it is difficult to assess the extent of the potential saving. We project that a saving is likely but it will be partially absorbed by the cost involved in creating and maintaining the list.

6. Discussion and next steps

6.1 The Education and Training Committee is invited to agree the following:

- Discuss the alternative approach outlined in the attached paper.
- Agree that the alternative approach to the current recognition of international qualifications model should be explored further and the research already initiated should continue.
- Agree that our proposed methodology for creation and maintenance of a list of comparable qualifications is appropriate.
- If the above is agreed, to approve the template list of comparable qualifications to be used throughout the approval process and to be updated progressively (see Appendix 3).
- If the above is agreed, to allow the Executive to create a list of comparable qualifications in relation to the Australian, Greek and Irish qualifications in physiotherapy, for the ETC's discussion and approval at its next Committee meeting.

Analysis of Physiotherapy Courses

GREECE

EILEEN THORNTON

Analysis of how physiotherapy professional training in Greece equates with an HCPC approved physiotherapy programme

Purpose

- To assist the HCPC in modernising their process of recognising EU/international qualifications for entry to the register to practise in UK.

Methodology

An analysis of applications processed by HCPC for 2010-2015 was completed.

The four **Greek Technological Education Institutes** (TEI) courses were identified to map against an approved UK physiotherapy programme. The courses mapped were:

- TEI Athens
- TEI Lamia (Central Greece)
- TEI Thessaloniki
- TEI Patra (Western Greece)
- University of Liverpool

A desk analysis of documentary information on the Greek courses was undertaken which included:

- Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center: TEI of Greece Curriculum in Physiotherapy – Core Course Modules –for all four TEI's
- Diploma supplement for all four TEI's
- Concise Course Curriculum of Physiotherapy and course description (TEI Patras)
- Course information form (TEI Thessaloniki)
- Curriculum Design – detailed course description (TEI Athens; TEI Patras)
- Four anonymised successful HCPC application forms - details of course/syllabus (TEI Lamina; TEI Thessaloniki; TEI Patras)

All courses were mapped against details of a HCPC approved physiotherapy programme using the following headings:

- National regulation
- Professional Body regulation
- Level of Qualification
- Length of programme
- Student work load
- Clinical practice
- Course content

For each course a risk assessment grid was used to determine the level of risk based on all the evidence available.

Findings

1. Historical application analysis 2010-2015

- 124 applications have been received
- 101 were accepted based on qualification (75%)
- 23 involved further information (FI) requests due to limited information (25%)
- 18 applicants were successful on basis of qualification and experience provided by FI submitted
- 3 were required to undertake a period of adaption
- 2 applications are ongoing

Analysis suggests that the majority of the applicants are judged to be UK equivalent trained based on the details of qualification only. Where further details are requested to expand on the range of experience the majority of applications are successful. Only a small number of applications (0.8%) have resulted in a period of adaptation being necessary.

2. Course documentation analysis

The quality and quantity of information in documents presented for review was variable.

- Diploma supplements from each TEI follow a standard format of information, provided enough to complete the first part of analysis grid and gave an overview of content course but were limited in detail.
- TEI Curriculum of Physiotherapy – Core Course Modules provided more information though still limited in detail.
- TEI Curriculum Design: Course Description provided by Athens gave a detail of syllabus, aims & objectives, lecture content, type of course, hours, ECTS, learning outcomes. Only detail missing was assessment methods.
- Course information provided as part of HCPC application process provided a good but variable level of information as this is dependent on the ability of applicant to complete the form.

General Information				
Institute	TEI Athens	TEI Lamia (Central Greece)	TEI Thessaloniki	TEI Patra (Western Greece)
National Regulation	Ministry of Health	✓	✓	✓
Professional Body registration	Pan-Hellenic PT Association	✓	✓	✓
Level of Qualification	240 ECT 'Diploma'	✓	✓	✓
Length of Programme	4 years (FT)	✓	✓	✓
Total Student Work Load	6840 hours @ 28.5 hours per week	6000 hours with 38 week years	6000 hours with 38 week years	No detail found
Clinical Practice Must be successfully completed before degree awarded	Compulsory 6 months = 1040 hours at end of course	Compulsory 6 months at end of course	Compulsory 6 months at end of course	Compulsory 6 months at end of course

Course content				
Must have completed compulsory, mandatory electives and optional courses before degree awarded				
	TEI Athens	TEI Lamia (Central Greece)	TEI Thessaloniki	TEI Patra (Western Greece)
Biological Sciences	Anatomy	✓	✓	✓
	Physiology	✓	✓	✓
	Neurophysiology	✓	✓	✓
	Exercise physiology	✓		
Physical Sciences	Kinesiology	✓	✓	
	Biophysics			
	Biomechanics	✓	✓	✓
Clinical Sciences	Pathology	✓	✓	✓
	Pathophysiology			
	Neurology	✓	✓	✓
	Surgery	✓		✓
	Adult Neurology Conditions & PT PLUS Clinical Placement unsure on placement	✓	✓ includes clinical	✓ unsure on clinical
	Orthopaedics, Musculoskeletal Conditions & PT PLUS Clinical Placement	✓	✓ includes clinical	✓ unsure on clinical
	Respiratory & Cardiovascular Conditions & PT PLUS Clinical Placement	✓	✓ includes clinical + ICU	✓ unsure on clinical
	PT in special groups	Group Exercise Therapy - Special Population	Obs & Gynae	Obs & Gynae Mental Health Elderly
	PT in Sports Medicine	✓	✓	✓
Behavioural Sciences	Health Psychology	✓	Psychology	
Core skills	Physical Agents in PT			✓
	Kinesiotherapy	✓	✓	✓
	Massage Techniques	✓	✓	✓
	Neuromuscular Re-education Techniques	✓	✓	✓
	Electrotherapy	✓	✓	✓
	Mobilization & Manipulation Techniques	✓	✓	✓

Research	Research Methods in PT	✓	✓	✓
	Biostatistics	✓		✓
Research Dissertation	Must be approved and successfully completed before degree awarded			
Patient assessment	PT assessment & clinical reasoning	✓	✓	✓
Other courses	Computing for Health Sciences			✓
	English Language - medical terminology		✓	✓
	Paediatric PT (Neuro)	✓	✓	
	1st Aid		✓	✓
	Diagnostic Imaging	✓	✓	✓
	Ethics in PT	Bioethics	Professional ethics	Ethics in PT
	Business Administration in small enterprises			
	Pharmacology			
		Ergonomics &PT	Ergometrics Ergonomics	Ergonomics
		Informatics in Health	Bioinformatics	
	Marketing	Hydrotherapy		

3. Risk assessment

- Training courses are linked to a national 'regulation' system.
- Post-qualification practice is linked to membership of the professional body.
- Level of qualification is equivalent to BSc (Hons) programme in UK and therefore meets SET 1.
- All core elements of courses can be mapped to core requirements of the UK physiotherapy programme needed to meet the SoP's although detail of depth and breadth is not always apparent from documents.
- Compulsory six months' period of clinical practice before end of programme is equivalent to minimum 1000 hours recommended in the CSP Curriculum document and covers core clinical science areas although no detail of range can be found.
- Historical data analysis is strong and supports the findings of the documentary analysis.

Regulator	LOW RISK
Register with professional body	LOW RISK
Qualification meets SET 1	LOW RISK
Course content linked to SOPs	LOW RISK
Historic data	LOW RISK
overall	LOW RISK

Conclusion

1. The review undertaken had limitations in that only one reviewer and one UK programme data was used. However, based on the lessons learned from this process, using documentary analysis supported by historical data analysis provides a good basis for providing a risk analysis that can be used in the assessment of equivalence of qualifications in international/EU applicants for entry to the HCPC register.
2. The process would be strengthened by using a panel of experts or a second reviewer in the process and a wider sample of UK approved programme data.

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August 2016**

Analysis of Physiotherapy Courses

IRELAND

EILEEN THORNTON

Analysis of how physiotherapy professional training in Ireland equates with an HCPC approved physiotherapy programme

Purpose

- To assist the HCPC in modernising their process of recognising EU/international qualifications for entry to the register to practise in UK.

Methodology

An analysis of applications processed by HCPC for 2010-2015 was completed.

Four courses on the approved qualification list were identified to map against an approved UK physiotherapy programme. The course providers mapped were:

- Trinity College, University of Dublin (TCD)¹
- University of Limerick (UL)²
- University College, Dublin (UCD)³
- Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI)
- University of Liverpool

A desk analysis of documentary and website information on the courses was undertaken which included:

- Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (ISCP), Accreditation of Pre-Registration Physiotherapy Programmes in Ireland (2012) document
- University College, Dublin – Course outline and website including module catalogue (2016-17)
- Trinity College, Dublin – BSc in Physiotherapy Course Handbook 2016 & website
- University of Limerick – BSc in Physiotherapy Programme Documentation, 2016 and website
- Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland – BSc Programme Document, 2016 and website

All courses were mapped against details of a HCPC approved physiotherapy programme using the following headings:

- National regulation
- Professional Body regulation
- Approvals Process
- Level of Qualification
- Length of programme
- Clinical practice
- Course content

For each course a risk assessment grid was used to determine the level of risk based on all the evidence available.

¹ TCD also offer a one-year (FT) course that will lead to a degree in Physiotherapy for students who have successfully completed a three-year diploma in Physiotherapy in Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore. This provision has not been included in the analysis.

² UL offer a two-year (FT) graduate entry MSc Physiotherapy (Professional Qualification) course. This programme is due for full accreditation in June 2017. The curriculum appears to cover the majority of year 2 to year4 modules of the BSc but studies over two years. This provision has not been included in the analysis.

³ UCD offer a two-year (FT) graduate entry MSc Physiotherapy. The course is accredited by the ISCP. This provision has not been included in the analysis.

Findings

1. Historical application analysis 2010-2015

- 221 applications have been received and accepted
- 217 were accepted based on qualification only (98%); 2 of these applications involved further information (FI) requests for course content.
- 4 were accepted on qualification and experience since qualification; 1 of these involved a FI request

Analysis suggests that all the applicants are judged to be UK equivalent trained, based on the details of qualification only or qualification plus practice experience. Where further details were requested all applications were successful. No applications have resulted in a period of adaptation being necessary.

2. Course documentation analysis

- The quality and quantity of information in documents presented and websites reviewed was detailed and informative.

General Information				
Institute	Trinity College, University of Dublin	University College, Dublin⁴	University of Limerick	Royal College of Surgeon in Ireland⁵
National Regulation	Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU) (see notes A - D)			
Professional Body registration	Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (ISCP) (see note E)			
Approvals Process	Equivalent processes of the HCPC approval process. Approval is time limited to 5 years in contrast to the open ended approval & monitoring of the HCPC.			
Level of Qualification	BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy	BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy	BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy	BSc (Hons) in Physiotherapy
Length of Programme	4 years (FT) 240 ECTS	4 years (FT) 240 ECTS	4 year (FT) 240 ECTS	4years (FT) 240ECTS 3 years (FT) for graduate entry 180ECTS
Clinical Practice Must be successfully completed before degree awarded	32 weeks with minimum of 1000 hours Includes core areas: Musculoskeletal Cardio-Respiratory Neurology	Minimum 1000 hours. Includes core areas: Musculoskeletal Cardio-Respiratory Neurology	29 weeks with minimum 1000 hours Includes core areas: Musculoskeletal Cardio-Respiratory Neurology	31 weeks with minimum 1000 hours Includes core areas: Musculoskeletal Cardio-Respiratory Neurology

Notes

- The Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU) is a multi-professional health regulator.
- Role of the Council is to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct, education, training and competence through statutory registration of health and social care professionals.
- CORU was set up under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 (as amended). It is made up of the Health and Social Care Professionals Council and the Registration Boards, one for each profession named in the Act.
- Registers for the professions were introduced on a phased basis over a number of years. The Register for Physiotherapists opened on 30 September 2016.
- Pre-September 2016, the ISCP was responsible for accreditation/approval of all courses leading to a physiotherapy qualification as the competent authority, under the power bestowed upon it by the Minister of Health. This authority operated through the Accreditation Board.

⁴ UCD is one of the four constituent Universities of the National University of Ireland.

⁵ RCSI is one of the two Recognised Colleges of the National University of Ireland.

Course content analysis – common topics				
	Trinity College, University of Dublin	University College, Dublin	University of Limerick (see note F)	Royal College of Surgeon in Ireland, National University of Ireland
Biological Sciences	Anatomy /Clinical Anatomy	✓	✓	✓
	Neuroanatomy	✓	✓	✓
	Physiology	✓	✓	✓
Physical Sciences	Chemistry	✓		
	Physics	✓		✓
	Biomechanics	✓		
	Kinesiology	✓		✓
Clinical Sciences	Pathology & pathophysiology	✓	✓	
	Pain & pain management	✓	✓	✓
	Respiratory	✓	✓	✓
	Cardiology	✓		✓
	Gerontology	✓ Role of PT		✓
	Neurology	✓	✓	✓
	Musculoskeletal	✓	✓	✓
	Orthopaedics	✓ and Rheumatology	✓	✓ and Rheumatology
	Amputations	✓ Role of PT		✓ Role of PT
	Oncology and haematology	✓ Role of PT		✓ Role of PT
	Mental Health			Psychological disorders
	Burns and plastics	✓ Role of PT		✓ Role of PT
	Paediatrics	✓ Role of PT		✓
	Womens' Health	✓ Role of PT		✓
Sports exercise medicine	Sports Physiotherapy		Sports Physiotherapy	
Behavioural Sciences	Health Psychology	Psychology of Sport & Health	Psychosocial aspects of health care integrated into modules as appropriate	Health, Behaviour and Society
Core skills	Electro-physical agents	✓	✓	✓
	Exercise Therapy	✓	✓	✓
	Manual Therapy	✓	✓	✓
Research & Research Dissertation	Scientific Investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic principles of scientific research Research proposal Research project write up 	Research methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic principles of research Research proposal 	Enquiry in Health Care Development of research proposal Three Research Projects with production of a journal paper	Methods of scientific enquiry Research methods Extensive Research Proposal
Patient assessment	Assessment of patients with conditions in the clinical sciences listed	Assessment of patients with conditions in the clinical sciences listed	Assessment of patients with conditions in the clinical sciences listed	Assessment of patients with conditions in the clinical sciences listed

Other subjects	Professional Issues E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Team working • Professionalism and ethical professional behaviour • Communication • Record keeping • Outcome measurement • Quality assurance in the form of audit and clinical guidelines • Legal and ethical issues • Professional standards and personal standards of proficiency • CPD • Risk assessment • Management & Leadership • Role of advocacy 	Introduction to Healthcare Practice E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope of practice • Ethical issues professional behavior • Legal aspects of practice • Risk assessment • H&S Physiotherapy Professional Practice E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical reasoning & evidence-based practice • Record keeping • Communication • Reflective practice • Manual Handling • Context of Practice • Business management and planning 	Introduction to Physiotherapy Practice E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Role of PT in Multi-Disciplinary Teams • Scope of Practice & Codes of Practice • Critical Thinking • Professional and Ethical Issues of Practice • Evidence-based practice 	Professional Development E.G. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Codes of Conduct • CPD • Communication • Record keeping • Ethics • H&S • Risk assessment • Clinical Reasoning • Reflective practice • Team working • Manual Handling
	Health Promotion	✓	✓	✓
Preparation for Clinical Practice and Clinical Placement		Preparation for Clinical Practice including moving & handling		
Course content analysis – provider specific modules				
Ergonomics including Manual Handling	Applied Exercise Science	Engaging through Complexity – health conditions that require multi-professional input	Patient safety & quality in health care	
Advances in Physiotherapy Practice	Health in a Global Society <i>(no details of module available)</i>	Health Informatics for Physiotherapists	Basic 1 st Aid and CPR	
Chronic Disease Management	Legal Medicine (Physiotherapy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Legal and ethical issues • Codes of Conduct 	Broadening modules in year one with a particular focus on enhancing graduate attributes and competencies outside of students' particular programme of study		
	Pharmacology	Participation in the Community		
		Innovation in Management for Health & Social Care		

Note

F. The delivery of the UL curriculum adopts a case-based learning approach. This involves integration of subjects pertinent to client case narratives rather than subjects being taught separately as with a traditional curriculum approach. This makes the programme

more challenging to map hence the physical sciences appear missing but they are integrated into the relevant clinical physiotherapy modules.

3. Risk assessment

- Training courses are linked to a national regulation system.
- Training courses are linked to a national professional body.
- Level of qualification is equivalent to BSc (Hons) programme in UK and therefore meets SET 1.
- All elements required for the approvals process can be matched to the remaining SETs.
- All core elements of the courses can be mapped to core requirements of the UK physiotherapy programme needed to meet the SoPs.
- Compulsory clinical practice integrated into each programme is equivalent to minimum 1000 hours recommended in the CSP Curriculum document and covers core clinical science areas.
- Historical data analysis is strong and supports the findings of the documentary analysis.

Regulator	LOW RISK
Register with professional body	LOW RISK
Qualification meets SET 1	LOW RISK
Course content linked to SOPs	LOW RISK
Historic data	LOW RISK
overall	LOW RISK

Conclusion

1. The review undertaken has limitations in that only one reviewer and one UK programme data was used. The process would be strengthened by using second reviewer in the process and a wider sample of UK approved programme data.
2. Analysis of the BSc pre-registration courses delivered in Ireland shows that there is high equivalence of these qualifications with an approved HCPC programme in the UK.
3. Analysis of the BSc pre-registration courses delivered in Ireland shows that there is low risk in accepting applicants with these qualifications directly onto the HCPC physiotherapy register.
4. Further analysis of the accelerated two year MSc pre-registration courses offered by University College Dublin and the University of Limerick will be needed to confirm equivalence for applicants offering this qualification.

Eileen Thornton
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November 2016

Comparable Qualifications

The Education and Training Committee (ETC) has assessed the qualifications included in this list as being of a comparable standard to an equivalent HCPC-approved qualification awarded in the UK.

The assessment of a qualification's comparability is based primarily upon the outcome of applications for admission to the HCPC register made by holders of that qualification. The comparability process does not involve the detailed approval or monitoring of an educational programme, but the ETC does keep the comparability of qualifications under review. The publication of this list is discretionary and the ETC reserves the right to remove a qualification from this list at any time.

This list was published on [date] and supersedes all previous lists.

Profession (alphabetical order)

Country (alphabetical order)

Programme name, from [date] onwards (alphabetical order)