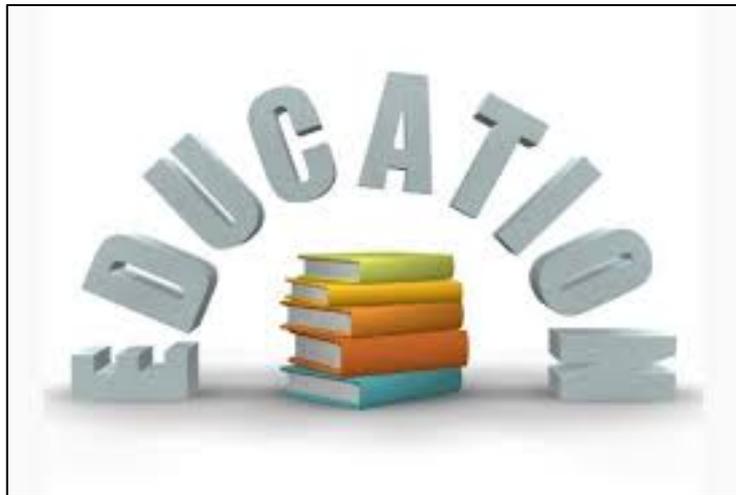




The Society of Homeopaths
representing professional homeopaths

EDUICATION **P**OLICY





EDUCATION POLICY

6th Edition, February 2015

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*This policy is intended to be read in conjunction with the Complementary and Natural Healthcare **National Occupational Standards for Homeopathy**. The Society has also produced further documents which inform this Policy: the **Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice**, the **Clinical Education Guidelines** and the **Course Framework**. All these documents are available from the Society's website.*

*The sister documents to this Policy are the **Application for Recognised Course Status (ARCS) Handbook and Guide to the Process**. These, too, are available from the Society's website.*

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This policy is the result of many years' work by a large number of people. It would be impossible to list every single individual who has played a part, but the following groups of people all deserve recognition for the influence their work and thought has had on this document. Some – particularly those who have participated in Education Development Workshops – may not have realised how important their contribution has been, but without the lively community of homeopaths engaged in education, the thinking reflected in this policy would never have been possible.

The group who drafted the original (1994) Education Policy

The course providers and educational consultants who commented on and developed the 1994 policy through debate and consultation, 1994-7

Participants in the Education Development Workshops, 1996-9

Members of the Society's Education Team and Board of Directors, 1996-2013

Individual practitioners and members of various organisations who participated in the National Occupational Standards consultations of 1999 and 2009.

Richard Winter of Anglia Polytechnic University who collaborated with the Education Team to derive the Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice.

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All who contributed thoughts on the third draft – via e-mail, telephone and face-to-face discussions and through representation at Education Steering Committee and Professional Standards Committee(2004-2006)

All those who contributed to the third (2006) and fourth (2013) editions of the Education Policy, through e-mail, and meetings of the Society's Education Steering and Professional Standards Committees. Thanks also to the patient group for their valuable perspective and input.

The thinking of the Education Team and of the contributors noted above has been informed by the work of many others in professional fields. In particular, we have drawn on the experience and approach of the Open University's Validation Services, and the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board. Also, the work of academics engaged in the study and development of professional education has been of enormous importance in informing the thinking of many of the contributors. Anyone interested in knowing more about this wider context for the Education Policy is invited to contact the Society of Homeopaths' Education Department.

A. AIMS AND CONTEXT OF THIS POLICY

A1. Aims of the policy

The policy is intended to form the basis for the ongoing work of the Society of Homeopaths in the field of education, through its Education Department and the course providers participating in its Recognition Procedures. As such, it is of interest to a range of reader-groups.

THE PURPOSES OF THE POLICY FOR DIFFERENT GROUPS

The SoH Directors

The context for negotiation with other bodies towards the formation of an Accreditation Board
The basis for presentation of our education principles to all interested bodies and individuals

The public (users and prospective users of homeopathy)

General information about the required standards of homeopathic education, and encouragement to seek out practitioners who have successfully completed a rigorous training.

The Education Department

Key principles to guide the department's work
The foundation of the agreement and liaison with course providers
The context for liaison with other departments of the Society of Homeopaths
The context for negotiation with other bodies towards the formation of an Accreditation Board

Applicant course providers

Guidelines upon which to base their application through ARCS (Application for Recognised Course Status)

Participating course providers

An agreed context for delivery and development of courses for the benefit of students
The foundation for their agreement with the Education Department

Homeopathy students (prospective and current)

Information about what is expected from courses offered by course providers participating in the recognition procedures of the Society of Homeopaths

External agencies concerned with health care and its regulation

Information about the principles and standards of homeopathic education under the aegis of the Society of Homeopaths; to be understood in conjunction with the Society's Code of Ethics and Practice and other relevant guidelines

Health care professionals from other disciplines

An insight into the content, emphasis and nature of professional homeopathic education, including indicative guidelines on standards; to be understood in conjunction with the Society's Code of Ethics and Practice

A2. Context of the policy

A2.1 Current context

The Society of Homeopaths has determined that it should work, in partnership with others, towards establishing a single register for homeopaths, and an independent Accreditation Board to regulate the standards of professional education in homeopathy. The Society (to whom "we", "us" and "ours" refers throughout this document) is dedicated to ensuring high standards of education and practice are maintained and is committed to working in partnership with other organisations which share these goals.

A2.2 History

From Registration to Education Since 1979 we have published a Register of professional homeopaths. Initially, a committee assessed applications; in 1982, an examination-based registration process was introduced. An alternative route to registration was established for those who had successfully completed certain courses. With the growth in the number of courses offering a professional education in homeopathy, the Society gradually moved towards closer involvement with providers of professional education. The

Education Policy was developed in 1993 and the recognition process was instituted in 1994. Successful completion of a recognised course now leads directly to eligibility for registration and for Society of Homeopaths' insurance. This course-based route to registration is now used by the vast majority of applicants.

From OIHC to ARCS The Organisation of Independent Homœopathy Colleges (OIHC), established in 1987, was the impetus behind the Society's closer involvement in homeopathic education. This group generated and agreed the beginnings of a core curriculum, which provided the original basis for course recognition. The course providers who formed the original cohort of recognised courses in 1994 participated in a quinquennial review in 2000. The process for this review was developed over the intervening years for the recognition of new courses. Thus, by 2001, all recognised courses met the standards laid out in this document, which paralleled the requirements of the recognition process (Application for Recognised Course Status, or ARCS). All recognised courses are required to re-apply for this status at least every five years.

CORH and beyond In 2001, all groups registering homeopaths (including the Society) formed the Council of Organisations Registering Homeopaths (CORH) and were engaged until 2008 in discussions aimed at the establishment of a single register and an associated independent accreditation system for homeopathy courses. A draft Accreditation Handbook was written by the Accreditation Working Group (AWG) of this body. After the demise of CORH, the Accreditation group set up as the British Homeopathy Accreditation Board (BHAB). In order to synchronise the Society's existing recognition system with that of the proposed new body, the Society's recognition criteria were changed in 2010 to accommodate the agreed criteria of BHAB's Accreditation Handbook. BHAB ceased to exist, and the Homeopathic Course Providers' Forum set up a peer-led quality assurance process, also based on the Accreditation Handbook. Over the last few years, The Society has moved towards greater independence of its course recognition system by increasing the involvement of external and lay advisors in all its processes.

A2.3 Standards

Several strands weave together to define the standards for homeopathic education laid out in this document.

- *Partnership with course providers* The Education Department and the recognised course providers have worked together over 20 years to identify and develop high standards. These have been documented in the SoH Clinical Education Guidelines, the Course Framework, 'Aiming for Excellence', etc. These are all available on our website or from our national office.
- *Diversity within clear principles and Code of Ethics* The Society of Homeopaths supports the existence of a wide variety of approaches to the practice and teaching of homeopathy. The diverse approaches to practice are linked by their derivation from the principles outlined by Hahnemann, commitment to clear and coherent philosophical principles, and adherence to the Code of Ethics and Practice of the Society.
- *National Occupational Standards* During 1997-99, the Society participated in the development and publication of National Occupational Standards (N.O.S.) in homeopathy, in partnership with several other bodies representing homeopaths practising in the U.K. The Standards were revised in 2009-10 as part of a project by Skills for Health to establish some core generic threads within Complementary and Natural Healthcare. These Standards for Homeopathy represent what is expected of a competent and effective practitioner, and demonstrate the parameters within which diversity is supported.
- *Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice* In parallel with the development of the original N.O.S., we worked with Richard Winter of Anglia Polytechnic University to derive Core Criteria for the practice of homeopathy. The Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice, adopted by the Society in 1998, are intended to be used in conjunction with the N.O.S., infusing its particular approach with the general ethical and professional skills required of a health practitioner.
- *Code of Ethics and Practice* The Society's Code of Ethics and Practice, by which all registered practitioners are bound, informs our education work and supervision as well as our practice. This Code includes guidance on the importance of recognising Bounds of Competence.
- *Higher Education standards* The practice and standards of the Higher Education sector are the appropriate basis for the education of health professionals, whether the course undertaken is a degree or not. Hence, the guidelines of the Open University Validation Services Handbook, the work of academics engaged in the study and development of professional education and the general approach of

the Quality Assurance Agency (which regulates higher education institutions and their courses) have informed the thinking behind this Policy.

- *Course Framework* This document aims to outline core content and benchmarking for courses designed to educate professional homeopaths. It was finalised in 2013, and is based on collaborative work between the Society's Education Department, Course Providers and the QAA over a number of years.

A3. The meaning and purpose of accreditation

The meaning of accreditation

Accreditation is a process by which a professional education in homœopathy (including all aspects of the student experience) is recognised as leading to a satisfactory standard of competence. Such recognition is provided by an independent, publicly accountable, Accreditation Board. Evaluation is based on criteria agreed by the professional community. The process involves self-evaluation, by the institution providing the course, of the ways in which it meets both its own and these community-derived criteria. This self-evaluation is guided and monitored by the Accreditation Board, which comprises peers from within the profession and others chosen for their expertise in education and related areas. Licentiates of accredited courses may proceed by a direct route to registration. Accreditation ensures the maintenance and development of course standards through an on-going process of self-evaluation, supported by regular reviews by the Accreditation Board.

The characteristics of accreditation

- Through a process of institutional self-study, a broad range of staff are involved in reflecting on practice. Thus self-knowledge is spread throughout the institution.
- The accreditation process is a developmental activity, in which each event leads to further development, so that continually improving provision and responsive change are assured.
- Validation by a university or other institution concerns the intellectual challenge demanded by a course; accreditation concerns the quality of professional practice. In an accreditation process, the relevant interlinking of theory and practice is given a firm foundation through the explicit basis of accreditation in professional practice.
- Standards are derived by an independent body of peers, and are seen to be both publicly and professionally acceptable. Such standards assure the general public, the homeopathic community and other professionals, agencies and organisations that a course has clearly defined and appropriate objectives, including those providing for the safety and competence of its licentiates.
- The process is evidence-based, so the institution must produce data which can be verified.
- Accreditation fosters high standards of professional education based on appropriate criteria and guidelines, encouraging diversity within clear parameters, experimentation and innovation with the boundaries of agreed standards.

Although the Society's system of course evaluation meets all of these requirements, we have chosen to name the status conferred 'Recognition' rather than 'Accreditation', to acknowledge the fact that it is not yet shared or contributed to by all homeopathy organisations, and is therefore not wholly independent.

B. THE VISION AND APPROACH TO EDUCATION

B1. A vision for education in homeopathy

- **Homeopathy can now become established as a major therapeutic system**
Homeopathy is a complete system of medicine. A number of factors make this a particularly propitious time to establish homeopathy in the U.K. and Europe as a major form of health-care. These factors include changes in the U.K. health-care system and continuing movement towards Europe-wide systems in all fields. Additionally, there is a growing public demand for alternative/complementary medicine. A sound and effective professional education system is a vital requirement in this situation.
- **Professional structures are essential for public recognition**
Public recognition requires clear and accountable structures to demonstrate clinical competence, research into the effectiveness of homeopathy, and quality assurance, in terms of individual practitioners and homeopathic medicine as a whole.
- **Accreditation is the basis of a profession**
An accreditation system would provide the independent quality assurance of professional education courses which forms the corner-stone of any respected profession (see above, A.3 for a definition of accreditation)
- **Accreditation supports the learning programme**
Accreditation and current recognition procedures also aim to support the development of the learning programme. In keeping with the ethos of homeopathy, this is holistic, integrating theory and practice as well as different aspects of the curriculum. Paralleling the basis of accreditation in self-evaluation, professional education is learner-centred and values reflection.
- **Professional education provides the basis for accreditation**
A professional education that enables students to become safe and competent practitioners, eligible for entry to the register, is an education which justifies accreditation.
- **The recognised course providers and the Society can create such an education**
Our educational development and recognition work in partnership with the course providers has established a firm basis for continuing development.
- **Professional development continues beyond qualification**
A course of professional education in homeopathy is the foundation for ongoing professional development. Reflection, research, audit, support and supervision are among the many potential aspects of continuing professional education.
- **Research and practice**
As homeopathy grows and develops, evidence-based research will demonstrate the value of our practice. Education in professional homeopathy will equip the homeopathy practitioners and researchers of the future to develop the profession still further

B2. Into the future: the Society's commitment to education

- **We will continue to provide a framework** which supports a community of educational establishments in providing a high quality teaching and learning environment.
- **We will continue to support and encourage diversity** within the homeopathic educational community, reflecting the diversity within modern professional homeopathy, while ensuring coherence, clear philosophical foundations and practice based within the parameters of the National Occupational Standards and the Course Framework.
- **We will continue to work with the homeopathy course providers and others**, to encourage developments in the education of professional Homeopaths.
- **We will continue to respond to the wider environment**, be that the general public, particular groups, political influences within the UK, Europe and internationally, to ensure the appropriateness and legitimacy of the work we do and the work we support and encourage.

B3. Aims and intentions

Aims

We aim to define, maintain and develop uniformly high standards of professional education, with a diversity of content and delivery, through a process of on-going consultation with all participating course providers.

We aim to work, with all recognised course providers, those seeking recognition, and other interested parties, towards an independent accreditation system, involving the summative assessment of an Accreditation Board.

We aim to support and develop a profession which can flourish in changing contexts of health care and national and supranational legislation.

Intentions

To support the above aims, our intentions are as follows. Performance indicators are shown in italics. We will use these to evaluate the extent to which we are fulfilling our intentions.

Define, maintain and develop high standards

Engage with those involved with professional education to encourage continuing debate about the establishment and maintenance of high standards

- *active participation by appropriate independent education advisors on the Education Steering Committee – attendance of at least one such advisor at each meeting*
- *referral of relevant articles and information etc to course providers*
- *provision of effective bases for networking and information exchange between course providers (e.g. at Education Development Workshops/Course Provider Meetings)*
- *provision of opportunities for debate by course providers, e.g. through national education conferences and/or within other meetings*
- *creation of opportunities for dialogue and development regarding both organisational and education policy/curriculum issues e.g. within the Course Recognition process and at liaison meetings*
- *employment of external education consultants when appropriate, providing different perspectives*
- *encouragement of educational research, with publication of articles in the homeopathic (and other appropriate) press*

Continue the process of consultation with course providers in order to set and develop commonly-agreed standards

- *the Society invites feedback from course providers on any proposed major changes, and can demonstrate their consideration of that feedback*
- *new and amended policy documents are only ratified after draft version(s) and one or more round of consultation, ensuring acceptance by course providers*

Continue with review procedures to enable course providers to receive feedback on their approach to ensuring high standards

- *An Annual Review or an equivalent process remains part of course providers' annual work within quality assurance*
- *Feedback from course providers on our processes and provision demonstrates the usefulness of our procedures, with changes being made if necessary.*
- *continue to monitor relevant quality assurance measures in allied disciplines, adapting as seems appropriate to our needs*

Towards an Accreditation Board

Administer the Course Recognition procedures as a formative assessment process

- *feedback from applicants and review candidates demonstrates an acceptance of standards and an enthusiasm and ability to meet them*
- *process new applications within the timescale notified*
- *feedback on applications is perceived by applicants as generally fair and clear, enabling them to raise standards to meet expectations*
- *yearly evaluation of procedures and the systems to enact them will ensure responsive amendment and development*
- *accountability for our processes will be provided by the Society's Professional Standards*

Committee, which includes 2 lay members; engagement with the Society's Patient Group; and (proposed) accreditation by the Professional Standards Authority (currently in application process)

Devise, with others, workable and effective procedures for accreditation of homeopathy courses, and for the monitoring of accredited courses

- *the Education Department, through the Senior Education Advisor or other delegate, is represented on all groups, committees, working parties, etc concerned with accreditation and allied issues*
- *act as a conduit between the course providers and those engaged in developing an Accreditation Board, so that course providers are able to comment on and contribute to such developments, until such time as a more representative body is operational*

Support and develop a profession able to meet changing contexts

Liaise with the Society's Continuing Professional Development, Registration and Professional Conduct personnel, in order to work together to support the profession

- *attend meetings of the Society's Professional Standards Committee and report all relevant developments to course providers*
- *liaise with other Society departments as appropriate*

Work to ensure appropriate support for those involved in professional education

- *liaison procedures between course providers and the Education Department are intended to facilitate review and development within each institution*
- *the education department facilitates meetings and educational workshops for course providers and teachers to explore, develop and share ideas and good practice*
- *relevant information about support and training provided by other agencies to course providers is reported whenever appropriate*

C. A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Where particularly appropriate, the related or parallel sections of the Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice (CC), the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the Course Framework (CF) are indicated at the end of each point. CC and NOS are intended for the professional practice of homeopathy; hence what is indicated here, for the professional education context, may relate in terms of a parallel rather than an exact equivalence. The absence of a reference to NOS, CC or CF does not infer a lack of relationship, and it is intended that the primary users of this policy should be familiar with those documents.

C1. The institutional background

The development of a well-structured and effective course depends on a stable institution. The institutional context must be able to provide the safe space within which the student can explore and develop. Hence, we see the establishment and development of the institution as fundamental to the education process. Evidence of plans for the future in the major areas of the institution's activity, and enactment of those plans, ensure smooth continuity for all participants and the ability to adjust to unexpected situations.

C.1.1. An appropriate learning environment

Underlying principles

All institutions providing education for the professions are founded on the idea of an open intellectual community, wherein challenge, critique, dialogue and debate are promoted. There is an expectation of reflection and personal educational development by staff and students. Staff should therefore be appropriately qualified and experienced. Students must be provided with learning resources which are adequate to provide the breadth of understanding and experience for practice generally accepted by the homeopathic community, and provision for support and welfare should be in place. Clear contracts for the employment of staff, or consultancy briefs for self-employed staff, ensure adequate security and stability, and the course provider's contract with students should be similarly explicit.

Desirable further development

A mature institution would be supportive of staff development, create research possibilities, and demonstrate a commitment to the development of teaching and assessment methods.

CC 2, 3

C.1.2. Institutional ownership and responsibility for professional education

Underlying principles

Institutional structures should be thoughtfully organised to ensure that ownership matters are separate from educational issues. It is also essential that educational policy and principles are determined entirely separately from financial issues, though budgetary considerations may be included within the prioritising and action planning of educational development. Appropriate structuring and accountability avoid conflict of interest or jeopardising the stability of the course provider's educational environment.

CC 1

C.1.3. Financial security

Underlying principles

Institutions providing professional education courses have an implicit obligation to ensure that students capable of completing the course have the opportunity to do so. It is therefore essential that course providers ensure they have a secure financial base and can provide evidence of contingency plans to protect the interests of students.

C.1.4. Relations with the wider community

Underlying principles

Recognised course providers must be aware of the wider context within which they are operating. This includes being responsive to the developments, initiatives and debates which are current within the homeopathic and educational communities in the U.K., Europe and elsewhere in the world. The NHS situation in the UK also generates debate, opportunities and developments of which course providers should be aware. The expectation of the wider community for impartiality within professional courses leads to an acceptance of the need for external examiners. Such individuals would ensure that standards were applied fairly and consistently, between students and across different year groups. S/he would be a complementary health practitioner or an educator who is familiar with the standards expected in higher education, and with experience in assessment.

Desirable further development

Course providers will want to develop and will therefore seek inputs from the wider homeopathic, other complementary medicine, orthodox medicine and educational communities, and will initiate debate and discussion.

CC 6
NOS C8

C.1.5. Organisational stability

Underlying principles

It is essential that, from the outset, a course provider has realistic arrangements in place to deal with any potentially destabilising changes, in order to guarantee continuity for students. Course providers will ensure that responsibility for the course is a collective enterprise, so that the loss (through illness, death, sudden resignation etc) of one individual will not cause significant changes to the running of the institution. Arrangements for other eventualities, such as major changes in the management/strategic plan or withdrawal from the Society of Homeopaths' Recognised Course list, should also be considered. Stability of the teaching programme, clinical provision and support should be assured.

C.1.6. Appeals procedures

Underlying principles

Institutions shall have an appeals procedure through which staff and students can seek review of decisions made concerning employment, assessment and related matters. This appeals procedure will be made known to all staff and students from the beginning of their connection with the institution.

CC 3, 4

C.1.7. Equal opportunities policy

Underlying principles

Institutions should aim to be open to all sections of the community, and enable and encourage all staff and students to participate fully. An equal opportunities policy (stating the values of the institution) informs admissions procedures, assessment policy, learning support policy, and codes of conduct for all course-based relationships (between students, between staff, between staff and students, with patients). Distinctions of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, socio-economic background, religious or political beliefs, family circumstance, sexual orientation, age (except concerning minimum admission age and the retirement conventions for the institution) and disability should not be used in a discriminatory way in any aspect of the life of the institution. However, there may be genuinely insurmountable difficulties such as inadequate command of English, beliefs which would prevent the staff member or student offering non-judgemental teaching or treatment, and physical or sensory impairments which cannot be effectively accommodated following full consultation with the prospective staff member or student. The equal opportunities policy should make clear the structures within which potential difficulties will be discussed and addressed, acknowledge known problems (eg lack of lift for those with mobility problems) and indicate the ways in which the institution will seek the commitment and involvement of all sections of staff and students in the implementation of the policy. There will be a full understanding of obligations under the 2004 Disability Discrimination Act.

Desirable further development

Active monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy would enable the institution to continue to improve its ability to be genuinely open to all sections of the community.

CC 1

C2. Overall course context and structure

C.2.1. Aims and intentions

Underlying principles

The development of a course is far more than the gathering of pieces of information. Clear aims, intentions and guiding principles are essential. From these, each course provider can have clarity about the kind of practitioner they want to see emerging from their course, the learning experience that is sought, and the way the institution works. Making the vision explicit contributes to clear and consistent planning. Aspects of this vision will be expressed in codes of practice, equal opportunities policies, consideration of boundary issues, and clear criteria for student admissions, progression and completion.

Desirable further development

The course provider will ensure that the vision and guiding principles suffuse every aspect of the institution's life, and will engage in a self-reflective process in order to adapt when necessary to changing circumstances, to understand its own fundamental principles (those aspects which do not change), and to deal with inconsistencies and conflicts in a coherent and sensitive manner.

C.2.2. "Ownership" of course content

Underlying principles

The responsibility for course design and delivery, student admission and assessment should be located as closely as possible to the appropriate members of the staff team (teachers, tutors, mentors, supervisors, assessors etc) and be exercised collectively. Where a syllabus is set and offered at more than one site, the institution should adopt organisational structures which involve those staff who deliver that syllabus in curriculum-based decision-making and the evaluation of such a syllabus in the local situation. It is essential that the expertise, strengths and interests of the staff, the opportunities and limitations of the site, and the qualities of the students are reflected in the overall curriculum at each individual site.

Desirable further development

All teaching staff would contribute to ongoing design and evaluation of the course, be responsible for relevant aspects of the assessment programme and accept responsibility for maintaining the quality of students' learning experiences.

C.2.3. Competence of staff

Underlying principles

In order to ensure relevant skills and understandings within the team, core staff should demonstrate a range of expertise and experience – professional, homeopathic, financial, managerial, and educational. Those staff members with teaching qualifications and experience should, wherever possible and appropriate, offer support to others. Encouragement should be given for staff without teaching qualifications to gain them.

Desirable further development

The majority of teaching staff would have a teaching qualification. A culture would develop among all staff which would ensure continuous development of teaching, management and other abilities, an ethos of sharing skills and support for all staff members. The monitoring of teaching quality and a programme of staff development would become accepted practice.

C.2.4. Student-centred approach

Underlying principles

Those who choose to train as homeopaths are adults, frequently with professional expertise in another field, and possessing knowledge and skills of relevance to their education. A professional education institution accepts homeopathy students as peers, and engages in genuine consultation and dialogue with them. Effective professional education in all fields is a life-changing and personally challenging experience and requires appropriate support and guidance. This should be recognised within the content and structure of a course, and given explicit acknowledgement within codes of conduct and ethics and equal opportunities policies. The provision of counselling services should be independent of those staff responsible for assessment.

Desirable further development

Students would have the opportunity to contribute to programme development, be provided with structures for participation in all decision-making (possibly excepting the most confidential aspects of finance) and be positively encouraged to debate relevant issues with the core staff team.

C.2.5. Professionalism, ethics and reflective practice

Underlying principles

The concept of professionalism implies an ability to synthesise knowledge, skills and perception and to act within a code of ethics and practice. Reflection allows us to foster awareness, and adapt and change our understandings to include new learning. In order for students to develop this skill, it should be modelled to them during the course of their training, with concomitant guidance to enable the development of appropriate attitudes and values. Reference should be made to the Society's Code of Ethics and Practice, the Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice, the relevant performance criteria contained in the National

Occupational Standards and the course provider's equal opportunities policy. Students should be enabled to develop their abilities to understand the ethical issues inherent in practice.

Desirable further development

Reflective practice would become an integral part of the practice and pedagogy of the institution, with self-assessment introduced from the beginning, overt modelling of the process in structures and teaching, valuing of self-reflection in clinical practice and an expectation of on-going professional development.

CC 1

C.2.6. Admission and progression procedures

Underlying principles

Clear criteria for admission to the first year of a course should be appropriate to the requirements for successful completion of that course and should be applied consistently. These criteria and the procedures for admission should be explicit. The procedures for admission of students from abroad should be sensitive to their particular issues (e.g. they may not be able to be physically present for interview) but demonstrably comparable with the criteria for all other students. (It should also be made clear to overseas applicants that Society of Homeopaths Registration is only appropriate for homeopaths practising in the United Kingdom.) Admission and progression into later years/stages of the course should have similarly explicit criteria, which for external candidates should be based on clear methodology for the assessment of prior learning (APL) and prior experiential learning (APEL). Evidence required should be appropriate to the level at which the applicant wishes to join the course.

Desirable further development

Assistance would be available to help the applicant prepare evidence of APL or APEL. Such assistance would be delivered by a different individual from those involved in the assessment of that APL or APEL.

C.2.7. Record-keeping

Underlying principles

In order to track student progress, facilitate transfer between courses, make decisions on students whose work does not clearly meet the required standards and address any challenge by a student concerning assessments made, clear records should be kept of each student's work, with formative and summative assessment grades and comments. Students themselves should be encouraged to develop good record-keeping, suitable for practice, as part of their educational experience. Both students and staff should be told what information is being recorded concerning them, and should have access to such records on request..

C.2.8. Transfer between courses

Underlying principles

In connection with C.2.6. and C.2.7. above, properly-followed procedures are essential to allow smooth transfer, when appropriate, between participating courses. The admission procedures required under C.2.6. should ensure that admission at any level beyond the first year of a course acknowledges the prior learning achieved on another recognised course. To facilitate such procedures, proper recording of learning and assessment is essential, enabling the receiving course provider to comprehend easily where particular key areas have been taught very differently or are taught at a different stage in the originating course. Given the diversity and individuality of recognised courses, there should be flexibility and a willingness to provide assistance to the incoming student to ensure that the level of understanding matches that of the students in the group which they are deemed eligible to join. Additionally, no recognised course should accept a student transferring from another recognised course unless all the student's financial obligations to the originating course provider have been fulfilled. The receiving course provider must satisfy themselves that there are no ethical issues communicated by the originating course or arising within the transfer process which might make this individual inappropriate for homeopathic practice. In order to achieve all these essential aspects, the Society of Homeopaths' transfer procedures should be followed.

C.2.9. Recognition of common standards: quality assurance

Underlying principles

All recognised courses are deemed to provide a standard of homeopathic education appropriate for those entering professional practice and seeking registration. While this may be delivered in diverse ways, all institutions offering recognised courses are required to participate in an annual review to include a focus on an aspect of their delivery defined by the Education Team (or such other appropriate procedures as may be agreed). Further, institutions are required to participate in regular reviews (usually 5 years), involving a

self-evaluation on the basis of the full ARCS (Application for Recognised Course Status) criteria and procedures. Review procedures should involve the broadest possible range of staff and student input. At all times, an external examiner should be employed to ensure an objective viewpoint on the course and its assessment procedures (see C.1.4).

Desirable further development

In order to achieve the highest standards, a course would establish regular internal evaluation and monitoring of its own performance, through investigation and report by staff and students. Structures would be in place to ensure that any issues raised through such monitoring are effectively addressed. Each course would publish an annual review.

CC 2

C.2.10. A culture of development and action, with reflection on experience

Underlying principles

Professions, and hence their course providers, must be responsive to the context and environment, which changes and develops through time. Further to the quality assurance issues raised in 9 above, the course provider should be able to reflect and develop dynamically within the institution's aims and objectives and in response to a changing context and environment. Such a process would be on-going and hence would not demand major restructurings or instability. Development plans would be supported by action plans which are SMART (specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and timetabled).

CC 2

C.2.11. Length and structure of course

Underlying principles

Courses designed for the professional education of homeopaths have traditionally adhered to a minimum length of four years for part-time courses and three years for full-time courses. This requirement recognises that the development of a professional homeopath is not merely knowledge-based but demands personal development and practical experience. Individual students may be granted exemption from specific elements of the course in which they have prior learning; explicit criteria for the demonstration of competence should be in place for such an eventuality, which will relate to experience in related professions.

Since the Society's recognition criteria were changed in 2010 to accommodate the criteria agreed through the Accreditation Working Group (AWG) of the Council of Organisations Registering Homeopaths (CORH), the overall duration of a course applying for recognition may vary, though it will be broadly consistent with these parameters. (e.g. an intensive part-time course may be able to offer provision over a three year period)

Desirable further development

Course providers may wish to offer a post-qualification support programme for students entering practice.

C.2.12 Internal complaints procedures

Underlying principles

Each course provider should have clearly laid out procedures to deal with complaints, ranging from initial informal procedures through to structured formal mechanisms. These should ensure that maximum objectivity can be seen to be in place, offering a fair and equitable system for both students and staff. Such procedures should relate to the codes of ethics and conduct, equal opportunities policy, assessment policy etc of the institution.

Desirable further development

An independent external appeals system would provide greater assurance of objectivity in challenging situations.

C.2.13 Fees and equitable refund policy

Underlying principles

The course prospectus and handbook should stipulate the course fees for all stages/years of the course, other expenses necessarily incurred, payment methods, and arrangements for refunds should the student be unable to continue the course. Such arrangements should be clearly equitable.

C3. A curriculum for professional education

We refer here to different aspects of the curriculum: procedures for setting and planning content (syllabus); how it is taught (pedagogy); and how it is assessed (recognising that these areas are in fact inextricably interlinked). These are overall policy issues. It is up to each institution to translate the policy into its own curriculum, and the Society provides guidance documents to support this (Clinical Education Guidelines; Course Framework).

C.3.1. A clear philosophy

Underlying principles

Homeopathy is a system of medicine, and as such must be taught systematically. Each course should structure its curriculum to reflect an internally coherent philosophy of homeopathy which will provide a secure basis for student learning.

A Framework for course content, which has been devised in consultation with recognised course providers and external educationalists, is available on our website or from our national office.

CC1; CF 1, 2

C.3.2. An ethical base

Underlying principles

Clinical training, provings and learning methods which involve the student in self-revelation should all be governed by ethical guidelines which ensure confidentiality and the safety (physical and emotional) of participants. The Code of Ethics and Practice, the Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice, relevant sections of the National Occupational Standards and any other documents relevant to the course provider's vision should form the basis of the approach to practice.

CC 1

C3.3. Learner-centred education

Underlying principles

The teacher's primary role is to facilitate the learning process, enabling learners to access the syllabus. A course will consider how to cater for learners' individual learning styles in relation to teaching and learning methods, appropriately qualified and experienced staff, and relevant and varied assessment procedures. In this way, learners are enabled to make individual meaning of the complex knowledge, information and skills involved in a professional education.

C.3.4. Developing the capacity for self-reflection

Underlying principles

In common with other professions, homeopathy depends upon the practitioner being able to accept personal responsibility for their actions. Additionally, the development of information is now so rapid and ever-changing that learning how to learn in relation to lived experience is the most valuable skill to incorporate theoretical knowledge. Hence, the capacity for self-reflection on practice should be developed throughout the student's experience of the course.

Desirable further development

It would be helpful for students to be able to undertake further development of their practice and their personal practice skills through research/assessment procedures such as those described as "audit". Self-reflection and audit skills would be modelled to the student by their teaching and supervisory staff during the course, and incorporated into taught modules. Providing structured opportunities and time for reflection ensures it does not get a reduced priority. Students would sense themselves part of a culture which valued reflection, with an awareness of its place within institutional life as well as within practice.

CC 1, 2; CF 5, 10

C.3.5. Pedagogy: consideration of a range of learning strategies

Underlying principles

Principles concerning the way that the syllabus is offered and delivered to students should characterise and reflect the course provider's ethos and policy. There are different ways of knowing, and hence different ways of learning. An effective curriculum will incorporate a variety of these, and course providers should consider carefully the best means for ensuring that their students learn and know what is needed in the most effective ways. Course providers should consider:

- *experiential learning* – direct experience, for example face-to face encounter with a person, place or thing, leading to knowing through empathy and resonance (e.g.clinical observation, clinical practice

- hours, case-taking, role play);
- *presentational knowing* – emerging from experiential knowing, being expressed through imagery such as drawing, movement, poetry and story (e.g. supervision narratives, metaphoric or symbolic representation of materia medica, case material);
- *propositional knowing* – knowing “about” something through ideas and theories, expressed in abstract language (e.g. theoretical concepts and principles of any curriculum area);
- *practical knowing* – knowing “how to” do something, expressed as a skill, knack or competence (e.g. student experience of case-taking, analysis, prescription, case management etc. and structured observation of experienced practitioners).

These are outline areas. Course providers are expected to consider seriously the pedagogy of their entire curriculum. Experiential learning is an essential component in all parts of the curriculum.

C.3.6. Clear assessment procedures and criteria

Underlying principles

Students should be given clear information about the ways in which they will be assessed, and the criteria on which such assessment should be made. These criteria may be derived by the examiner, teacher or, when clearly stated, by the students themselves. Each assignment which is to be assessed should be accompanied by clearly documented criteria, providing definition and precision to the assessment process OR the outcome and purpose should be precisely defined, enabling the student to decide their own objectives for the assignment, which are then used as marking criteria. All assessment should then be made using these criteria. This ensures fairness and comparability, as well as providing students with a secure and comprehensible framework. Formative and summative assessment should be clearly distinguished, and summative assessment (at least) should be internally moderated. Assessment methods should be appropriate to the intended outcome. The overall structure of assessment should be documented, so that students, staff and other interested parties can understand the assessed areas, and the process by which a student progresses through the course to the point of course completion.

C.3.7. Self- and peer- assessment

Underlying principles

Professional education recognises that adult learners have a full rational grasp of their learning objectives. Therefore, as well as assessing what they have learned, they should be encouraged to assess how they learn and how they provide the evidence of their learning. This makes self-assessment a particularly important component of formative assessment. The ability to achieve valid self-assessment depends on the balancing provided by peer-assessment. Maintaining and developing these skills provide a basis for professional practice. These issues in assessment clearly relate to the ability for self-reflection identified in C.3.3 above.

C.3.8. Research skills and ethics

Underlying principles

Research has been integral to homeopathy from its very beginnings, in that variety of research which we know as a “proving”. The homeopathic community must be one which questions, supports and develops its knowledge base. The student who aspires to join such a community needs to develop the skills to become part of a profession which undertakes research. An introduction to research in its various forms is an important part of a professional education. Some research skills are developed through self-reflection (e.g. the use of audit to identify problems within practice, which might lead to a decision to undertake some specific continuing professional development or make changes in systems of procedures). The ability to evaluate/critically review both one’s own work and that of others is a crucial professional ability. Teachers will model this by providing clear references to the sources of information they are introducing, or state if such references are unavailable. Students will ensure that their assignments are accompanied by full bibliographies and critical acknowledgement of sources. Additionally, in the specific context of homeopathic education, an understanding of the procedures and ethics of provings should form part of students’ skills.

CF 9,10

C.3.9. A developing clinical training

Underlying principles

Clinical Education aims to enable homeopathy students to become proficient, safe and appropriately confident professional homeopaths. The framework of the course and the activities and opportunities within

it will aim to encourage the student to formulate links between theoretical concepts and practice experience, and provide means for students and teachers to monitor and assess development.

Clinical Education aims to develop both *competence* and *capability* in students in a clinical practice.

Competence is defined as what individuals *know* and are able to *do* based on knowledge, skills and understanding.

Capability is defined as the individual's ability to *adapt to change, generate new knowledge, and continue to improve* performance.

By the end of the course, the student will be expected to be able to demonstrate through written work, reflective writing, verbal communication and in clinical practice that they are able to:

Demonstrate the skills and understanding of the **National Occupational Standards in Homeopathy**
Practise professionally within the **Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice** and the **Society's Code of Ethics and Practice**

A professional education in homeopathy is a preparation for practice. Clinical experience should form an integral part of such an education. The levels of responsibility expected of students should progressively increase as they move through the clinical experience aspect of the course; they should be informed about "duty of care" and understand their limits of competence. Each course provider is responsible for clarity about the approach to supervision in the institution, and ensuring that appropriate, adequate and effective supervision is provided for each student. Appropriate insurance should be in place. Supervisors should wherever possible have training in supervisory skills and in the assessment skills demanded of them by the course provider. The needs of patients must be considered responsibly in all such arrangements. The Society of Homeopaths' Education Department, in consultation with Recognised Course Providers, has produced Clinical Education Guidelines which develop these ideas in more detail.

Desirable further development

Supervisors would be part of the course team, and possibly paid directly by the course provider. Clear communication from the course provider would ensure that supervisors were fully informed of the course ethos. They would have clear criteria for all situations in which they were expected to assess students. Supervisors would themselves be in supervision both as practitioners and as supervisors. Clinicians would also have supervisory skills.

CC 3, 4; CF3,5

C.3.10. Preparation for practice

Underlying principles

The realities of working as a sole practitioner and the importance of belonging to a professional body should be explicit aspects of the student's learning. This provides the context for continuing professional development, insurance, code of ethics and community responsibility. Appropriate work experience and aspects of business management should form part of the course/course requirements. Awareness of the professional bodies which students and graduates may join, and the issues concerning the importance and relevance of such membership, should be developed in appropriate ways.

CC1; CF 7,8,9

C.3.11. A satisfactory ending

Underlying principles

Procedures for course completion should be clear and transparent. The student should have an explicit timetable detailing the earliest and (where applicable) latest points at which they can complete the course. The course provider's responsibility to students, and the ways in which the process towards completion will be managed should be stated. Thus a clear "ending procedure" would be in place to provide security for both student and course provider. Such an ending should provide students with the basis for Continuing Professional Development.

CC 2

C.3.12. The National Occupational Standards and The Society's Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice and Course Framework

Underlying principles

The Society's Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice have been adapted from work to identify professional criteria in other professions, and stand as a clear statement of the professional values in homeopathy. As such, they provide the context for all homeopathic practice, and thus also for all professional education in homeopathy.

The National Occupational Standards have been derived through open consultation within the profession. These Standards seek to define the work of a homeopath, and while some aspects can only be developed

within independent practice, it is expected that courses will ensure that all relevant elements are included. Neither document is a syllabus nor curriculum, but it is expected that courses will develop and operate with full awareness of them.

The Society's Course Framework offers an outline of the essential requirements for a comprehensive course in homeopathy for professional practice, and can be used as a guide to curriculum content.

D. THE AGREEMENT WITH RECOGNISED COURSE PROVIDERS

Recognition of a course by the Society of Homeopaths places obligations on both the Society (see B1 and B2, as well as the obligations implicit throughout this document) and the course provider.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN COURSE PROVIDERS IN HOMEOPATHY EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHS FOR 2015

On behalf of[course provider]

I agree to:

- work within the conditions set out in the Society's Education Policy (revised 6th edition) and the Society's Code of Ethics and Practice
- ensure that the programme of study will meet the recognition criteria, include the approved core subjects (see ECCH European Guidelines for Homeopathic Education 2011; SoH Course Framework 2013), and relate closely to the Complementary and Natural Healthcare National Occupational Standards (Homeopathy), the Society's Core Criteria for Homeopathic Practice and Clinical Education Guidelines .
- consult about any proposed changes significant to the recognition criteria when these arise, and to work in partnership with the Society of Homeopaths to ensure that the programme includes such other requirements as may be specified
- ensure that course provision is adequate for students to qualify at a standard equivalent to Higher Education level 6 (or at least to Level 5 with clear aims for Level 6)
- fully participate in the monitoring and review procedures organised by the Society such as Recognition and Re-Recognition procedures (ARCS), and to provide the Society with an annual review (or equivalent documentation), and numerical data within agreed headings.
- ensure that all core staff members are familiar with the criteria contained in the handbook of the Society's Application for Recognised Course Status (ARCS)
- facilitate attendance of staff members at relevant activities such as meetings and Educational Development events
- provide structured complaints and appeals procedures, academic guidance and access to student support, and to include students in course evaluation and review processes
- ensure appropriate insurance and supervision arrangements for the protection of students and patients operating within the clinical learning programme
- act with professional integrity towards other course providers and their students and commit to the structured process of student transfer between institutions appearing on the Society's list of Recognised courses
- notify the Society's Education Department of any difficulties arising which could lead to the closure of the course
- use only the stipulated wording assigned to the status of the course(s) when referring to the Society of Homeopaths in promotional literature or advertising.

Signed

Date.....

Name (please print)

AGREEMENT BETWEEN COURSE PROVIDERS IN HOMEOPATHY EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY OF HOMEOPATHS FOR 2015

On behalf of the Society of Homeopaths

We agree to:

- implement, monitor and review the Society's Recognition and Re-recognition procedure for professional courses
- implement, monitor and review the Society's Individual Route to Registration (APEL) procedure
- co-ordinate the process of annual review (or equivalent review documentation), which the Department and course providers each agree to produce. To give feed back to the course providers on their reviews
- promote recognised courses directly through the Society's website and other appropriate media, and in response to enquiries
- provide up to date information to the public relating to education in homeopathy through the Society's website, the FindaHomeopath website and in response to specific enquiries
- work in partnership with course providers, students and relevant others, enabling all interested parties to contribute to development of future educational policy and processes, either directly or via Course Provider and student representatives on the Education Steering Committee
- invite accountability of current regulatory functions such as Course Recognition through the Society of Homeopaths' Education Steering Committee and Professional Standards Committee
- facilitate review by independent representatives in our course recognition procedures
- provide an appeals procedure relating to regulatory decisions
- support and encourage peer development of education in homeopathy, both through our own activities and through the Homeopathy Course Providers' Forum
- promote liaison with course staff and students through course visits, email and telephone contact
- support the process of ethical student transfer between institutions appearing on the Society's list of recognised courses
- create and distribute the newsletter, "Leading Edge", for course providers and their staff
- to keep Society of Homeopaths' members informed of developments in homeopathy course provision through the Society Journal, First Class Mail, website and direct mailing as appropriate
- maintain and participate in co-operative links with other departments of the Society and various outside agencies, and to feed back to Course Providers the outcomes of such links when appropriate

Signed..... **Date**.....

Name.....*Senior Education Advisor*
on behalf of the Society of Homeopaths' Education Department

When an independent Accrediting Body is in place, this Policy will be replaced by the accreditation standards and such policy specific to the Society of Homeopaths as may be deemed appropriate at the time.

If an Accreditation Board or its equivalent is not established or on the verge of becoming so by the end of 2015, this Policy will be revised during 2016.

The Society of Homeopaths reserves the right in the interim to make such minor amendments to this policy as may become necessary, following reasonable discussion with and general agreement among the participating course providers.

EDUCATION POLICY: GLOSSARY

Accreditation

See section A3.1

At its simplest, accreditation means the endorsement, on behalf of a professional body, of the professional education offered by an institution. Such endorsement indicates that the course satisfies the criteria set by the profession for professional education.

Assessment

The comprehensive, evaluative, view of an aspect of a student's work within a course, undertaken to provide information concerning the student's progress.. Assessment relates to learning outcomes or other set criteria. *See also formative assessment, self assessment, summative assessment.*

Audit

Audit is a formal way to reflect on action, in real practice situations. Undertaking an audit implies a willingness to change. By undertaking a conscious investigative procedure, one looks at processes and structures in order to influence outcomes. The model of audit used by the Society of Homeopaths asks five questions in a cyclic pattern: what am I trying to achieve? am I achieving it? why am I not achieving it? what can I do to change things? have I changed things?

Blended Learning

Distance-based education courses that also require a physical on-site presence for any reason (including taking examinations or for clinical practice) have been referred to as blended (or hybrid) courses of study.

Collegiate experience

This term can be used to describe the experience of students as connected to an identifiable group of learners. This will usually occur naturally in an attendance course, but may require some deliberate positive intervention to provide for students engaged in distance learning.

Competence

The capacity to operate in a principled and informed way. This implies the ability to create new meanings in practical situations. Beware confusion with "competencies" which are discrete skills undertaken in accordance with an agreed standard.

Critique

A way of reflecting on some element of process or content which analyses the main issues and provides an estimation of the usefulness or appropriateness of those aspects. A critique may also suggest how improvements can be made, by reference to explicit principles. Critical awareness of this kind uses curiosity and reflection in order to learn. It is an important aspect of education.

Curriculum

A curriculum is an outline of the entire context within which learning takes place. It provides the principles by which the selection of the syllabus, the means of conveying of that syllabus and the integrative links between aspects of the course have been decided. Curriculum includes all the activities, experiences and learning opportunities which the course provider intends to ensure for students. The "hidden curriculum" implies those aspects which the education provider has not made explicit, to others or even to themselves.

Distance Learning

Distance Learning is an umbrella term to cover modes of providing education to students who are not physically present in a traditional setting such as a classroom. Traditionally this was usually done through 'correspondence courses', but more recently students maintain contact with the education programme through electronic links (e.g. internet, Skype, Moodle, etc)

Education

Implies, according to its Latin root, a "leading out" of understanding from the student. Education is a process of enabling the student to make their own meaning from a body of knowledge that is both theoretical and practical. The ability to be critical, to challenge ideas, is an essential aspect of education; a deepening of understanding occurs through the critical encounter with pre-existing knowledge.

Formative assessment

Assessment which is part of the learning process, providing the student with guidance as to the necessary next steps. This, along with self-assessment, is an important component of 'assessment for learning'.

Moderation

Moderation is a quality assurance process that ensures appropriate and consistent standards. It involves checking and reviewing assessment schemes and students' assignments, providing feedback to markers to help them align their standards with those of others.

Pedagogy

"The science of teaching". Pedagogy implies the approach taken to education and the way this is expressed in the range of methods used to facilitate the learning of the student.

Professional

Relating to specialised work for some "good" in society. Professional work demands theoretical knowledge, skill, judgement and an ethical basis. A professional person requires personal and professional values in order to act autonomously within the tradition of their profession. The complex and discretionary nature of such work means that it is necessary for the client to trust the practitioner to act appropriately, as the client may not have the knowledge to evaluate such actions fully.

Reflection

A deliberate strategy for practitioners to undertake internal enquiry, using modes of knowledge that are wider than the intellectual. The process enables us to adapt and change our understandings to include new learning. Reflective processes have become educationally esteemed, as a counter-balance to the purely abstract and theoretical knowledge which came to dominate professional and academic modes of thought. Reflection transforms the link between theory and practice into a continuous feedback loop.

Self -assessment

Aims to raise awareness of the process of learning and the levels of attainment required and reached. Self-assessment introduces dialogue into the process of assessment. (*See Formative assessment*)

Summative assessment

Assessment which determines whether the student has achieved the learning intentions for the relevant part of the course. Summative assessment is often used to decide whether a student can progress to the next stage.

Supervision

A formally contracted, regular opportunity for reviewing and clarifying professional experience. The intention within the supervisory relationship is to seek understanding at greater depth than, or from a different perspective to, that achieved through individual self-reflection. The supervisee is enabled to become clearer about the area addressed and thus achieve enhanced competence in professional work.

Syllabus

A specification of the subject matter or content of a course, including both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Training

Ensures that the same reaction is always given to a similar event. It does not imply a critical perspective. *See also Education.*