



GCC Test of Competence External Examiner's Annual Report

Period: January 2016 – January 2017

Results

Date of TOC	Results
January Pass rate at first attempt: 38% Pass rate after resubmission: 75%	Number of candidates: 8 Pass: 3 Fail: 2 Further Evidence Required: 3 Passed after submitting further evidence: 3
March Pass rate at first attempt: 25% Pass rate after resubmission: 50%	Number of candidates: 4 Pass: 1 Fail: 2 Further Evidence Required: 1 Passed after submitting further evidence: 1
June Pass rate at first attempt: 33% Pass rate after resubmission: 55%	Number of candidates: 9 Pass: 3 Fail: 4 Further Evidence Required: 2 Passed after submitting further evidence: 2
September Pass rate at first attempt: 33% Pass rate after resubmission: 66%	Number of candidates: 12 Pass: 4 Fail: 4 Further Evidence Required: 4 Passed after submitting further evidence: 3

January	Number of candidates: 6
Pass rate at first attempt: 33%	Pass: 2
Pass rate after resubmission:	Fail: 3
N/A	Further Evidence Required: 1
	Passed after submitting further evidence: N/A

Please provide comment on the results in this period.
(E.g. Any causes for concern, significant trends noticed or any significant differences between these results and those from previous years.)

There was a slight increase in the numbers of candidates taking the assessment compared to the period detailed in my previous report, and this has been based on the same number of panels in both years. In the year 2016 (excluding January 2017) there were 28 candidates so this also represents an increase on the same period last year. In my previous report for the year (2015) 75% of candidates passed including those required to resubmit evidenced. This year the figure was 74%, with one outstanding resubmission awaited. It is pleasing to note that the pass rates have been maintained and that on the evidence of the data the TOC assessment remains as popular as last year.

An area for discussion is that given the pass rates are relatively low (though perhaps in accordance with other similar assessments), but that candidates often pass on a subsequent attempt using much the same background data, why are there not more candidates passing first time? Are there additional supports that if put in place might increase the pass rate and should the GCC be involved in such an initiative?

Analysis of Paperwork

Panel Member Recording Sheets
(Please provide comment on the sample of panel member recording sheets (TOC Form A))

No major issues were identified. All panel members felt that the day as a whole operated 'extremely' or 'pretty well'. It was also felt that the panels worked together 'extremely' or 'quite well'. In their comments on co-assessors all felt that colleagues operated professionally and effectively. It is good to recognise these comments especially since there has been incorporation of new assessors on to the panels in this current year.

Chairs Reports
(Please provide comment on the sample of Chair's reports (TOC Form B) e.g. are they

consistent with comments on the TOC form As, do they provide clear information to the Registrar.)

Chairs reported that generally the process was completed satisfactorily with no significant difficulties or issues remaining unresolved.

It would be helpful for the external examiner to sample some of the written documents resubmitted by candidates as additional evidence which have then been assessed by the Chairs, as it is still not clear what it means when it is reported that reading has been completed, or an essay has been submitted of the required standard. It would be good practice to have sight of at least a sample of these pieces of evidence so that comments can be made about them, and consistency assured between chairs, so far as is possible. The process has been followed appropriately but assurance of consistency between panels/Chairs has not been examined.

Result Letters from CER

(E.g. Are these consistent with Chairs Reports? Do they provide sufficient feedback and recommendations to the candidate? Are they clear and easy to understand?)

The sample seen is clear and unequivocal. Subsequent steps for the candidate are clearly expressed.

Assessment Panel Operation

TOC Pre- Meetings

(E.g. Were decisions discussed appropriately and in detail, were the meetings conducted professionally etc.)

I attended a sample of the pre-meetings for the January 2017 assessment. Both were operated with professionalism, and efficiency. They were thorough and fair. There was ample evidence that all assessors had read all the candidates' submissions carefully. There was consensus as to the areas identified for questioning in the subsequent panel interview.

TOC Interviews

(E.g. Were interviews conducted fairly, candidates put at ease, questions explained clearly, panel dynamics etc.)

Two panels were observed in January 2017. All interviews with each candidate were professionally conducted. Chairs demonstrated appropriate leadership and sensitivity, putting the candidates at ease. Communication was consistently good. Questions reflected the panels' preparation the day before. An appropriate range of candidates' clinical skills and experience was tested. So far as I could determine, outcomes seemed appropriate and fair, and the process followed as prescribed. Evidence of good practice in both panel operations was observed of the use of pre-documented plans of questioning which greatly assisted efficiency on the day of the panels.

Assessor Performance Appraisals

Confirm whether appraisals have been completed for all TOC Assessors and highlight any overall issues that have arisen.

All appraisals were completed and no significant issues were identified. All appraisees confirmed that they found the process helpful, positive and fair. Assessors have asked for a copy of the completed signed forms sent to them by the GCC office for their records (or at least a scanned copy).

Candidate and Assessor Feedback

Assessor Feedback Forms

(E.g. Any significant issues highlighted)

No issues of major significance were identified.

Candidate Feedback Forms

(E.g. Any significant and/or frequent issues highlighted.)

Most candidates commented that the assessment panels worked well together, though there were some comments that the process was lengthy/intense. Candidates found the assessors polite, supportive and professional, asking relevant questions. Some candidates had difficulty in navigating around the website, though this is not obvious from my own inspection of the on line material. I am also aware of the good levels of support offered by office staff which is worthy of comment. One candidate made the point that given graduation in southern hemisphere institutions is in April and September offering a TOC panel between September and January might be useful.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints and Appeals for this period.

(Were any complaints received or appeals made, were they handled appropriately, what was the outcome.)

One complaint was received after the September 2016 panel concerning the unsettling sustained by the candidate when asked to complete some uncompleted part of the EPQ, presumably due to the relatively short time scale involved before the panel took place. The responses of the GCC were clearly expressed, in accordance with established practice and fair. Requesting additional evidence or seeking corrections with ample time to complete the requirement is of course best practice. In relation to the response to the specific complaint it was clearly stated that the evidence sought was not assessed as such, merely serving to help the interview process. Taking that into account whilst collating such information at short notice was regrettable it should not have unsettled the candidate to the extent that it adversely affected assessment performance on the day in my view, and thus I support the position taken by the GCC.

Review and Evaluation of the Process

Please provide comment on the annual review meeting.

An excellent meeting was observed. Ideas were discussed, proposals made to improve and refine the process, operating to standardise the assessments. There was sharing of good practise and information was given to update all assessors.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Of the nationalities of the applicants 22 were from US, 10 from South Africa, 7 from Australia and one from New Zealand. Demand from European countries resulting in formal application is non-existent in the current year and worthy of comment and further thought.

The training day provided a useful event to allow assessors to meet and compare notes and suggest refinements to the process and restatement of policy to be made. The newly appointed assessors all made helpful contributions to the training day and all were able to operate efficiently and professionally in the panels I observed.

Appraisals demonstrated that all assessors were operating professionally and reflection enabled areas of good practice to be identified as well as areas for further development.

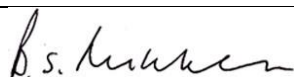
The overall pass rates compare with the previous year and with the previous operation in USW which reflects the high standard expected before candidates can register with the GCC.

Overall I am satisfied that the process in the year under consideration has been operated satisfactorily, standards maintained and public safety assured.

Summary of suggestions and recommendations:

- Demand from European countries resulting in formal application is non-existent in the current year and worthy of comment and further thought.
- An area for discussion is that given the pass rates are relatively low (though perhaps in accordance with other similar assessments), but that candidates often pass on a subsequent attempt using much the same background data, why are there not more candidates passing first time? Are there additional supports that if put in place might increase the pass rate and should the GCC being involved in such an initiative?
- It would be helpful for the external examiner to sample some of the written documents resubmitted by candidates as additional evidence which have then been assessed by the Chairs, as it is still not clear what it means when it is reported that reading has been completed, or an essay has been submitted of the required standard. It would be good practice to have sight of at least a sample of these pieces of evidence so that comments can be made about them, and consistency assured between chairs, so far as is possible.
- Assessors have asked for a copy of the completed signed forms sent to them by the GCC office for their records (or at least a scanned copy).
- One candidate made the point that given graduation in southern hemisphere institutions is April and September offering a TOC panel between September and January might be useful.

Signed:



Professor Barry Mitchell

Date:

24/1/17

GCC Response to the Test of Competence External Examiner's Report

The below is the response and actions as a result of the suggestions and recommendations made by the External Examiner in the 2016/17 annual report.

Recommendation	Response	Planned Action (If applicable)
Demand from European countries resulting in formal application is non-existent in the current year and worthy of comment and further thought.	Currently, those who qualify and go on to practise in an EU country are able to apply to the GCC's register under the EU Directive 2005. Those who do not hold EU Community Rights and do not possess a qualification recognised by the GCC are required to sit the TOC.	The GCC will need to discuss any changes that may need to be made to requirements after the UK has left the European Union.
An area for discussion is that given the pass rates are relatively low (though perhaps in accordance with other similar assessments), but that candidates often pass on a subsequent attempt using much the same background data, why are there not more candidates passing first time? Are there additional supports that, if put in place, might increase the pass rate and should the GCC being involved in such an initiative?	We seek to ensure that we offer as much information as possible on our website to those who wish to apply for the TOC. We have also produced a handbook that is sent to all those who apply. Both the handbook and our website give a clear list of what is covered in the assessment interview and the handbook contains useful links and resources.	Earlier this year, the RCC developed online modules aimed at those who will be sitting the TOC. Those who have applied will be directed to these modules as well as given information on the four professional associations who may be able to provide advice.
It would be helpful for the external examiner to sample some of the written documents resubmitted by candidates as additional evidence which have then been assessed by the Chairs, as it is still not clear what it means when it is reported that reading has been completed, or an essay has been submitted of the required standard. It would be good	We agree that this would be helpful and will enable the External Examiner to ensure that this part of the process is being conducted effectively, fairly and consistently.	For all future reports, the External Examiner will be issued with samples of candidates' further evidence.

Recommendation	Response	Planned Action (If applicable)
<p>practice to have sight of at least a sample of these pieces of evidence so that comments can be made about them, and consistency assured between chairs, so far as is possible.</p>		
<p>Assessors have asked for a copy of the completed signed (appraisal) forms sent to them by the GCC office for their records.</p>	<p>The GCC agrees that assessors should receive a copy of their signed appraisal forms as part of the appraisal process.</p>	<p>The office is to ensure that all assessors receive a signed, electronic copy of their completed appraisal forms following an appraisal.</p>
<p>One candidate made the point that given graduation in southern hemisphere institutions is April and September offering a TOC panel between September and January might be useful.</p>	<p>The Welsh Institute of Chiropractic historically held TOC assessments in November prior to the GCC managing the process. We were informed by WIOC during the development of the new TOC that the dates in November had a low level of interest and were frequently cancelled. It is on this basis that it was decided that TOCs would take place in January, March, June and September only.</p>	<p>We currently run 4 TOCs per annum and would not have resources to run more. Consideration was given to a November TOC but this would not be possible given that this is the retention period and also when the office reviews CPD summaries.</p>