

Council meeting 12 April 2012

04.12/C/05

Public business

Fees for the exam (effective from June 2012) & pre-registration application (effective from July 2012)

Purpose

To agree whether there should be a reduction to the Entry to Pre-Registration scheme fee with effect from July 2012 and the Registration Assessment entry fee with effect from June 2012.

Recommendation

The Council is asked to agree that the entry to pre-registration scheme fee and the registration assessment entry fee are reduced for the new pre-registration year (July 2012 – June 2013) including the June 2012/September 2012 exams.

1.0 Background

1.1 Under the Scheme of Delegation the following is reserved to Council:

Determining fees to be charged in connection with entry to the pre-registration scheme and registration examination for prospective pharmacists, and the assessment of overseas-qualified pharmacists (art 65(1));

1.2 Council members will be aware that education-related fees under art 65(1) were considered at the February Council meeting. At the meeting it was agreed to hold fees to their current levels as more information was needed in relation to the actual costs of the exam and pre-registration year if we were to reduce fees.

This paper is dealing with the entry to pre-registration scheme and registration assessment entry fees only.

1.3 For information the current fees are quoted here:-

- Entry to pre-registration scheme: £174
- Registration assessment entry fee: £206

1.4 More detailed analysis has now been carried out and it is now proposed to lower both fees to the following:-

- Entry to pre-registration scheme: £142
- Registration assessment entry fee: £182

The fee has been calculated by analysing the direct and indirect costs associated with both the exam and the pre-registration activities.

The direct costs for the registration assessment entry fee relate to the actual costs of running the assessment including venue hire and invigilators.

The direct costs of the entry to pre-registration scheme relate to the costs of pre registration facilitators.

The indirect costs of these activities have been derived from the use of the capacity plan produced by Customer Services and allocating a proportion of staff who are not directly attributable to either activities.

In addition to the direct and indirect costs of these activities an allowance of 15% on top of direct and indirect costs, has been made in respect of overheads.

There are just over 2,800 pre-registration students registered with us currently, we expect this to rise to 3100 in 2012/13 based on the student lists supplied to us by the universities.

We expect 2589 students to sit the exam in June and a further 634 in September which will include a number of re-sits from 2011 and the June 2012 sitting.

If we hold fees at their current levels we will generate a surplus of £174,641 comprised of £76,708 from the exams and £97,933 from the pre-registration year.

Hence the proposal is to reduce the fees charged to eliminate the surplus generated.

2.0 **Equality and diversity implications**

- 2.1 Lowering fees to the lowest appropriate level whilst covering the relevant costs incurred will benefit those at the beginning of their career, some of whom will be on a very low income.

3.0 **Communications implications**

- 3.1 A letter has been received from the BPSA asking for fees payable by pharmacy students to be looked at by the GPhC. They have asked that the decision to delay a review until 2013 be brought forward and presented to Council at the April meeting. The letter quoted "With fees for pharmacists and technicians likely to be reduced it seems unfair that the part of our profession that traditionally earns the least will still be expected to pay the same fees for the coming 12-24 months."
- 3.2 The intended changes will be publicised on the GPhC website.

4.0 **Resource implications**

- 4.1 The budget for 2012/2013, agreed at the February Council meeting assumed a reduction in the registration assessment entry fee to £150, no adjustment was made to the entry to pre-registration scheme fee. Total budgeted income for the new academic year is £1,005,450 and the revised income generated through adopting these new fees would be £1,011,297, a slightly higher income of £5,847 to that budgeted.

5.0 **Risk implications**

- 5.1 The risk implications of not lowering the fees will be that a surplus will be generated from the registration assessment entry and the entry to pre-registration scheme. Given the current level of reserves forecast not reducing fees where appropriate could attract adverse criticism from registrants..

Recommendation

The Council is asked to agree that the entry to pre-registration scheme fee and the registration assessment entry fee are reduced for the new pre-registration year (July 2012 – June 2013) including the June 2012/September 2012 exams.

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