

CODP Position Statement: HCPC Consultation on revised threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register for ODPs

The College of Operating Department Practitioners (CODP) welcomes the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Consultation on a revised threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register (SET1) for Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs). The College introduced the BSc(Hons) in Operating Department Practice curriculum document in April 2011 and a revised curriculum document was published in September 2018. The Dip HE Curriculum was introduced by the Association of Operating Department Practitioners (AODP) in 2002 as the threshold qualification when regulation was sought with the HCPC; this curriculum was withdrawn by CODP in 2015.

The College's rationale for introducing the degree-level curriculum centered upon:

- Future Operating Department Practitioners would need to be equipped with the sufficient depth of knowledge, understanding and skills needed for practice at the point of registration and for future professional practice and development
- Enhanced critical thinking capability
- The challenges facing the National Health Service (NHS)
 - Society's increasing expectations of healthcare
 - An ageing population
 - Increased access to information for all
 - The changing nature of disease and illness
 - Advances in treatment
- A changing workplace where new and extended roles would be introduced in order to ensure the patient would continue to receive appropriate care of the highest standard

Since 2011 there has been a transition to degree level pre-registration Operating Department Practitioner programmes across the United Kingdom, currently there are 24 Higher Education Institutions delivering degree programmes. It can be seen therefore that the majority of Operating Department Practitioner programmes are now delivered in excess of the current threshold level of Diploma of Higher Education.

Of the 15 professions regulated by the HCPC, the threshold entry route to the register is at either Bachelor degree or Master's degree for 12 professions with 1 further profession moving to Bachelor degree from September 2021. A change therefore of the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register would align Operating Department Practitioners with the vast majority of HCPC registrants.

The College of Operating Department Practitioners believes the threshold level of qualification for entry to the Register of Operating Department Practitioners should be changed to Bachelor's degree level for the following reasons:

- Patient safety in perioperative practice is relies upon multi-professional care; a thorough understanding of Human Factors and other safety critical factors; and both



the ability to critically analyse and the knowledge and confidence to challenge others in the best interests of service users. This can be achieved through study to degree level

- Positively affect recruitment onto pre-registration Operating Department Practitioner programmes
- Reflects the needs of contemporary Operating Department Practice
- Future-proofs the profession giving Operating Department Practitioners the opportunity to apply for specialist and advanced roles
- Reflects the advances the profession has made over recent years which we believe now requires graduate level knowledge and skills for safe, effective practice