

Accredited Registers

Condition Review: British Acupuncture Council (BAcC)

30 November 2022

1. Outcome

- 1.1 We issued the British Acupuncture Council (BAcC)'s with two Conditions of Accreditation in May 2022.
- 1.2 This report discusses the actions BAcC took to address the Conditions, as well as our decision about whether the *Standards for Accredited Registers* ('the Standards')¹ were met.
- 1.3 We found that the BAcC had met the Conditions.

2. Background

- 2.1 We assess Registers against our *Standards for Accredited Registers*. Where a Register has not met a Standard, we can issue Conditions. A Condition sets out the requirements and the timeframe that a Register must meet.
- 2.2 At the BAcC's renewal of Accreditation², completed in May 2022, we issued the following Conditions, to be completed within three months:
- 2.3 **Condition One:** BAcC's new register website must clearly communicate the following:
 - a) information about its requirements and processes for registration and renewal, referencing its codes of conduct, required level of education, insurance, CPD and other essential requirements.
 - b) BAcC must publish definitions of its categories of registration.
 - c) BAcC must publish registrants' identification numbers against their register entries.
 - d) BAcC must publish its Exceptional Circumstances policy setting out how it will approach requests not to appear on the public register.
 - e) BAcC must make its regulatory and complaints handling roles clear on its website landing page. (paragraph 5.4)

BAcC was required to provide its plan of how these requirements will be addressed on its new website within three months of publication of our report.

- 2.4 **Condition Two:** BAcC must review and update its risk matrix. The matrix must demonstrate awareness of the risk that registrants' advertising may, if unaddressed, lead to harm. BAcC must provide an updated version of its Risk matrix to the Accreditation team within three months of publication of this report.
- 2.5 We reviewed the following evidence:

¹ <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers.pdf>

² <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/panel-decisions/bacc-annual-review-decision-2022.pdf>

- a) BAcC's progress report on the development of its updated website (for Condition One)
- b) BAcC's updated 'Conduct and Practice Risk Register' (for Condition Two)

3. Concerns leading to the Condition

Standard Two: Management of the Register

- 3.1 As part of BAcC's 2022 full renewal assessment³ we found there were several areas where BAcC did not fully meet our Accredited Registers Evidence Framework⁴.
- a) We found that its registration processes were not clearly linked to its published professional codes, standards of practice, or requirements to hold indemnity insurance or complete CPD.
 - b) We considered that while BAcC does not have many grades of registration, those it does have are not clearly explained on its website. There was a potential risk that people could assume that, for example, practitioners marked as 'non-practising members' may be insured when they are not required to be.
 - c) We noted that registrants' identification numbers are not published on the register.
 - d) We require Accredited Registers to publish all practitioners that meet its standards for registration on their public registers. Where there are valid reasons for excluding registrants from the public register, we require the register to publish an 'Exceptional Circumstances' policy. BAcC had not published such a policy.
- 3.2 To address these, we issued Conditions 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d.

Standard Five: Complaints and concerns about registrants

- 3.3 We required BAcC to make its regulatory and complaints handling role explicit on its website landing page. We issued this to BAcC as Condition 1e.
- 3.4 We were aware that BAcC was developing a new public-facing website and considered these points should be addressed on that website. We required BAcC to present a plan of how, and when, it would do so.

Standard Seven: Management of risks arising from the activities of registrants

- 3.5 We had previously considered how BAcC ensures its registrants advertise in line with Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) and Committee for Advertising Practice (CAP) Codes. As part of this, we noted that BAcC recorded a risk of inappropriate advertising in its risk register, but it did not appear to expressly acknowledge a risk that registrants may inadvertently or deliberately advertise practices that could directly or indirectly lead to harm. To assure that BAcC met this Standard, we issued Condition Two.

³ https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/guidance-documents/annual-review-process-guide.pdf?sfvrsn=e5c7220_18

⁴ https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/accredited-registers/standards-for-accredited-registers/accredited-registers-evidence-framework-for-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=55f4920_6

- 3.6 Further details can be found under Standards Two, Five and Seven of BAcC's 2022 Accreditation Renewal Report.

4. Assessment of Condition 1

- 4.1 BAcC provided its progress report setting out how its updated website would address each requirement of the Condition. BAcC stated that it would restructure pages and content in relevant areas of its public website. BAcC aimed to complete different actions by the end of November 2022 and March 2023.
- 4.2 We found that BAcC had met the requirement of the Condition by providing its plan of how it would meet the Standards.
- 4.3 BAcC must complete these changes to meet Standards 2 and 5. We will check that BAcC completes the required actions at its next assessment.

5. Assessment of Condition 2

- 5.1 BAcC provided its updated 'Professional conduct and practice risk register'. The updated matrix stated that there is a risk that registrants' marketing material may lead to harm due to inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information.
- 5.2 The matrix stated BAcC aims to address this risk through its communications, relevant support to registrants, its monitoring of registrants advertising, and the sanctions it can issue where its standards are found to be breached.
- 5.3 We found that BAcC's updated risk matrix demonstrates awareness of the risk that registrants' advertising may, if unaddressed, lead to harm. The risk matrix acknowledges that this can be addressed with support, but also through enforcement of BAcC's regulatory role.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 BAcC has carried out the actions required by the Conditions. We will check that BAcC completes the required actions at its next assessment.