

## HEOPS Study Day 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013

### SEQOHS Update

A number of HEOPS members have posted queries on the mail base seeking advice regarding SEQOHS accreditation. In response detailed below is a brief overview guide to help HEOPS colleagues navigate through the SEQOHS accreditation process. This overview is based on information provided on the SEQOHS website.

#### Overview

[SEQOHS](#) (Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service) is a stand-alone voluntary accreditation system for occupational health services, based on published standards. Its purpose is to help to raise the overall standard of care provided by occupational health services, thus helping to make a meaningful difference to the health of people of working age. The Faculty of Occupational Medicine developed the standards, in conjunction with a multi-disciplinary stakeholder group, and commissioned the Royal College of Physicians to develop and run the accreditation system. SEQOHS is also now available in Ireland and is endorsed by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

SEQOHS Accreditation can help employers to determine whether an occupational health service is competent. Although SEQOHS Accreditation is voluntary, the use of an occupational health service accredited by SEQOHS provides assurance through independent validation and that the service provided satisfies the SEQOHS Standards for safety, effectiveness and quality as a minimum. It is therefore timely to question whether sector in house OH services need to be looking at such accreditation to enable them to compete with external accredited providers should service provisions be reviewed.

To date only two universities are listed as having achieved accreditation - Bangor University, 20 March 2012 and Glasgow University 11 December 2012- who no doubt will be able to share their experiences and feedback on key learning outcomes. It is noted NHS Trusts were required to be ready for accreditation by 31st March 2013 and at present approximately 25% of NHS Trusts have achieved accreditation.

#### Scope

SEQOHS applies to core clinical occupational health services (ie. services provided by doctors, nurses and occupational health technicians) and is relevant to all types and size of occupational health services whether they are in-house or outsourced.

#### Aims

SEQOHS aims to:

- enable services to identify the standards of practice to which they should aspire
- credit good work being done by high quality occupational health services, providing independent validation that they satisfy standards of quality
- raise standards where they need to be raised
- help purchasers differentiate occupational health services that attain the desired standards from those that do not

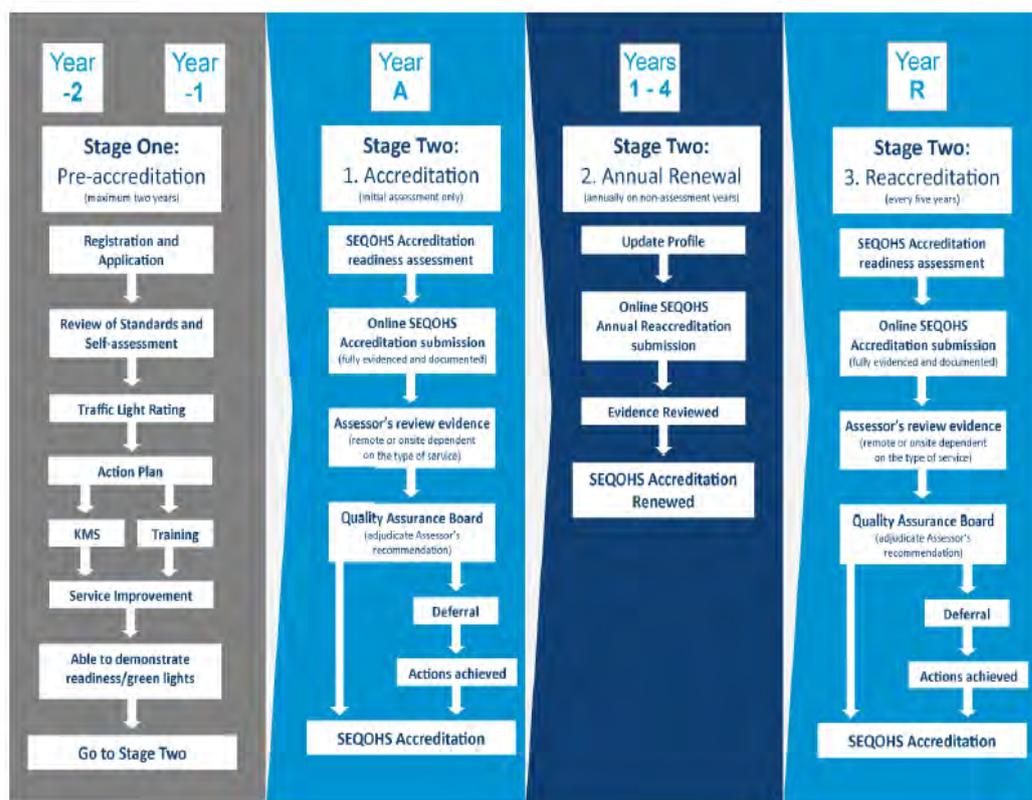
The standards are grouped into **6 domains** that relate to:

- Business probity** (business integrity and financial propriety)
- Information governance** (adequacy and confidentiality of records)
- People** (competency and supervision of occupational health staff)
- Facilities and equipment** (safe, accessible and appropriate)
- Relationships with purchasers** (fair dealing and customer focus)
- Relationships with workers** (fair treatment, respect and involvement)

**The SEQOHS Accreditation Pathway**

The SEQOHS Accreditation Pathway may be undertaken by any OH Service with services based in the United Kingdom. When an OH Service signs up to the SEQOHS Accreditation Pathway, they are part of an on-going annual programme of quality improvement, accreditation and maintenance.

The SEQOHS Accreditation Pathway is displayed below, consisting of four main steps:



All OH Services are required to enter Stage One within a maximum of a two year period : Pre-accreditation to complete the online SEQOHS self-assessment tool. The results of self-assessment will be displayed as a traffic light system that will indicate the OH Services' readiness to go forward for accreditation. Once at stage two, the OH Service will be invoiced at the applicable cost to stage two. All OH Services on stage two will achieve SEQOHS Accreditation, followed by an annual renewal with a full reaccreditation assessment on the five year anniversary of accreditation.

At Newcastle University a gap analysis template has been compiled and used as part of our self assessment pre accreditation phase to identify the work required before submitting our data on line, copy of which we are happy to email to the HEOPS Group.

### Cost

There different costs structures for both stage one and two .Cost of **stage one** is dependent upon the size of the OH Service. The annual fee is calculated as per the table below:

Band	Service Definition	Annual Fee (excl. VAT)
1	Single handed operator (peripatetic)	£ 500
2	Single handed operator (with offices)	£ 500
3	Medium sized service (1 to 6 sites)	£1,000
4	Large sized services (7 to 15 sites)	£1,500
5	Large sized services (16 to 30 sites)	£2,000

The cost of **Stage 2** depends on where the applicant is at in the licence fee status when they upgrade to stage 2. If an OH Service is upgrading to stage two on their annual licence renewal date, then an upgrade application is required along with payment. The full stage two (Full Year) payment schedule is outlined below. If the OH Service has already paid their annual fee and are mid-way through their licence year when they wish to upgrade, then they would be required to pay the pro-rata amount for stage two fees which would be calculated with the assumption that their usual renewal month is month one of Quarter 1 (Q1) and then using the Upgrade Fees matrix below.

Band	Definition	Annual Fee (Excl. VAT)	Upgrade Fees (Excl. VAT)			
			Q1 (Pro-rata)	Q2 (Pro-rata)	Q3 (Pro-rata)	Q4 (Pro-rata)
1	Single handed operator (peripatetic)	£ 750	£ 250	£ 188	£ 125	£ 63
2	Single handed operator (with offices)	£1,000	£ 500	£ 375	£ 250	£ 125
3	Medium sized service (1 to 6 sites)	£2,000	£1,000	£ 750	£ 500	£ 250
4	Large sized services (7 to 15 sites)	£2,500	£1,000	£ 750	£ 500	£ 250
5	Large sized services (16 to 30 sites)	£3,000	£1,000	£ 750	£ 500	£ 250

A five-yearly SEQOHS Reaccreditation Assessment, including:

- Basic costs for SEQOHS Assessors to review all submitted documentation and attend an onsite Assessment (if applicable)
- A detailed action plan (if applicable) or a detailed report outlining the areas accredited
- A SEQOHS Reaccreditation Certificate
- Continued access to use the SEQOHS Accreditation brand on company documents
- In addition to the above,

### SEQOHS Accreditation Assessment Visit

As soon as the service has uploaded their evidence an assessment date and appoint Oof an assessment team will follow. The assessment date is set approximately 12 weeks' in advance. During thisperiod the assessors will review the submitted, seek clarification , request revision of submitted evidence to ensure that when the day of the assessment comes the service is as ready as possible to enable a smooth visit and hopefully a successful outcome.

## Outcomes

Following assessment the applicant will receive usually within a 3 month period:

- A detailed action plan (if applicable) or a detailed report outlining the areas accredited
- A SEQOHS Accreditation Certificate
- Access to use the SEQOHS logo on company documents (e.g. Websites, emails, or business cards)

## Resources

The SEQOHS website <https://www.seqohs.org/> supports the self-assessment, improvement and full accreditation of OH Services. The website also features a range of support tools and links to resources that will assist all OH services and practitioners in improving their services.

- Accreditation Guide for OH services to ensure that all providers have the information that they require to go forward with accreditation.
- Knowledge Management System (KMS) resource has been developed to underpin the SEQOHS Standards and to share good practice.
- Quick guide to the SEQOHS Accreditation Scheme
- Benefits from SEQOHS
- Top twelve Tips from a SEQOHS Assessor Jan Coombes (11 tips) and 1 key tip from Aileen Stewart Glasgow University (see Appendix 1)
- Feedback from How to prepare for your SEQOHS Accreditation Day.

## Training

To date the SEQOHS office have run two one day training courses How to Pass Your SEQOHS Accreditation Day , evaluation of which can be viewed on line. For further details of future training dates please contact the SEQOHS office [enquiries@seqohs.org](mailto:enquiries@seqohs.org)

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## Appendix 1 – Top ten hints for SEQOHS Accreditation

Here are some tried and tested top tips that many of those who have already passed the SEQOHS assessment have found to be useful.....

1. Make sure that the information uploaded is relevant to the domain that has been requested. Some services have uploaded the wrong documents in the wrong domains and in some cases upgraded every document in the department just to make sure. This creates the impression that the occupational health service has little understanding of the accreditation process and this is likely to go against you rather than assist.
2. Provide a list of all the clinical services that you provide e.g. spirometry, audiometry, hand arm vibration, night workers, food handlers, pre-placement, vaccinations (including details of any patient group directive and standing orders) etc. so that the assessors can choose one or two processes to look at in detail for quality assurance purposes. Make sure that all procedures are up to date and signed off by the appropriate senior manager or clinician.
3. Ensure that all information is available for the assessors on the day, whether by hardcopy or having access to the correct website or files. By having information on different sites or by if information is inaccessible, will hold up the accreditation process and time may be wasted while trying to track down a specific document or record.
4. The assessors will give an indication at the end of the visit of any issues arising which may mean a deferment. Be prepared to ask for advice and further information on these if you do not understand what the issue might be or why what you have provided is not adequate. It is easier to have conversation around this face to face rather than trying to interpret and act on emails in the future.
5. Allocate the most appropriate staff member to each domain and ask those staff to collect and upload the required information. For example use the training manager to upload and provide notes on the training matrix and induction processes. Also get the allocated domain person to respond to any queries from that domain prior to the visit day. For the larger Occupational Health services it is very difficult for one individual to know the detail of all domains and a lot of time can be saved if the person who deals with a subject can be available to upload and talk about the issue when needed.
6. Upload as much information as you can prior to the visit day. If there are big gaps in the evidence 2 weeks prior to the assessment the Lead SEQOHS assessor may decide to defer the assessment until the requested information is available. On the day of the visit there is very little time to read and assimilate new information especially if it's large policy documents or audit reports etc.
7. Although the assessment consists of asking for policy documents these in themselves are not sufficient evidence to pass the assessment. This is just starting point and the assessors will be looking to see evidence that the policy has been implemented according to the document specification and further, audits against the practice have been undertaken, with satisfactory results.
8. Whilst you are going through the assessment process you may suddenly notice that you have insufficient evidence to pass a particular domain, for example some equipment may have no calibration certificates or training may have lapsed on a clinical procedure for some groups of staff. Do not try to hide issue but put together an action plan of how you are going to correct this non-conformance with clear responsibilities for actions and timeframe of when the issue will be resolved. Upload this action plan as evidence; by doing this you are showing the assessment team that you have reviewed the situation and

have reacted quickly to an unacceptable situation.

9. The assessment will consist of both a document appraisal and a physical tour of your premises. Many people concentrate on getting the paper documentation together but may forget to go around the Department looking for issues which may be found by the assessors; focus on clinical areas, expiry dates on vaccinations and medicines, manual handling issues, hand washing facilities, fire risks, out of date books and disabled access and egress etc. It may be useful to ask your health and safety officer to conduct their own walk around assessment prior to the SEQOHS assessment and pick up on issues that you may have overlooked.

10. Listen and read carefully what the SEQOHS assessors are looking for in the evidence required to pass the assessment. Remember they **want** you to pass the assessment. If you can correct any problems on the day then go ahead and do so and let the assessors know what you have done and any other implementation plan, for example, ask calibration companies to fax through any lost certificates, put notices up on the wall which may be missing e.g. complaints notice, asking for a chaperone etc.; also remember any training that may be required for staff associated with the corrective action.

11. I know I said 10 hot tips but this is really important and not to be missed off - try not to be defensive but cooperate as much as you can. It will pay dividends.

*Jane Coombs is a SEQOHS assessor*

***NB- and another one- use the Knowledge management system as a basis for creating new policies or documents. Do not be afraid to copy policies or procedures on it- after all it has worked for others- no need to reinvent the wheel!***