

To approve

Minutes of the Meeting on 2 December 2008¹

Present

Professor Sir Graeme Catto, President

Dr Rachel Angus	Dr Brian Keighley
Dr Sati Ariyanayagam	Dr Malcolm Lewis
Dr Edwin Borman	Mr Robin MacLeod
Mr Stephen Brearley	Dr Joan Martin
Sir Michael Buckley	Dr Arun Midha
Mrs Gillian Camm	Mrs Patricia Moberly
Professor William Dunlop	Mrs Fiona Peel
Ms Ruth Evans	Professor Michael Pringle
The Very Rev Dr Graham Forbes	Dr Rosalind Ranson
Dr Alex Freeman	Mrs Ann Robinson
Mr Alan Hartley, Chairman of Patient and Public Reference Group	Professor Peter Rubin, Chairman of Education Committee
Ms Sally Hawkins	Mr Robert Slack
Mr Stuart Heatherington	Dr Peter Terry
Professor Ian Hughes	Dr Nicola Toynton
Professor Janet Husband	Dr Joan Trowell
Dr John Jenkins	

Finlay Scott
Chief Executive and Registrar

¹ These Minutes should be read in conjunction with the Council papers for this meeting, which are available on our website at <http://www.gmc-uk.org/>. A transcript is also available on request.

President's Business

1. Apologies for absence were noted from the Rt Hon Kevin Barron, Professor Bulstrode, Professor Dame Carol Black, Professor Shaw, and the Chief Medical Officers for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
2. The President noted that this was the final meeting of the Council as currently constituted, and thanked members for their contribution over the past five and a half years.
3. The President noted the success of the 150th anniversary events, and thanked the 150th Anniversary Working Group for their contribution.
4. The President congratulated Mr Hartley on his appointment as a member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain's Public Liaison Group.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2008

5. Council approved the minutes of the meeting on 5 November 2008 as a true record and they were signed by the President.

Chief Executive's Report

6. Council:
 - a. Considered the Chief Executive's report, noting progress since the meeting on 5 November 2008, mapped against the key aims in the 2008 Business Plan.
 - b. Noted that the GMC had been successful in securing recertification of BSI ISO27001 for its information security arrangements.
 - c. Noted progress with the proposed co-location of PMETB with the GMC.
 - d. Noted the tabled correspondence from the pressure group Professionals Against Child Abuse.

GMC Affiliates

7. Council received an update on the GMC Affiliates pilot, including a report from two of the GMC affiliates working on the pilot in West Yorkshire.
8. Council endorsed progress to date.
9. Members noted the positive feedback from Medical Directors in the areas where the pilots were being undertaken, in particular in relation to enhanced communications and relationship management.

10. Members recognised the importance of ensuring that the evaluation of the pilots is based on defined outputs and outcomes, against which future policy can be determined.

Work of the Patient and Public Reference Group 2008

11. Council noted the report on the work of the PPRG in 2008.

12. Council:

a. Noted the outcome of the Group's discussion about future governance arrangements.

b. Endorsed the need for appropriate transitional arrangements and early implementation of the new model to be commended to the reconstituted Council in 2009.

13. Members noted that the six public members of the Group had been invited to continue into the new arrangements.

Consultation on *Tomorrow's Doctors*

14. Council reviewed the proposed consultation on the GMC's guidance *Tomorrow's Doctors*, last revised in 2003.

15. Council:

a. Agreed to consult formally on the draft text of the 2009 edition of *Tomorrow's Doctors*.

b. Authorised the President and the Chair of the Education Committee to finalise the documents in the light of members' comments during the discussion.

Guidance on Student Fitness to Practise

16. Council considered the outcome of the consultation on the revised edition of *Medical Students: Professional Behaviour and Fitness to Practise*, guidance jointly produced with the Medical Schools Council.

17. Council:
 - a. Agreed the revised version of *Medical Students: Professional Values and Fitness to Practise*.
 - b. Authorised the President and Chair of the Education Committee to agree any further drafting changes in the light of members' comments during the discussion.

Revised Indicative Sanctions Guidance

18. Council considered the outcome of the consultation on the revised Indicative Sanctions Guidance, last reviewed in 2005.

19. Council:
 - a. Agreed the revised version of the Indicative Sanctions Guidance, as revised in the light of consultation.
 - b. Authorised the President to approve any marginal changes to the Guidance in the light of further work, which would include a review of any implications arising from recent court cases.

Changes to the Guidance for Decision Makers at the Investigation Stage of the Fitness to Practise Procedures

20. Council considered the Guidance for Decision Makers at the Investigation Stage in the light of a recent High Court decision.

21. Council approved the amended Guidance for Decision Makers at the Investigation Stage, revised to provide additional guidance to case examiners and the Investigation Committee on issues of remediation and the likelihood of repetition of conduct.

Securing Further Improvements to the Fitness to Practise Procedures

22. Council considered a number of possible changes to the statutory framework for the fitness to practise procedures, designed to further improve existing processes.

23. Council agreed the proposed amendments to the Medical Act 1983, and to the Fitness to Practise Rules, as the basis for discussion with the Department of Health (England) for inclusion in an early Section 60 Order. It was noted that key interests would be consulted on those changes that do not require amendments of the 1983 Act.

Fitness to Practise Ethnicity Statistics

24. Council received a report on fitness to practise statistics on activity and outcomes in 2007, by reference to doctors' ethnicity.

25. Council agreed that the data on ethnicity and fitness to practise activity and outcomes should be published, together with the commentary by Professor Humphrey, who leads the research study.

Business Plan and Budget 2009

26. Council received and reviewed the draft Business Plan and Budget for 2009, together with proposals for changes to annual retention fee levels.

27. Council:

a. Endorsed the 2009 Business Plan, subject to noting that the correct wording of key aim six was as set out in Annex A.

b. Endorsed the Resources Committee's decision to approve the 2009 budget based on expenditure of £83.3 million, matched by income of £83.3 million.

c. Approved amendments to the General Medical Council Registration Fees Regulations to reflect new fee levels, from 1 April 2009, of: £140 for provisional registration; £410 for full registration; and £410 for retention and restoration to the register.

d. Approved an increase in the threshold for eligibility for the lower income discount, to £21,862, effective from 1 April 2009.

Report of the Audit Committee

28. Council received a summary of the Audit Committee's activities for the period June to November 2008, together with details of the internal audit programme, the external audit service, and risk management arrangements.

29. Council:

a. Received the report on the activities of the Audit Committee.

b. Received the auditors' assurance on the internal controls of the systems reviewed, and noted that substantial assurance could be given over the design and operation of controls in place in all completed assignments to date.

c. Noted that a further eight audit reports would be completed for review by the Audit Committee on 11 December 2008.

d. Noted that the 2009 internal audit plan would be circulated to the Audit Committee for approval before its current membership demits office, in order that it can be commended to the Audit and Risk Committee in 2009.

30. Council agreed that the reconstituted Council should receive information on the most important 10 risks in the top level risk register.

Merger of PMETB with the GMC: JOG Progress Report

31. Council received an update from the Joint Oversight Group on preparations for the merger of PMETB with the GMC.

32. Council:

a. Noted progress across the four workstreams, some of which were dependent on external factors.

b. Endorsed JOG assurance that the implementation of proposals relating to the merger of PMETB with the GMC is on track.