

Agenda item:	8
Report title:	Establishing a Medical Licensing Assessment Programme Board
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Action:	To consider

Executive summary

This paper proposes to establish a Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) Programme Board as a task and finish group reporting to the Strategy and Policy Board. The Programme Board would oversee all aspects of the development and implementation of the Medical Licensing Assessment and would replace the existing oversight groups, the MLA Executive Board and MLA Steering Group. The purpose of this change is to streamline decision-making on the MLA while maintaining robust reporting arrangements to the Strategy and Policy Board and Council.

Recommendations

The Strategy and Policy Board is asked to:

- a** establish the MLA Programme Board as a task and finish group reporting to the Strategy and Policy Board.
- b** dissolve the MLA Executive Board and MLA Steering Group.

Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA) Programme Board

- 1 In order to oversee the development of the Medical Licensing Assessment ahead of the public consultation on the MLA, in October 2015 the Strategy and Policy Board set up an MLA Executive Board as a task and finish group. Its terms of reference and membership are at Annex A. Subsequently, an MLA Steering Group was set up in early 2016 to report to the MLA Executive Board on a quarterly basis on the progress and operational implications of the MLA project.
- 2 In September 2016, we commissioned Arup to support development of the MLA by advising on how we might translate our initial thinking into a structured programme of work. Among other things, Arup recommended that we replace the existing Steering Group and Executive Board with a single Programme Board, arguing that “the two existing governance groups create potential for duplication of effort and lack of clarity.” The Arup report recommended that this single Programme Board should “act as a single guiding mind for the programme, who will make key decisions and offer direction to the programme based on the best information available at the time.” The recommendations from Arup reinforced an internal view that the current arrangements had developed organically and might not give the GMC the most effective governance structure as the programme moves into a new phase.
- 3 We have therefore established an MLA Programme Board and now propose that this becomes part of our formal governance arrangements by establishing it as a task and finish group reporting to the Strategy and Policy Board. The Programme Board endorsed this approach at its meeting on 30 January.
- 4 In practical terms, in order to make sure that there are clear and transparent reporting lines to Council we propose that the Programme Board should report to the Strategy and Policy Board through the circulation of its minutes as a below the line item, which would include a summary of all actions agreed by the Programme Board.
- 5 To avoid unnecessary duplication, we propose that the Strategy and Policy Board would not normally need to re-consider issues already discussed at the Programme Board unless a member of the Strategy and Policy Board requested this in advance of a meeting.
- 6 Given the statement of purpose of the Strategy and Policy Board and the Board's position within the formal governance structure of the GMC, the Strategy and Policy Board would need formally to agree at its meetings the decisions taken by the Programme Board. Decisions would then, in the normal way, be reported to Council via the Chief Executive's report.
- 7 Under the terms of reference and reporting arrangements agreed by the Strategy and Policy Board, the Programme Board would take operational responsibility for the

overall direction, decision-making and oversight of the MLA Programme, and assume responsibility for overseeing work to delivering its benefits.

- 8 The proposed terms of reference and membership of the MLA Programme Board are attached at Annex B.

Recommendation

- 9 The Strategy and Policy Board is asked to establish the MLA Programme Board as a task and finish group reporting to the Strategy and Policy Board, replacing the MLA Executive Board and the MLA Steering Group.

8 – Establishing a Medical Licensing Assessment Programme Board

8 – Annex A

UK Medical Licensing Assessment Executive Strategy Group Terms of Reference (October 2015)

Purpose

- 1 UK Medical Licensing Assessment (UKMLA) Executive Strategy Group provides strategic direction and tactical advice in the development of a UKMLA.
- 2 The UKMLA Executive Strategy Group will:
 - a Review the plans of the programme, providing direction as required to ensure alignment of activity with corporate and strategic needs.
 - b Consider high priority issues and mission-critical risks to provide advice and test the appropriateness and adequacy of mitigating or remedial actions.
 - c Consider strategic proposals for the UKMLA in light of identified objectives and benefits, resource constraints and acceptability to key stakeholders.

Membership

- 3 Membership of the UKMLA Executive Strategy Group to comprise:
 - a Chief Executive (Chair).
 - b Chief Operating Officer.
 - c Director of Education and Standards.
 - d Director of Resources and Quality Assurance.
 - e Director of Strategy and Communication.
 - f Director of Registration and Revalidation.
 - g General Counsel and Director of Fitness to Practise.

h Senior Medical Adviser and Responsible Officer.

4 Other staff may be invited to attend as required.

Meetings

5 The UKMLA Executive Strategy Group will meet quarterly.

Reporting and accountability

6 Major policy issues need to be considered by the Strategy and Policy Board prior to consideration by Council.

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8 – Annex B

MLA Programme Board Terms of Reference

MLA Steering Group, at its meeting on 24 October 2016 agreed the following draft terms of reference for the proposed MLA Programme Board.

Purpose

The Programme Board will collectively:

- set the strategic direction for the Medical Licencing Assessment (MLA) programme and its constituent work streams;
- agree the benefits of the programme and be accountable for their realisation, in line with GMC corporate policy and strategy;
- make sure that the programme's development takes account of stakeholders' views;
- help to build coherence between the MLA and other GMC programmes;
- address risks and issues that are escalated to it, in order to provide assurance about the delivery of the MLA programme to the GMC Council, patients and employers, the medical profession, and the wider community.

Activity & Responsibilities

The Programme Board will:

Strategic Direction

- Provide strategic direction to make sure that the programme stays in line with corporate requirements and strategy.
- Agree defined roles and responsibilities for the governance and day to day programme and work stream management of the MLA programme, including by agreeing delegated authority to the Programme Sponsor, Programme Manager and Work Stream Managers in accordance with defined tolerances.

- Consider strategic proposals for the development and implementation of the MLA in light of identified objectives and benefits, resource constraints and acceptability to key stakeholders.

Delivery

- Authorise the beginning of constituent work streams after reviewing cost, benefits and risk, and authorise work stream closure when it is satisfied the work stream has delivered or is no longer necessary.
- Receive and review progress reports at key review points to ensure the programme's ongoing progress and viability.

Governance

- To provide advice about critical items escalated by the MLA programme team, high priority issues and mission-critical risks, and to test the appropriateness and adequacy of mitigating or remedial actions.
- Review and approve key programme documents as presented by the MLA programme team.
- Provide progress updates to the Strategy & Policy Board, the Performance & Resources Board and Council, and seek their advice, decision and sign off, as appropriate.
- Commission independent assurance of the programme and its constituent work streams as required.

Engagement

- Engage with senior stakeholders within and beyond the GMC, to encourage coherence across GMC projects and, if necessary, to resolve strategic and directional issues between programmes and work streams.

Membership

The Programme Sponsor will chair the Programme Board, but may delegate chairing of a meeting to another suitable member if necessary.

Membership will include the following GMC officers:

- Chief Operating Officer;
- Director of Education and Standards;
- Director of Resources and Quality Assurance;
- Director of Strategy and Communication;
- Director of Registration and Revalidation;
- General Counsel and Director of Fitness to Practise;
- Senior Medical Adviser and Responsible Officer.

The GMC Chief Executive may attend Programme Board meetings at any time, and should advise board secretariat in advance of the meeting if they wish to attend.

The Board will review its membership on at least a yearly basis, and consider extending its membership to include, for example, representatives of particular stakeholder interests.

The Board may invite specific colleagues and internal or external stakeholders to attend particular meetings, depending on the agenda.

Meetings will be quorate if four members are in attendance, including the Programme Sponsor or the member to whom the Programme Sponsor has delegated the chair.

Meetings and agenda

The Programme Board will schedule meetings on an eight weekly cycle. However, members may ask the Programme Sponsor to organise ad hoc meetings as required.

The Agenda should include the following standing items:

- Overall programme status and progress.
- Review of any critical risks and issues that may impact delivery.
- Critical items escalated by the programme team.
- Sign off or approval required.

The Board will invite the Programme Manager and other members of the programme team, as appropriate, to attend a meeting, to report on progress and provide information and clarification.

A member of the programme team will act as secretariat for the Board, will receive notice of absence, circulate agenda and materials and produce and circulate the meeting minutes. An agenda and papers will normally be circulated a minimum of one week in advance of meetings; and the meeting chair should authorise any exceptions to this. Minutes will normally be finalised and circulated within three weeks of the meeting.

Terms of Reference Review

The Programme Board will review these Terms of Reference on a yearly basis and will amend them as appropriate to reflect any change to the programme.