

ACCREDITED PRACTITIONER REGISTER (“REGISTER”) ADVISORY BOARD (“BOARD”)

Minutes of a meeting of the Advisory Board held online via MS Teams

12th December 2024 at 19:00.

INVITES:	NAME	POSITION
	SERENA HEMMINGS (SH)	CHAIR
	JENNIFER GEACH (JG)	ATHENA HERD FOUNDATION
	GRAEME GREEN (GG)	ATHENA HERD FOUNDATION
	CARA COLLINS (CC)	LAY MEMBER

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

TRACEY ADEBOWALE JONES

Serena Hemmings opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees. She confirmed that automatic transcription was agreeable to all present. This was confirmed by all.

1. Update on activity with the Professional Standards Authority accreditation team

JG provided the meeting with an update on the accreditation activity with the PSA.

JG advised the meeting of new standard 9 introduced during 2024 covering for equality, diversity, and inclusion. The assessment has been reviewed and signed-off by the PSA as meeting the standard.

JG continued to explain the submitted Notification of Change covering new titles for accreditation, being:

- Equine Facilitated/Assisted Psychotherapist/Therapist
- Equine Facilitated/Assisted Occupational Therapist
- Animal Assisted Psychotherapist/Therapist
- Horticultural Therapist

There is no current eta for approval of these.

JG updated the meeting on conversations with the Green Care Coalition (GCC) and Social Farms and Gardens with respect for developing related activities under the Accredited Practitioner Register, including the engaging of appropriate professions to support the oversight of these roles.

Lastly JG confirmed that the annual review had been completed – which includes the remaining initial conditions of accreditation. There had been some challenges arising at the last minute. These were in respect of publishing board minutes, summaries now released. As well as the use of site visits within the application process, a framework for which has now been published on the website. The review has been completed now, pending internal review.

2. Update on Professional Conduct Review Committee

GG reported that the Professional Conduct Review Committee (PCRC) has been expanded to eight members and is now working independently of the Advisory Board. First meeting was held early in Autumn and will be having next meeting to collectively review process.

3. Update on Education and Training Committee

GG updated the meeting that an Education and Training Committee had now been successfully created. Dr Sue Binks from Henley Business School had joined SH and GG on that committee.

That committee signed off the application for recognition of TheHorseCourse's internal training programme, meaning that their trained facilitators can now apply for register membership.

4. Update on application and registration

SH asked GG about the importance of understanding when the renewals process will become unmanageable. GG said that at present it is fine, current estimate is 1 day's effort per week. JG clarified that the decision to set a single renewal date of March 1st was made to streamline operations and align with the PSA's schedule for reporting numbers and associated. This approach simplifies tracking renewals and allows for pro rata adjustments.

5. Update from Accredited Register Collaborative (ARC)

JG advised the meeting about the responsibilities of the Accredited Register Collaborative and that it was a bi-annual gathering of representatives from all the accredited registers, but not the regulators.

GG shared insights from the ARC meeting, where the PSA's new Head of Accreditation (Oz) discussed the upcoming three-year plan and the intention to align regulations across accredited registers with those of regulated bodies. There is uncertainty about whether these changes will simplify processes for accredited registers. Additionally, Graeme noted a significant backlog of applications and the potential addition of new registers, including a potentially significant one for social workers.

6. Promotional activity since last meeting and proposed activity

Promotional activities through the autumn were outlined. This included talk at IAHAIO conference in Romania, some networking in the US by GG when he was there and online attendance of IAHAIO AGM, the World Horse Welfare conference and the British Horse Council.

Future events currently scheduled in 2025, the Horses and Humans Research Foundation conference in February, the National Equine Forum (March), Equine Cultures in Transition (June) and the American Horse/British Horse Councils (June).

There will also be attendance at the National Horse show in March at the NEC and the Dublin Horse show in August.

7. Risk matrix and Conflicts of Interest register (to be circulated for review)

GG advised that he would be circulating the risk matrix and conflicts of interest register, noting that they require periodic review and input from committee members. Comments and observations would be invited from all recipients.

8. Further recruitment to the Advisory Board, and other committees

JG and CC both emphasized the need to focus recruitment efforts for the committees to attract individuals outside of Athena. JG confirmed the strategy now is to bring in independent people from around the market with different training backgrounds and different practices, such that membership reflects the coverage of the Register. This will be essential once the additional roles are approved by the PSA.

GG confirmed Dr Sue Binks' appointment to Education and Training Committee.

GG advised that a c.v. had been received from a lady providing therapeutic riding instruction. It was discussed that this would represent a good complementary skill to cover. GG to share c.v.

9. Any other business

There was no "other business"

10. Meeting dates for 2025

CC emphasized the need to schedule future meetings, expressing a preference for Tuesdays or mornings while avoiding Wednesdays and Thursdays. SH proposed specific weeks for meetings in 2025, including the week of March 10th, June 9th, September 15th, and December 8th.

Action Items:

- * GG will create a page on the register's website listing recognized qualifications in the market.
- * GG will review the applications for membership from the Horse Course facilitators and announce the new members.
- * GG will circulate the risk matrix for review and comments.
- * GG will circulate the conflicts of interest register for review.
- * JG will reach out to the British Horse Council to discuss the register at their next meeting.
- * GG to share c.v. of Therapeutic Riding instructor.
- * SH will send invites for the next meeting dates in March, June, September, and December.
- * JG will explore the possibility of creating promotional materials, such as videos or testimonials, to highlight the benefits of the register.