



Enough points for everyone

Bill Harvey aims to reassure readers that if they are not eligible to complete a particular CET exercise, another will soon be published that does fit their competency requirements

Q I am a contact lens optician. Why was the article on adenovirus not approved for contact lens opticians?

A The first point is to reassure you that our plan is, and always has been, to make sure that you have access to all the required points you need over the three-year cycle (bar the peer to peer points, although we will be publicising events and information in this area too). The enhanced CET scheme is much more rigid now when applying for points and you have to state up front which competencies are to be addressed. There is often overlap, for example when we run exercises aimed at dispensing opticians and optometrists. Where, however, we have a specialist point approved, such as in this case for independent prescribers, we have to be careful that this is not in any way conflicted by an application for a job category with completely differing competency requirements. If we did, then the application would likely be rejected for at least one of the categories.

There will be occasions in future where we run articles for CLOs alone or CLOs when another job category is not mentioned and I am sure they will write to us then too. In the meantime, we will attempt to publish a range of CET articles aimed at all the various job categories. We remind readers that, while they might not be able to complete one, another will soon be along that does fit their competency requirement. The best thing always is to have a good look at the job category logos at the top of each exercise.

Q Why have I not had my points confirmed yet?

A The most common reason is that the submission for interactivity does not clearly show your GOC number or, in many cases, your surname. Please make sure these are clearly marked on any CET correspondence.

Q If we need six points by the end of the year, why should I take part in a CET exercise now if it is not



Rex Features

There are a few genuine reasons why someone might not have easy access to another clinician, such as being a sole practitioner in Tristan da Cunha in the South Atlantic (pictured)

to finish before next year (some of our current active exercises run for a three-month period now)?

A We will regularly upload points on a continual basis throughout the period any exercise is running. If you have completed your interactive exercise before the end of the year we will endeavour to upload your points also within this year so it will count towards your six-point requirement.

Q I have little contact with other practitioners so I am sending my thoughts to you. Is this OK?

A The simple answer has to be no. There are a few genuine reasons why someone might not have easy access to another clinician or practitioner. One example is a reader who works in Tristan da Cunha where she is often the sole practitioner within thousands of miles. The interactivity requirement was brought in by the GOC as a way to address the many people who did not regularly attend CET events such as conferences and LOC meetings and therefore ran the risk of working in isolation without

any influences from other colleagues. This state of affairs has been known, in many clinical disciplines, not just optometry, to be a recipe for people developing poor practice habits and, worse still, being unable to adapt their practice to changing times.

While we are happy to address interaction in exceptional cases, we have been responding to those that clearly are not in such circumstances with the following: 'Please try to discuss with colleagues in future as this is the main reason for the GOC introducing this form of CET. We allow plenty of time for you to correspond, whether by email, telephone or actual meetings. We will upload the points when the exercise finishes.'

Some people have already replied positively to our encouragement. One reader last week wrote: 'Thanks for the response. Attended a peer review since emailing you and I think I have sorted out someone to discuss future articles with.'

This is exactly what the system aims to achieve. So don't be shy and interact.

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