

## **STATEMENT DEFINING THE EQUIVALENCE OF THE DIPLOMA OF THE COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS TO A DEGREE AWARD**

During the past two years, most full-time pre-registration courses, which previously offered the award of the Diploma of the College of Occupational Therapists, have progressed to degree status, so that occupational therapists are now qualifying with the award of BSc in Occupational Therapy.

There has been recognition for some considerable time that the Diploma award was equivalent to a degree in all but name. In the Report of the Independent Commission published in 1989, which was chaired by Louis (now Sir Louis) Blom-Cooper QC, it is stated:

*“We are convinced that the academic level attained by those who gain the Diploma of Occupational Therapy – the profession’s basic qualification – is at least as high as that achieved by students taking an ordinary degree in English or Scottish universities and polytechnics.”*

Further acknowledgement of the equivalence came in the statement published by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in February 1990 for the purposes of its Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme, where courses and awards are given a points rating. In the statement, all paramedical diplomas – including physiotherapy and radiography – were rated at 240 points, which is equivalent to the award of an unclassified degree.

The degree-equivalent value of the Diploma is recognised by universities and higher education institutions, which readily offer to diplomates access to study for higher degrees at Master’s level. It is the College’s advice that this professional development route should be taken, and many practitioners are successfully pursuing and achieving these higher qualifications.

The experience of all the Professions Allied to Medicine is similar, and this is practically recognised by the fact that there is no differentiation by employers in the salary paid to the qualifying professional merely on the grounds of being a diplomate or a graduate.

The UK professional and statutory bodies regard all their qualified practitioners – diplomates or graduates – on a basis of complete parity and treat the all fairly and equitably. The achievement of qualified professional status and licence to practise is the goal, and whether this is by a diploma or degree course route is according to the development of a particular course – and an accident of time.

November 1992

## **ADDENDUM TO THE STATEMENT (NOVEMBER 1992)**

The Diploma of the College of Occupational Therapists (DipCOT) award\*, for the purposes of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS) of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in February 1990, implemented by many higher education institutions, attract 240 points at levels 1 and 2 (or 360 points at levels 1, 2 and 3 in the Scottish system of SCOTCATS).

In the CNAA statement, the academic status of all paramedical diplomas – including occupational therapy, physiotherapy and radiography – were recognised as equivalent to an unclassified degree.

An honours degree attracts a further 120 credit points at level 3 (or 120 points at level 4 within SCOTCATS).

*\*applies to DipCOT qualifications awarded from 1983 (diploma 81 syllabus).*

The College of Occupational Therapists was granted a Royal charter in 2017