



Press Release 28

Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP) complaints prompt Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Investigation into Aesthetic Training Companies

The UK aesthetic sector continues to grow rapidly and with it the number of companies offering training in non-surgical aesthetics in particular injectable treatments such as botulinum toxin and dermal fillers. This increase has spurred concerns for the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP) over vague and misleading representations of qualifications and pathways to practise within aesthetics by training companies. As such, the JCCP referred their concerns to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). A sample investigation into three establishments was conducted over several months and the rulings released this week.

The JCCP wanted to address a significant problem that exists within the aesthetics sector, working with the ASA to address the fact that some education and training bodies were misrepresenting the basis of training programmes in terms of content, the nature and duration of training, qualification obtained and whether the qualification obtained meets the standards required for admittance onto a PSA voluntary Professional Register.

The JCCP has received many complaints from members of the public, existing practitioners and from other stakeholders about education and training companies who may have advertised their training courses with misleading claims. A small sample of three companies from the extensive number of complaints received by the JCCP was forwarded to the ASA for review and they have now concluded their investigation into them. In all three cases the ASA have upheld the complaints and advised that the three cited companies had misrepresented or withheld full and correct information for potential students to be enabled to make an informed decision before contractually entering the courses advertised.



It was also apparent that the three companies examined in this test case were not alone in their actions and that there are multiple training establishments who are promoting courses with aspirational claims that cannot be substantiated and who are making unfounded guarantees that standards set out by PSA registers such as the JCCP will be met. The North West of England has been highlighted as one particular problem area with exaggerated and inaccurate forms of marketing in this manner. The Council continue to observe the advertising practices in this area and will refer any areas of concern to the ASA who will subsequently take action as necessary.

The full rulings on Aesthetics Uni, Aesthetics Lounge Academy and Boss Babes Uni can be found here.

Extremely worrying statements were made – **The Aesthetics Uni** said – *You can now enter this course as a novice and learn a range of techniques for injection of lip filler.* This causes us concern that people who lack the proper qualifications will feel qualified to treat the public.

Boss Babes Uni said *Good Quality Advanced Training – an advanced training company who train unique beauty courses across the UK. The Qualification: Anti-wrinkle Injections and Dermal Fillers.* The name misleads the public and the trade. This is not a university, nor is the training to a recognised university standard.

Aesthetics Lounge Academy said *Our VTCT NVQ Level 3 in Beauty Therapy works as a Bridging Course to Aesthetics. The Aesthetics Lounge Academy offers a wide range of accredited aesthetic training course to all suitably qualified individuals.* The ASA considered the ad misleading because it did not give students the necessary information to make an informed decision as to whether or not to enquire further about enrolling on the course.

Professor David Sines CBE – Executive Chair JCCP said,

‘With the recent significant growth in the non – surgical cosmetic and hair restoration surgical procedures there has been a correspondent ‘explosion’ of education and training companies offering to train people to perform these procedures. Unfortunately, some training companies have misrepresented the basis of the training provided, the level and type of qualification obtained and how their programmes relate to the standards required for admittance to relevant PSA accredited voluntary professional registers, such as the JCCP. This misrepresentation leads to trainees spending large sums of money on training programmes that have not been developed in line with required standards and regulated qualifications. We are delighted that the ASA has upheld these three complaints and would now encourage all education and training providers to consider joining the JCCP register of



approved training organisations as a kite mark of quality for both the public and for the sector generally. We also advise all people seeking to develop their competence in the aesthetics sector to look carefully at the courses on offer to ensure that they lead to nationally recognised regulated qualifications, at the appropriate level for that particular treatment and they comply with nationally agreed knowledge and practice competence requirements, as outlined by the JCCP and endorsed by key stakeholders’.

Associate Professor Anne McNall, Chair of the JCCP Training and Education Committee, Said:

“The number of aesthetic ‘academies’ and training establishments that have emerged in the past year alone demonstrates the rapid rate of growth that has occurred in what can only be described as a largely unregulated education and training market in aesthetics. This is a huge cause for concern. A number of these companies have limited experience of providing educational courses, as illustrated by their use of terms, such as “accredited”, “certified” or “approved” without providing proof this actually exists. There are limited number of organisations such as Universities and Awarding Organisations that can legitimately provide academic accreditation, and quality assure courses. The term University is protected and terms like Uni should not be used to misrepresent the nature of the organisation if it does not hold such status.

McNall goes on to say, Because there was no uniformity or standardisation in the UK of course content, delivery or assessment in non-surgical aesthetics, (that operates in a non-regulated sector), the JCCP has developed Education Standards and a Competence Framework setting out standards for knowledge and competence to be achieved for each type of non-surgical (and surgical hair restoration) cosmetic treatment. This is irrespective of whether the course is provided in the private, vocational, further, or higher education sector. Education & Training Providers, Universities and nationally approved ‘Awarding Organisations’ who provide **regulated qualifications** which meet these standards can apply for approval by the JCCP. This makes it much clearer for practitioners which courses actually enable them to achieve the knowledge and competence to practise safely and enables registration with a PSA approved register such as the JCCP. Our key aim is to provide the public with access to safe and appropriately qualified practitioners, providing safe treatments, in safe environments, using safe products in order to protect the public in the interests of safety.”

Miles Lockwood, Director of Complaints and Investigations at the ASA, said: “These rulings set a key precedent for us in taking action against advertisers in this sector. It’s important to



ensure that aesthetics practitioners are being upfront and not making misleading claims about the training they provide.”

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Notes to Editors:

The Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP), was formally launched In February 2018 as a ‘self-regulating’ body for the non-surgical aesthetics and hair restoration sector in the United Kingdom and has achieved Professional Standards Authority (PSA) recognition and **charitable status**. The charitable status reflects the overarching not-for-profit mission of the JCCP which is to improve patient safety and public protection. The concept of the JCCP was envisioned by the Department of Health and was instigated by Health Education England on behalf of NHS England and the Department of Health.

The primary aim of the JCCP is to enable the public to be more informed about the risks associated with non-surgical and hair restoration treatments and to clearly identify safe and appropriately trained practitioners who practise in these areas of specialist treatment. In order to achieve these aims the JCCP has now established a Government (Professional Standards Authority – PSA) approved **Practitioner Register** and a **Register of Approved Education and Training Providers & Qualifications**.

The ASA was established in 1962 as an industry watchdog to monitor and adjudicate on breaches for the British Code of Advertising Practice (CAP Code) with the primary objective of protecting the public from misleading, inaccurate or inappropriate advertising whether online, in print or in broadcast.

Joining Instructions and Requirements for Education and Training providers can be found here

<https://www.jccp.org.uk/EducationAndTrainingProvider/joining-the-education-and-training-provider-register>

For general information and enquiries on the JCCP and a full version of the MoU with the ASA can be found [here](#)

JCCP Competency Framework for Cosmetic Practice can be found [here](#)



For further information on standards for non-surgical aesthetic treatments and hair restoration surgery please go to:

www.cosmeticstandards.org.uk

For further information on the ASA go to:

www.asa.org.uk

For further information regarding this press release contact:

Amy Senior, JCCP Marketing lead – 07845014963

Sally Taber, JCCP Governance lead – 07885 740500

Anne McNall – JCCP Education lead - 07809553187