

## Memorandum

**To: Practitioners and key stakeholders**

**From: Registrar**

**Date: 26 April 2016**

**Subject: Assessment of qualifications and competence of overseas trained osteopaths**

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This policy introduces a process to assess both the qualification and competence of an overseas trained osteopath whose qualifications are **not** recognised by the Council. The Council receives a number (approx. 20) of enquires each year from overseas trained osteopaths wishing to work in New Zealand. The Council has no mechanism at present to assess these qualifications and register practitioners.

The process of assessment will be undertaken by senior osteopaths with higher education teaching experience who will be contracted to the Council.

It is proposed that if qualifications are found to be equitable with the New Zealand qualification practitioners will enter the Competent Authority Pathway Programme (CAPP).

The fees related to this activity are also being consulted on at this time. [Click here for consultation on fees.](#)

### HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

If you wish to make a submission, please provide this in writing by **5.00pm on 20 May 2016**. The Council does not guarantee that submissions received at the Council's offices after that date will be considered. Unless requested otherwise, the Council may make any responses public.

#### Submissions can be sent to:

The Registrar  
Osteopathic Council of NZ  
PO Box 10-202  
Wellington 6143  
Email: [Andrew.charnock@osteopathiccouncil.org.nz](mailto:Andrew.charnock@osteopathiccouncil.org.nz)



## **POLICY FOR THE REGISTRATION OF OVERSEAS QUALIFIED APPLICANTS**

Refer - Part 2 of the Health Practitioners Capabilities Assurance Act 2003

## **POLICY FOR THE REGISTRATION OF OVERSEAS QUALIFIED APPLICANTS**

**This policy does not apply to individuals who are eligible for registration under the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997**

### **Purpose**

In order to practise in New Zealand as an osteopath, it is a legal requirement to be registered by the Osteopathic Council of New Zealand, (OCNZ), and to hold a current practising certificate. This document outlines the registration requirements of the Health Practitioners Capabilities Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA), and sets out the OCNZ's policy requirements for overseas qualified applicants for registration.

The registration requirements for registration under the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (TTMRA) are not included in this document - they are set out in a separate policy which is available on the OCNZ website.

This policy has been developed to assess qualifications and competencies of osteopaths who/s:

- trained at an osteopathic educational institution outside of New Zealand and Australia.
- Qualifications are not currently recognised, by notice in the Gazette by the OCNZ.

### **Background**

#### ***Section 15 of the HPCA Act – registration requirements***

Under section 15 of the HPCA Act the OCNZ may register an applicant within the scope of practice 'General Scope of Practice: Osteopath' if the applicant:

1. is competent to practise within that scope of practice; and
2. has the qualifications that are prescribed, under section 12, for that scope of practice; and
3. is fit for registration in accordance with section 16.

### **Policy**

The OCNZ's policy with respect to the capabilities, qualification and fitness requirements for registration is set out below.

#### **1. Capabilities requirements for overseas qualified applicants**

In order to be registered all applicants for registration in the General Scope of Practice: Osteopath, must meet the OCNZ's standards of clinical, cultural and ethical capabilities for registration. Individual applicants are required to complete

the online *Foundation Course on Cultural Competency* (at [www.mauriora.co.nz](http://www.mauriora.co.nz)), and submit a capabilities assessment application. The OCNZ's assessors assess capabilities for registration and make a recommendation to the OCNZ.

Where an applicant fails to satisfy the OCNZ of their capabilities for registration, they may be required to provide further information.

In addition to meeting the capabilities requirements, an applicant for registration must also meet the OCNZ's qualification and fitness requirements for registration – see 'Qualification for registration' and 'Fitness for registration' below.

## **2. Qualification for registration**

### **General qualification criteria**

To gain registration in the General scope of Practice: Osteopath, an applicant must either:

- have a minimum of a bachelors degree in osteopathy from an accredited educational institution in New Zealand; *or*
- have overseas osteopathic qualifications and experience assessed by the OCNZ as equivalent to the prescribed New Zealand qualifications for registration; *or*
- be registered as an osteopath in Australia and have entitlement to registration in New Zealand pursuant to the TTMRA.

In addition to meeting the OCNZ's qualification criteria, an applicant must also meet the OCNZ's capabilities and fitness requirements for registration – see 'Capabilities for registration' above and 'Fitness for registration' below.

### **Applicants with an overseas osteopathic qualification**

The OCNZ's assessors assess the applicant's qualification for registration and make a recommendation to the OCNZ. In the first instance the assessors assess whether the osteopathic qualification is comparable to the New Zealand qualifications for registration. If it is not, they assess whether the gaps that have been identified have been mitigated by the applicant's pre or postgraduate experience and/or training.

Where an applicant fails to satisfy the OCNZ of the comparability of their qualification, they may be required to provide further information. There is currently no examination option available.

### **Applicants entitled to registration under the TTMRA**

Information about registration in New Zealand under the TTMRA is included in a separate policy on the OCNZ's website.

## **3. Fitness for registration**

The criteria relating to fitness to practise are set out under section 16 of the HPCA Act. In addition to meeting the OCNZ's fitness criteria, an applicant must also meet the OCNZ's capabilities and qualification requirements for registration – see 'Capabilities for registration' and 'Qualification for registration' above.

### **(i) English language requirements**

If English is not the applicant's first or home language, the OCNZ requires him/her to demonstrate proficiency in English.

The OCNZ's policy requirement for registration is International English Language Testing System (IELTS) academic test results with a score of 7 in each band. The full English language policy is available on the OCNZ website.

**(ii) Assessment of criminal convictions**

Section 16(c) of the HPCA Act 2003 states that no applicant for registration may be registered if he or she has been convicted in New Zealand or elsewhere of any offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of 3 months or longer, and he or she does not satisfy the responsible authority that, having regard to all the circumstances, including the time that has elapsed since the conviction, the offence does not reflect adversely on his or her fitness to practise as a health practitioner of that profession.

The OCNZ will consider each case on its merits in order to be satisfied that the person is fit to practise as an osteopath in New Zealand.

**(iii) Physical and mental health**

In order to register an applicant, the OCNZ must be satisfied that he/she is able to perform the functions required for the practice of osteopathy, and that he/she is not prevented from doing so because of some mental or physical condition.

**(iv) Good standing**

In determining an applicant's fitness for registration, the OCNZ is required to take into consideration:

- professional disciplinary proceedings, (whether in New Zealand or in another country); and
- investigations in respect of any matter that may be the subject of professional disciplinary proceedings, (whether in New Zealand or in another country); and
- orders of professional disciplinary tribunals, (whether in New Zealand or in another country); and
- any issue which may give the OCNZ reason to believe that an applicant may endanger the health or safety of members of the public.

**4. Condition on the scope of practice of Overseas Qualified Registrants**

An overseas qualified applicant who has satisfactorily met the requirements for registration, is registered with the 'Preceptorship and Supervision' condition on their scope of practice. This condition is noted on the public 'Register of Osteopaths' and on the practitioner's practising certificate.

The 'Preceptorship and Supervision' condition requires the practitioner to receive fortnightly supervision for the first six months of practice in New Zealand. Sometimes the condition is personalised, depending on individual circumstances. The supervisor must be a registered osteopath with a current practising certificate, and no condition on his/her own scope of practice.

It is up to the practitioner to apply to have the condition removed; the supervision requirements continue to apply until the OCNZ has removed the condition. The OCNZ will not remove the condition until it has received the following:

- Notice from the preceptor that the Competent Authority Pathway Programme (CAPP) has been successfully completed; and

- a satisfactory supervisor's report in all capability areas; and
- a copy of the practitioner's supervision log; and
- the prescribed fee.

**Date approved: tbc**

**Due for review: tbc**