

Policy

Subject: **Assessment of Overseas Trained Doctors and Overseas Trained Specialists in Australia and New Zealand**
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THE AUSTRALIAN SYSTEM

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) administers national examinations for overseas trained medical practitioners seeking to practice medicine in Australia.

The AMC only recognises basic medical degrees from universities that it accredits. Currently those universities are only located in Australia and New Zealand. All other medical practitioners require formal assessment under AMC processes which will be detailed subsequently in this policy.

There are two different pathways available for overseas trained doctors depending on whether they have only basic medical qualifications or specialised medical qualifications. Those doctors with only basic medical qualifications are known as Overseas Trained Doctors (OTD). Those with additional qualifications are known as Overseas Trained Specialists (OTS).

1. Overseas Trained Doctors

Overseas Trained Doctors (OTDs) are those doctors who do not have additional specialist qualifications in Pathology recognised in the country of origin.

The College supports the AMC's guidelines when determining eligibility for acceptance of overseas trained medical practitioners into its Training Program. That is a doctor is considered to not have specialist qualifications if he/she require more than 2 years of supervised assessment before being eligible for Fellowship of a Specialist College.

Any OTD requiring more than two years supervised time before being eligible to sit for the Fellowship must first pass the AMC examination process and fulfil the English proficiency and testing requirements, before being accepted on the training program as a full Trainee.

2. General Issues for Overseas Trained Specialists

Overseas Trained Specialists are those overseas trained doctors who are recognised as specialist Pathologists in their country of origin and who required no more than two years of supervised assessment in order to attain the Australasian Fellowship.

This Policy reflects and should be implemented in conjunction with *Application Procedures and Requirements for Specialist Assessment*, AMC 2005. There are two

processes in Australia for the assessment of Overseas Trained Specialists seeking Medical Registration to practise in Australia

- 1 Assessment by the Australian Medical Council (AMC) through the standard “general” pathway
- 2 Assessment under Area of Need (AON) provisions.

There are a number of variations between the requirements for general OTS Assessment and AON Assessments.

In essence the OTS process assesses an overseas trained specialist’s qualifications for work in Australia in any location, while an AON Assessment assesses the doctors’ qualifications for a particular position following the declaration of a geographical location as an Area of Need by the State or Territory jurisdiction. Because of these variations there are minor differences in the process of assessment but essentially they are the same.

One of the differences relates to who actually makes the application to the AMC. In the case of the general OTS this is done by the applicant and all correspondence is with the applicant. In the case of the AON the application is generally made by the employer who is sponsoring the AON position.

2.1 Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment

In response to requests for specialist medical registration from overseas trained medical practitioners, the Australian Medical Council (AMC) requests Specialist Colleges to assess the comparability of these Overseas Trained Specialists (OTSs) wishing to practice in the Australian environment with the standard required of an Australasian trained specialist. The Board of Censors makes an independent assessment following interview by, and the advice of, an Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment Subcommittee as described below.

This procedure is based on principles agreed between the Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC), the Australian Medical Council (AMC) and the Medical Boards. It applies only to overseas trained pathologists seeking permanent registration in an Australian State or Territory. Applicants granted registration under the scheme will not be eligible to practise in any other field of medicine in Australia without meeting other requirements laid down by the Australian Medical Council. Formal assessment of applicants will be the same as that offered to other candidates for Fellowship, and applicants who successfully meet the requirements of the Board of Censors will be offered Fellowship of the RCPA and, if taken up, will enjoy all rights and privileges to which other Fellows are entitled.

2.2 Assessment of Area of Need Positions

An Area of Need post in pathology is a post for which the employer is unable to recruit locally registered specialists, as a result of which local health services are adversely affected.

RCPA’s Area of Need process is in accordance with that documented by the Australian Medical Council (AMC). *User’s Guide: Assessment Process for Area of Need Specialists*, AMC 2002.

This involves working with employers, health authorities, and Medical Boards to recognise a position as an Area of Need post, advise on the appropriateness of the post to provide sustainable pathology services, assess the suitability of applicants to the post, and facilitate the provision of pathology services in areas of need. An

applicant holding Area of Need registration may apply to proceed through the AMC/Specialist Medical College standard pathway for Overseas Trained Specialists (OTSs).

While the documentation requirements and arrangements for processing AON applications are broadly similar to those for the processing of applications through the general OTS pathway, there are some differences that arise because of the need to accommodate accelerated processing of AON applications by the AMC and the assessing College, in parallel.

2.2.1 Objectives of Area of Need Assessment

The objectives of RCPA's Area of Need process are:

- To confirm that an Area of Need post meets minimum standards to deliver safe pathology services.
- To facilitate the provision of suitably trained pathologists to work in identified areas of need.
- To assess the standard and suitability of an applicant for the job description of the specific Area of Need post.
- To fast track appointments in area of need posts in pathology.
- To follow through to assessment for specialist recognition, those applicants who are overseas trained specialists.

2.2.2 Defining an Area of Need Post

The establishment of a post in pathology for Area of Need status is a workforce issue and should be addressed by health authorities, local communities, AMWAC, the AMA and the RCPA.

An Area of Need post is intended to meet identified pathology service needs for which no RCPA Fellow or Australian specialist can be appointed, and as such is generally intended as a limited-term provision.

Employers who have difficulties in filling a post should review their management strategies to address:

- Minimum standards for the delivery of safe pathology services in accordance with NATA/RCPA requirements.
- Salary packages that appropriately remunerate for the pathology services required having regard to the location of the post.
- Working hours that do not compromise safety because of fatigue.
- Opportunities for appointees to undertake continuing education and professional development.
- Requirements for oversight and supervision where appropriate. The purpose of oversight is to provide advice and support, and the purpose of

supervision is to provide advice, support and direct assistance in certain circumstances.

- Other human resource issues such as accommodation and work environment.

If the above issues are not adequately addressed, it may cause difficulty in filling the position.

2.2.3 RCPA support for the declaration of a post for Area of Need status:

- Minimum standards for the delivery of safe pathology services in accordance with NATA/RCPA requirements is a minimum requirement.

Other criteria to be considered:

- The post has been difficult to fill, despite nationwide advertising and attention to the conditions of service outlined in 1.2 above.
- The distance from the nearest facility with pathology services is excessive and alternative coverage and telepathology services are not appropriate.
- Outreach services from regional hospitals/private laboratories are not available or appropriate.
- Oversight, and where appropriate, direct supervision arrangements are available or can be organised.

2.2.4 The employer of a declared Area of Need post is required to provide:

- A detailed position description and selection criteria of the post and an outline as to how the applicant is matched against the position description and selection criteria.
- A brief description of how it can provide oversight and supervision, and support for further education and self development. RCPA is willing to assist in these services.
- A statement affirming that it has addressed all the issues noted in 1.2.
- An indication to be provided as to whether the applicant will be providing services that will need to attract Medicare rebates.

3 Process for Assessment of Overseas Trained Specialist and Area of Need Applicants

All overseas trained specialists requiring either general OTS or AON Assessment must first apply to the AMC. Area of Need applicants will be fast tracked by the AMC and the College.

3.1 AMC Assessment

In the case of a general OTS assessment the applicant, and in the case of an AON Assessment, the employer forwards the appropriate AMC application form to AMC

along with the following documentation:

- a) Evidence of basic and specialist medical qualifications including certificate originals (or certified copies)
- b) Full Curriculum Vitae outlining training, examinations and employment history
- c) Registrar Reports
- d) For AON applicants documentation outlined in 2.2.4 above.

The AMC will ensure the applicant is competent in English.

If the documentation is considered satisfactory and the applicant is competent in English the documentation is forwarded to the RCPA.

If the documentation is not considered adequate the AMC emails the applicant and copies the RCPA on the correspondence for both OTS and AON applications.

3.2 The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia Assessment

For general OTS applicants the AMC sends the application and documentation to the College.

For AON applicants the employer forwards a duplicate copy of the application and documentation to the College at the same time as to the AMC.

3.2.1 Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment Subcommittee

Please refer to Terms of Reference - note that Members of the Subcommittee should ordinarily be on the Panel of Examiners for the Board of Censors.

The documentation is assessed initially by the Subcommittee.

For general OTS Assessment if the applicant is not eligible to be classified as an OTS (i.e. they would be required to undertake more than 2 years additional assessment), the AMC is notified as quickly as possible. If the applicant appears eligible or if it is not able to be determined, an interview is arranged.

A period of supervised training in Australia prior to applying to the AMC for OTS or AON assessment may contribute to years of previous training that are accepted when assessing the need for further top up assessment

In the case of applicants who have qualified in certain countries and systems interviews will be arranged as a matter of course. The countries are the UK, Ireland, Canada, South Africa and those qualified through the American Boards.

For AON applicants if the applicant is not suitable for the specified position, this allows the employer to be notified as quickly as possible. If the applicant appears suitable, an interview is arranged. For AON applications the interview panel will consist of members from a different jurisdiction from where the position is located. The Chief Examiner may, on initial review of the documentation, advise the Chair of the Subcommittee of any specific areas for clarification.

3.2.2 Interview

The interview is held at a location determined by the College and an interview panel will be convened from the Subcommittee as required, keeping in mind the need to process AON applications within 8 weeks and general OTS applications within 12 weeks. The panel will consist of at least three people, including the Chairman of the Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment Subcommittee or a Fellow nominated by him/her, and the Subcommittee member representing the discipline of the applicant's choice. The third member of the panel may be a Fellow in the discipline who is not on the Subcommittee. The panel members will be selected from a number of different jurisdictions. Members of the interviewing panel should ordinarily be on the Panel of Examiners for the Board of Censors.

The interview follows the format set out in the *Interview Protocol for Overseas Trained Specialists and Area of Need Applicants*. The interview is not an examination, but serves three purposes:

- It gives the panel the opportunity to explore the applicant's experience and suitability for the position in question. Interviewers will peruse the documents provided by the applicant to ensure that the required information is present and that any points of uncertainty are clarified (such as the exact nature of work undertaken in the applicant's training posts and subsequent experience). They will assess the level of training and experience attained by the applicant and make a recommendation about suitability for the specified position.
- It allows the panel to determine what, if any, further training or experience is required to achieve comparability with training undertaken by specialist pathologists in Australia. This determination may lead to a recommendation to the employer that the applicant may be suitable for a position other than that specified (eg senior medical officer rather than consultant).
- It gives the applicant an opportunity to ask questions about the practice of pathology in Australia, as well as the implications of undertaking an Area of Need post. Interviewers will ensure that the applicant is made fully aware of the advantages of proceeding to Fellowship.

Note for AON applicant the documentation should have been received from the AMC by this time and is checked to ensure that all requirements have been met.

3.2.3 *Report of the Interview*

The interview panel may make one of four possible assessments:

(a) Training and experience NOT comparable to that of a Fellow of the RCPA (OTS) or not suitable for the specified position (AON).

For general OTS applicants, if the applicant's experience and training are considered insufficient, (i.e. the applicant would be required to undertake more than 2 years additional assessment) the application will be rejected and returned to the AMC. Reasons for rejection will be given.

For AON applicants if the applicant's experience and training are considered insufficient, the application will be rejected. Reasons for rejection will be given. In the case of AON Anatomical Pathology applications, the employer may request the opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate his/her knowledge and the application may then proceed as outlined in item 3.2.5 below.

(b) Training and experience considered partially comparable to that of a Fellow of the RCPA and therefore suitable for the specified position.

For general OTS applicants if the applicant has suitable post-graduate qualifications and has successfully completed a period of supervised training considered to be comparable to the training of Fellows of the College, the OTS will be eligible to undertake those assessments determined by the BOC to be necessary to confirm comparability and for attainment of Fellowship of the College. The BOC will apply the same criteria in assessing which assessments are necessary as apply to all other applicants who are part of the training scheme of the College. If successful in the assessment, the applicant will be eligible for immediate admission to Fellowship of the College.

For AON applicants if the applicant is assessed as having had comparable training, experience and similar examinations to an FRCPA, it is likely that the Assessment Subcommittee will support the appointment to an Area of Need position. The applicant is provided with a training and examination determination if they choose to progress to Fellowship.

(c) Training and experience partially comparable similar to that of a Fellow of the RCPA but further "acclimatisation"/experience/assessment in the Australian environment is warranted.

For general OTS applicants, if the applicant has substantial training, qualifications and experience in pathology, has only demonstrated partial comparability to that which is expected of trainees who have successfully completed the RCPA training programme, he/she will be eligible to enter a scheme or process to "top up" knowledge of up to two years leading to assessment for Fellowship. Exemptions from part of the examination requirements may be granted by the BOC on the basis of the applicant's prior training and experience. All such applicants must work in positions in laboratories accredited by the RCPA and will need some form of medical registration (including temporary, conditional or provisional registration), depending on the regulations of the Medical Board of the State in which the applicant intends to practice. The College is not responsible for finding positions or funding for these candidates.

For AON applicants if the applicant has substantial training, qualifications and experience in pathology, but has only demonstrated partial comparability (particularly if they require top up assessment) to that which is expected of trainees having successfully completed the RCPA training program it is unlikely the applicant would be recommended for an area of need position as a specialist, although the College may support their employment in a registrar position.

Please refer to item.3.2.5 below for applicants in Anatomical Pathology.

(d) Training and experience deemed to be substantially comparable to that of a Fellow of the RCPA.

Certain qualifications for pathology will be deemed by the BOC to be substantially comparable to those that Fellows of the RCPA have undertaken. In this circumstance for both OTS and Area of Need applications the applicant will be granted approval to work as a specialist pathologist and if they wish to apply for Fellowship after a suitable period of peer review, they may be granted a Fellowship of the College. (See Policy, Award of FRCPA to Overseas Trained Specialists via Peer Review 2009)

(e) No assessment of training comparability to that of a Fellow of the RCPA is possible on the basis of an interview alone. The interview panel may be unable to reach a conclusion about the comparability of the training of the applicant based on the information available and the interview dealing with duration and content of training. In this circumstance the College would not recommend appointment to the Area of Need position.

Please refer to item .3.2.5 below for applicants in Anatomical Pathology.

3.2.4 Assessment by Chief Examiner

For general OTS applicants the individual panellists' copies of the completed *Interview Protocol for Overseas Trained Specialists and Area of Need Applicants*, and the completed *Summary and Recommendations Overseas Trained Specialist* are forwarded to the Chief Examiner or their delegate who reviews all the material and provides a training and examination determination to the Assessment Subcommittee if the applicant wishes to pursue fellowship.

For AON applicants the documentation from the employer, the individual panellists' copies of the completed *Interview Protocol for Overseas Trained Specialists and Area of Need Applicants*, and the completed *Summary and Recommendations Area of Need* are forwarded to the Chief Examiner or their delegate who reviews all the material and provides a training and examination determination to the Assessment Subcommittee if the applicant wishes to pursue fellowship.

3.2.5 Special arrangements for Anatomical Pathology applicants In the case of applicants under (a), (c) and (d) above.

Where it may be necessary to immediately assess safety to practise in an Area of Need, the employer may request one of the following procedures, either of which may be undertaken at the Chief Examiner's discretion:

In-laboratory assessment

- the applicant shall spend 2 to 5 days in a teaching hospital where an experienced Examiner in Anatomical Pathology is employed

- assessment shall include cutting up, reporting, general laboratory activities and particularly, slide examinations of diseases likely to be seen in the Area of Need
- lists of the diagnoses of slides handled by the applicant shall be recorded and marked objectively
- final assessment shall be made by the supervising examiner after consultation with other Fellows in the department and a review of the marked slides
- if the assessment is positive, the Chief Examiner makes a recommendation to the Subcommittee that the applicant be approved for the specific Area of Need
- all expenses for this assessment are to be covered by the applicant or the prospective employing authority.

OTS Special Practical Assessment

- the applicant may sit for an OTS Special Practical Assessment This assessment is only available during the August practical examination period.
- with the applicant's permission, the College informs the employer of the outcome of the assessment, against a specified standard, to assist their decision making.
- the assessment is not recorded as a pass/fail and does not permit future exemption from any examination.
- the fee for the assessment is at least equivalent to that for the Part I examination but may be greater depending on the additional costs incurred in an individual situation. The fee is payable by the applicant or the prospective employing authority.

3.2.6 Final Review by the Assessment Subcommittee

For general OTS applicants the result of the assessment, including the training and examination determination where relevant are reviewed by the Registrar of the BOC and the information reported to the AMC on their standard form for notification to the applicant.

For AON applicants the completed forms from the interview and the determination from the Chief Examiner will be referred to the Subcommittee, (this will normally be done electronically) which will consider the whole application and, where necessary, consult further with the Chief Examiner. Based on the outcome of the interview, the training and examination determination made by the Chief Examiner, the corresponding documents and, in the case of applicants in Anatomical Pathology, the recommendation arising from the in-laboratory or practical assessment, the Assessment Subcommittee shall make an assessment as to whether the training and experience would be suitable for the particular Area of Need position.

Of note, it would normally only be those applicants assessed to fit into point b) above, who would be considered appropriate for an Area of Need consultant position. However, in Anatomical Pathology, the result of either of the practical assessments may change this position.

In its notification to the Medical Board, the Subcommittee shall advise that no assessment of the competency of the practitioner can be made at this time without formal examination. Any limitations on the nature or extent of practice should also be advised. The training and examination determination will be provided to the applicant informing them of the examinations they would be required to sit if they wish to progress to Fellowship.

The applicant should also be advised that, should they wish to progress to Fellowship, they will need to contact the AMC in order to complete the requirements of the general OTS pathway. Failure to do so may have adverse implications for future medical registration.

3.3 The Medical Board Registration

3.3.1 For AON applicants the assessment made by the Assessment Subcommittee is sent to the Medical Board, the employer and the AMC. The Medical Board considers the assessment and makes the decision to grant registration in accordance with the provisions of State and Territory Acts. For OTS Applicants it is their responsibility to liaise with the Medical Boards.

3.3.2 For AON applicants registration will be linked to regular assessment and monitoring by the relevant College (see 3 below).

4. Ongoing Action for AON Applicants

In accordance with RCPA Policy No. 11/2002: Supervision of Training, a supervisor will be nominated for the applicant.

Following commencement in an Area of Need position the College will:

1. undertake assessment of the applicant after 3 months
2. if any deficiencies are identified at the initial assessment, follow up as required
3. undertake assessment of the applicant after 12 months
4. report the findings of each assessment to the employer and the relevant medical board.

Assessment process

Each assessment will comprise:

1. completion of Area of Need Ongoing Assessment form, to be forwarded to the College at least two weeks prior to the teleconference date
2. discussion by teleconference between the original interview team and the applicant regarding progress
3. discussion by teleconference between the original interview team and the nominated supervisor. Where concerns are evident, such discussion will include a proposal for remediation of noted deficiencies.
4. The Registrar of the BOC reviews the AON Supervisor's Report. The Report is provided to the employer and the relevant medical board and will outline if there is

satisfactory progress or any deficiencies for remediation and the course of action proposed.

If any major deficiencies are notified by the College, the relevant Medical Board may alter conditions of registration (if deficiencies are not significant) or withdraw the registration if deficiencies are considered significant or constitute a danger to the community.

An applicant holding Area of Need registration will be encouraged to proceed to attaining the Fellowship.

5. Appeals

The mechanisms already available for the College and Medical Boards will be utilised to resolve appeals by applicants for Area of Need positions.

6. Promotion of Rural Pathology Services

6.1 Recruitment of overseas trained pathologists to areas of need should be a temporary solution. RCPA is committed to work with rural communities, health authorities, and Colleges to redress the maldistribution of specialists.

6.2 RCPA fosters outreach programs whereby pathologists from larger regional hospitals or practices serve small remote hospitals or practices on a regular basis. Such visiting pathologists may provide oversight to Area of Need appointees.

7. Applicant Requirements for a Medicare Provider Number

7.1 If the applicant does not need a Medicare Provider Number no further action is required.

7.2 If the applicant requires a Medicare Provider Number the applicant must apply for exemption from Provider Number restrictions, which gives access to Medical Benefits Schedule plus consultation items at A2 level. If the applicant requires access to A3 items, he or she must apply to SRACs/OSACs.

Related Documentation

User's Guide: Assessment Process for Area of Need Specialists, AMC 2002

Terms of Reference: Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment Subcommittee

Policy No. 11/2002: Supervision of Training

Websites of AMC, State Health Departments and Medical Boards

ASSESSMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

This Policy reflects and should be implemented in conjunction with the *Policy on Registration within a Vocational Scope of Practice for Overseas Trained Doctors*, Medical Council of New Zealand 2004.

The Medical Council of New Zealand will assess the eligibility of doctors who have qualifications, training and experience as specialists overseas for registration within a vocational scope of practice.

To qualify for registration the doctor must:

- have passed, or been exempted from passing, the IELTS English test
- be fit for registration (HPCAA, s16), and
- be able to assure Council that he or she has qualifications, training and experience comparable to that of a New Zealand trained doctor registered in the same vocational scope, and
- be capable of independent, unsupervised practice, and
- be competent to practise medicine within the vocational scope for which he or she has applied, and
- be intending to practise in New Zealand.

Rationale

- The Council is responsible for protecting the health and safety of members of the public by providing for mechanisms to ensure that doctors are competent and fit to practise medicine in New Zealand (section 3).
- Overseas trained doctors registered within a vocational scope must demonstrate that their qualifications, training and experience are comparable to that of a New Zealand trained doctor working and registered within that same scope of practice.

Procedures

1. The Medical Council has developed a pathway to assess the eligibility of overseas trained doctors who have completed their vocational training and have appropriate qualifications, training and experience for registration within a vocational scope of practice.
2. Applications must be made in a recognised vocational scope, requirements for which are listed on the Medical Council website.
3. Council takes advice from the appropriate branch advisory body (BAB) responsible for advising Council about matters relevant to particular branch. For pathology, the BAB will be the College's New Zealand representatives.
4. The BAB will do an initial paper assessment if this is requested by the doctor. If the doctor is considered to be suitable to continue in the pathway, he or she will be required to attend an interview with the BAB.
5. The BAB will advise Council on the doctor's suitability for registration within a vocational scope, and will recommend what (if any) further assessment is required.
6. Once the doctor has suitable employment arranged, he or she will be registered within a provisional vocational scope of practice to work under supervision and assessment for a minimum of 12 months, and for up to two years.
7. On satisfactory completion of this time, and when all assessment requirements have been satisfied, and the doctor has shown he or she is competent and suitable for independent, unsupervised practice, Council will authorise a change of scope from a provisional vocational scope of practice to a vocational scope.
8. If the doctor fails to satisfy the conditions on his or her practice required by Council to ensure competence in a vocational scope within two years, the Registrar will refer the doctor's application for an APC to the Council under section 27(1)(b) of the Act. The Council may:
 - extend registration within a provisional vocational scope for a further period, or

- propose to either place restrictions on, or decline to issue the doctor's APC under section 28, and give the doctor an opportunity to make written submissions and be heard by Council, and then make a decision whether to issue the APC.

This pathway is only for assessment of doctors who have completed their vocational training overseas. Registration will not be granted to enable a doctor to participate in a vocational training program.

All overseas trained doctors applying for registration within a vocational scope of practice must be intending to practise in New Zealand. Registration will only be granted once the doctor has attended a registration interview and has suitable employment arranged.

If an applicant has not been assessed for general medical competence, he or she will be authorised to practise only within a specified vocational scope, and will be subject to conditions imposed by the Council under section 22 of the HPCA Act.

1. The purpose of the interview and assessment process is to ascertain if:
 - i) The applicant should be granted probationary registration for 12 months to confirm he/she is competent and able to operate independently in a New Zealand setting without supervision. Subject to satisfactory performance for a minimum of 12 months on probationary registration the applicant will be granted general registration (possibly with conditions) and vocational registration.
 - ii) The applicant should be granted probationary registration to undergo an assessment period of up to 12 months to clarify information about his/her knowledge and skills that was not apparent in the interview.
 - iii) The applicant should revert to the general registration pathway and has to complete USMLE 1 & 2 and NZREX Clinical examination, before probationary registration is granted.
2. All eligible overseas trained doctors (other than Australian graduates who are deemed to be eligible for general registration without further assessment) will be granted probationary registration for a minimum of one year to work under supervision to confirm his/her competency and capability to work in New Zealand independently as set out in Section 22 of the Act.
3. Following the period of satisfactory performance on probationary registration, general and vocational registration may be granted. The former will be subject to conditions as set out in Section 20 of the Act, and may be subject to others in the interests of public safety.
4. Applicants not able to demonstrate they can meet the standard required may be directed to have further probationary registration, further assessment or revert to the general registration pathway.
5. The Medical Council of New Zealand has to ensure its processes are fair, reasonable and timely.
6. The Medical Council of New Zealand is able to use discretion to accept or reject the College's advice. In using its discretion Council will document the specific reasons why the decision was made and must ensure its decisions are not:
 - made for an improper purpose
 - made without taking into account relevant matters

- influenced by factual error
 - made without regard to the particular merits of the case and by rigidly applying predetermined policy
 - made under the dictation of someone else, and
 - invalidly delegated.
7. If or when the Medical Council of New Zealand proposes to decline the application or put conditions on the applicant's registration (other than conditions under Section 20) the applicant must be informed of the grounds on which the proposal is made, must be given copies of information on which Council relied in coming to that decision, and must be given the opportunity to make written submissions and be heard either personally or by a representative (Section 34(5)).
 8. If conditions are imposed or registration declined an appeal may be made to the District Court (Section 116 of the Act).
 9. Advice given to applicants following a decision of Medical Council of New Zealand is valid for a period of two years from date of the letter of advice from the Medical Council of New Zealand.
 10. Fees: New Zealand Applicants pay the fees subscribed by the New Zealand Medical Council for the assessment. The Pathologists involved in the interview are reimbursed for any expenses incurred in attending the interviews. The RCPA New Zealand Committee is paid for 1 hour plus travelling time at an agreed hourly rate.

Related documentation

Terms of Reference: Overseas Trained Specialist Assessment Subcommittee

Policy 2/2001 for Assessment of Qualifications for Area of Need Positions

Policy No. 11/2002: Supervision of Training

Application Procedures and Requirements for Specialist Assessment, AMC 2005.

Policy on Registration within a Vocational Scope of Practice for Overseas Trained Doctors, Medical Council of New Zealand 2004.

Websites of AMC, MCNZ, State Health Departments and Medical Boards