

Submission to the Pharmacy Board of Australia

Response to consultation paper: Registration standards and related matters

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Demographics

SHPA is the national professional organisation for almost 2,200 pharmacists, pharmacy students, pharmacy technicians and associates working across Australia's health system.

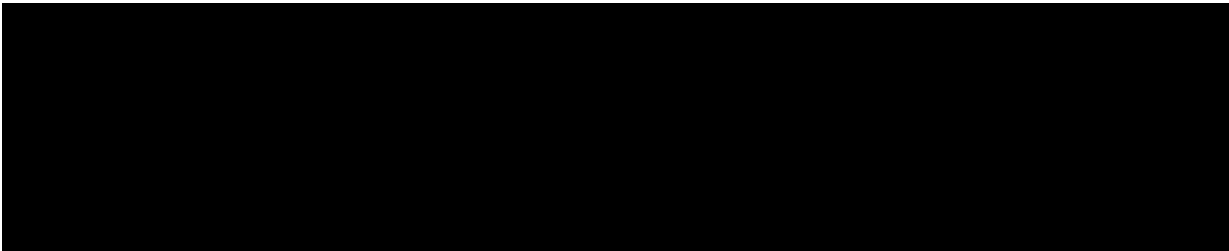
Established in 1941 following the pioneering efforts of 25 public hospital pharmacists from Victoria, the inaugural meeting of the SHPA national council and the first national conference was held in Adelaide in 1961.

SHPA is the only professional pharmacy organisation with a core base of members practising in public and private hospitals and other health service facilities.

Supporting the safe and effective use of medicines is the core business of pharmacists, especially in hospitals.

Reflective of changes in health care, **SHPA's membership** is now drawn from the **diverse pharmacy practice settings** of public and private hospitals (urban, rural, general, specialty, small and large), community pharmacy, academia, research, industry, government, consultant / accredited pharmacists providing medication reviews at home or in residential aged care, quality use of medicines projects, medication safety, clinical governance and medicines management programs.

SHPA offers the following comments on each section of the proposed registration standards.



2.2 English language skills

The need for all pharmacists to **communicate clearly** with patients, care givers and other health care providers **is critical**.

The listening and speaking skills of candidates need to be improved and maintained at a high level so that registered pharmacists will be employable.

The IELTS Guide for Stakeholders states that the banding suitable for linguistically demanding courses / professions such as medicine is 7.5 to 9.0 (the highest rating). The proposed achievement rating of 7.0 for internationally qualified applicants is set too low and appears below the University of Cambridge's own guidelines.

The achievement of an overall IELTS rating for registration should be 7.5 at a minimum. **The rating needs to be high for listening and speaking.** The rating profile required should parallel the requirements for Australian medical courses / applicants.

The list of parent countries where the applicant undertook secondary education and tertiary qualifications should also include Singapore and Hong Kong as SHPA understands that many schools teach and assess in English in these countries.

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