



University of
South Australia

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1982 (Cth)**

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03 SEP 2010

Mr Glen Ruscoe
Chair, Physiotherapy Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
Melbourne VIC 3001

2 September, 2010

Dear Mr Ruscoe,

The Division of Health Sciences, University of South Australia, would appreciate consideration by the Physiotherapy Board of Australia to waive the English language standard for Limited Registration for five internationally trained physiotherapists who have received offers from the University into two of our postgraduate programs in physiotherapy (Master in Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy, and Graduate Certificate in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy). These offers were made as early as the first quarter of 2009 in some instances, and all offers were made prior to the change to national registration. At the time the offers were made, these two programs had an English language entry requirement of IELTS 6.5 and this was sufficient for limited registration with the Physiotherapy Board of South Australia.

The University has amended the English language entry requirements for both programs to match those of the National Board. It has also notified the Board's registration requirements to all students who have received an offer and to all of its international agents. The University has also rescinded offers to a large number of applicants to these two programs and made new ones based on the changed requirement. This is a significant step for the University to take, given its obligations under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act, but it has done so in good faith to ensure its obligations in respect to both the students and the Board are met.

Unfortunately, there are five students with exceptional circumstances who are most severely affected by the transition to the new requirements. We feel their individual situations warrant consideration of a waiver to the new English language requirement, if at all possible. This is not a request we would make in any future intake but is one we feel we should put to the Board, in this time of transition, based on natural justice and hardship. I have outlined each of their circumstances below:

Mr Taweewat Wiangkham was made a conditional offer to the 2011 Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program pending achievement of IELTS 6.5 English language proficiency. Mr Wiangkham has received a scholarship from the Government of Thailand that is limited to study in 2011. He is currently in Australia undertaking English language studies to reach the English language proficiency required at the time of his offer – IELTS 6.5. We request a waiver of the new English language requirement for Mr Wiangkham so that, should he reach the IELTS 6.5 score at the completion of his English language program, he is allowed a Limited Registration to undertake the Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program.

Mr Eike Hirschmann was made a conditional offer to the 2011 Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program pending achievement of IELTS 6.5 English language proficiency. On receiving his offer this student resigned from his job, terminated his rent agreement, sold many of his belongings and booked his flight to Australia. He is registered to take English language studies in Australia commencing in October. We request a waiver of the new English language requirement for Mr Hirschmann so that, should he reach the 6.5 score at the completion of his English language program, he is allowed a Limited Registration to undertake the Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program.

Ms Sangeeta Sharda was made an unconditional offer to the 2011 Graduate Certificate in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy with a conditional offer to progress to the Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program pending successful completion of the Graduate Certificate. Ms Sharda met the University of South Australia's English language entry requirement of IELTS 6.5 based on her previous undergraduate physiotherapy studies in India

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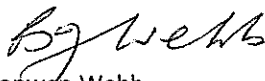
being in English (based on the University's exploration of study in other countries we don't require a test from Indian students who study at particular institutions when all their studies were undertaken in English). We request a waiver of the new English language requirement for Ms Sharda and that she be allowed a Limited Registration with her IELTS 6.5 English score.

Mr Li Feng Tian was made an unconditional offer to the 2011 Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy. Mr. Tian met the University of South Australia's English language entry requirement of IELTS 6.5 based on his previous undergraduate physiotherapy studies in Singapore being in English. Mr. Tian graduated with a Diploma in Physiotherapy from Nanyang Polytechnic in Singapore, a Bachelor of Health Science in Physiotherapy from the Singapore Institute of Management (awarded by the University of Sydney), and a Graduate Certificate in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy from University of South Australia. As such he has undertaken considerable previous studies in English, including our six month Graduate Certificate in 2007. We request a waiver of the new English language requirement for Mr Tian and that he be allowed a Limited Registration with a 6.5 English score.

Mr Sandeep Kumar Thakur was made an unconditional offer to the 2011 Graduate Certificate in Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy with a conditional offer to progress to the Master of Musculoskeletal and Sports Physiotherapy program pending successful completion of the Graduate Certificate. Mr Thakur met the University's English language requirement at the time of his offer - IELTS 6.5. Mr Thakur has already given up his job in India, terminated the lease on his residential property, arranged his travel and has begun to sell furniture and other effects. We request a waiver of the new English language requirement for Mr Thakur and that he be allowed a Limited Registration with a 6.5 English score.

These students have each committed to undertaking our 2011 programs and have already commenced considerable personal and financial arrangements based on their offers which were made well before the changed requirements became official. While we appreciate the new English requirements apply to all health professions and our University was alerted to the impending changes, we hope you will also appreciate the personal circumstances of these five students and the potential for significant hardship should the requested waiver not be approved. One aspect the Board may wish to consider is that the University's postgraduate physiotherapy students undertake their clinical studies under the same supervision arrangements as our undergraduates (who are not required to achieve the Board's English language standard) and in fact the level of supervision is greater as we have a smaller educator to student ratio in the postgraduate programs.

Yours sincerely,



Bronwen Webb
Division Manager

Copy: Associate Professor Annette Raynor, Acting Head of School, School of Health Sciences, University of South Australia