

ALL NATIONAL BOARDS

20 September 2009

Meeting Number: 1

Agenda Item: 4.4

REGISTRATION STANDARDS

RECOMMENDATIONS

That members:

1. note the background information including the timelines at Attachment A
2. note the decisions required about registration standards in 2009-10 and that standards will need to be finalised by December 2009 for submission to the Ministerial Council
3. note the range of matters on which registration standards could be made, including the potential for some common standards
4. note and take into account the resources available:
 - a. legislation (Act A and exposure draft of Bill B)
 - b. resources from existing boards (Agenda Item 4.2)
 - c. registration transition plan (Agenda Item 4.3), and
 - d. requirements for developing standards (Agenda Item 7)
5. note that consultation is required and the proposed consultation process is detailed at Agenda Item 4.1
6. note the material for draft common registration standards provided at Attachment B
7. in relation to mandatory standards (see Attachment C), agree to work with other boards on registration standards for common use on:
 - a. English language requirements, and
 - b. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
9. decide whether the board requires any board-specific registration standards, and
10. decide on a process to develop the draft of registration standards required for consideration at the October 2009 meeting and consultation immediately following the meeting, in order to meet the December 2009 deadline for submission to the Ministerial Council.

BACKGROUND

From 1 July 2010, each national board will need to make decisions on a range of registration matters including:

- initial applications for registration, ie applications from individuals who have not previously been registered under State or Territory professional registration legislation and who are not subject to transitional provisions
- applications in particular categories of registration, eg limited registration for an area of need
- applications for endorsements, and
- applications for renewal of registration and endorsements.

Bill B provides that boards may develop registration standards about the registration, or renewal of registration, or persons in a health profession, to be approved by the Ministerial Council. A national board needs to consider which registration standards it will require to guide its decisions on registration matters. A national board must ensure that the process to develop any registration standard includes wide-ranging consultation about its content.

There are a number of specific references to registration standards throughout Bill B, including specifying requirements for initial registration, renewal of registration, different categories of registration, provision of information, eg in the annual statement that applicants for renewal must submit, and any standards the board wishes to put in place relevant to endorsements of registration.

The timeframe is tight for the development of registration standards because of the requirement for approval by the Ministerial Council and the preparation of forms and guides for applicants. A national board will need to develop any draft registration standards, and complete the required consultation, by December 2009 so that the standards can be approved by the Ministerial Council and available for use from 1 July 2010. If the standards are not finalised by December 2009, then national boards will miss the opportunity for Ministerial Council approval before 1 July 2010. To meet these deadlines, boards will need to finalise consultation material at the October 2009 meeting for consultation immediately following the meeting.

Attachment A sets out the timetable for the development of registration standards. The timetable takes into account the Christmas period, the deadlines for lodging papers for Ministerial Council meetings and the lead time to implement the standards for use from 1 July 2010.

Boards need to create registration standards in the context of revised Bill B. Revised Bill B is expected to provide that a registration standard for a health profession must include the following:

- a) [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- d) requirements about the English language skills necessary for an applicant for registration in the profession to be suitable for registration in the profession, and

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The content of registration standards will be important to the development of forms and IT to support the registration process.

Scope

National boards will have determined the categories of registration applicable to their profession in deciding about transition arrangements (see Agenda Item 4.3). Boards may wish to consider whether to develop two sets of standards – one for overseas applicants and one for domestic applicants.

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

Boards also have the option of developing codes or guidelines, except where the legislation makes specific reference to a registration standard.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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Mandatory registration standards

Registration standards required for all boards	Initial registration (by Division where applicable)	Where applicable, specialist (and other categories of registration such as limited registration)	Where applicable, limited registration – public interest – occasional practice	Where applicable, endorsement	Renewal
1. [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4. English language	Required for all boards. Standard would be the same for all categories of initial registration and renewal				
5. [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Optional registration standards

Registration standards that may be required by boards	Initial registration (by Division where applicable)	Where applicable, specialist (and other categories of registration such as limited registration)	Where applicable, limited registration – public interest – occasional practice	Where applicable, endorsement	Renewal
6. [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]				
[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
8. Other	Only if required by board				

Common standards for all boards

In some cases it would be possible to have a common registration standard across registration categories, divisions of the register and professions, and for initial registration and renewal, eg criminal history relevant to registration. Under this approach, boards would start with a common base standard and then add profession-specific elements if required.

The Agency recommends that boards consider adopting common standards wherever possible, as this will assist boards to prepare for commencement of the national scheme on 1 July 2010 and promote best practice across boards. A possible approach to developing common standards would be to identify a best practice example of a current standard, guideline or policy and adapt it for use across all boards.

The following subjects are proposed for common standards:

Possible common standards	Required or optional	What would the registration standard contain?
1. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
2. English language requirements	Required for all boards	The standard would require international graduates to be sufficiently competent in English for safe practise of their profession.

Attachment B contains more detail about the content of possible common registration standards.

Areas where boards will require board-specific standards

In many cases registration standards will vary across professions and possibly registration categories and divisions of the register, eg the period of supervised practise or exam or assessment to assess the individual's ability to competently practise the profession.

Board specific standards	Required or optional	What would the registration standard contain?
1. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

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Board specific standards	Required or optional	What would the registration standard contain?
<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>6. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

More detail about the possible content of some standards, including proposed common standards, is at Attachment B.

Format

A standard format will be developed for registration standards to assist national boards. It will include information such as the date, approval, the requirements, any explanatory material, etc.

Process

Each national board will have to decide which standards it will require for initial registration. The table at [Attachment C](#) provides a framework for discussion of the mandatory standards required by all boards. A national board also needs to decide whether it requires any board-specific standards. In making its decisions, boards should take into account the timeframes set out at [Attachment A](#).

Once a national board has identified the standards it requires, it needs to decide how it will develop the standards by October 2009 to enable the wide ranging consultation required by Bill B before the standards are finalised for Ministerial Council consideration by December 2009. The board's process would draw on the resources relating to registration from existing boards (Agenda Item 4.2) and referenced at Attachment C.

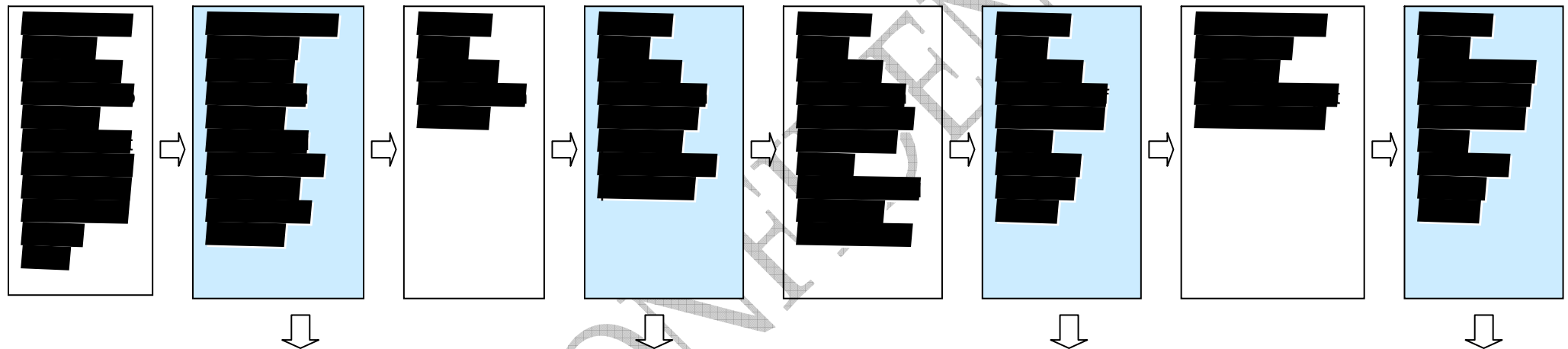
ATTACHMENTS:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Attachment A: | Registration standards development process and timelines |
| Attachment B: | Required and optional registration standards |
| Attachment C: | Recommendation on mandatory registration standards |

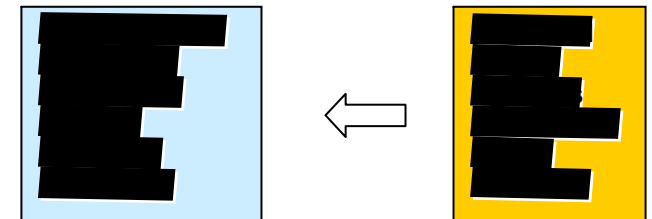
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Shaded = action at board meetings

White = action between board meetings



National board meetings Sep 2009 meeting Oct 2009 meeting Nov 2009 meeting Dec 2009 meeting



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Attachment B

Content of standards for initial registration (to be expanded as appropriate examples are identified)

Possible common standards	Required by all boards or optional	What would the registration standard contain?
<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
2. English language requirements	Required by all boards	<p>The standard could specify the English language requirements that the Board requires for international graduates and any test that may be required to verify English language proficiency. For example, medical boards in all States and Territories have adopted a common English language proficiency requirement for international medical graduates using the IELTS examination (academic module) and three alternative tests. The requirement specifies that test results must be within two years prior to applying for registration and that the applicant is responsible for the cost (http://www.nswmb.org.au/system/files/f52/o486/National%20Eng%20Lang%20Pol%20V%2017%20April%202007.pdf). The policy could be adapted along the following lines:</p> <p>Draft standard</p> <p>This standard applies to all international graduates who are seeking registration in Australia under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law.</p> <p>Requirements</p> <p>Applicants need to submit evidence to the relevant registration authority of competency in speaking and communicating in English, as demonstrated by having completed the IELTS examination (Academic module) to the following standard:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The boards require the applicant to have achieved a minimum score of seven in each of the four components. 2. Alternative English proficiency tests that will be accepted are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Completed and obtained an overall pass in the Occupational English Test (OET) administered by the Centre for Adult Education with grades A or B only in each of the four components, or b) A pass in the Professional Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) in the United Kingdom, or c) A pass in the New Zealand Registration Examination (NZREX) in New Zealand.

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What would the registration standard contain?

Possible common standards	Required by all boards or optional	
		<p>3. Results must have been obtained within two years prior to applying for registration.</p> <p>4. An IELTS (or approved equivalent) Test Report Form more than two years old will be accepted as evidence of present level of ability if accompanied by proof that a candidate has actively maintained employment as a medical practitioner in a country where English is the native or first Language. Test results must comply with the current requirements of this policy.</p> <p>5. Results from any of the abovementioned English language examinations must be obtained in one sitting.</p> <p>NOTE: The applicant is responsible for the cost of English tests.</p> <p>4.0 Exemptions</p> <p>The boards may grant exemption where the applicant provides evidence of secondary education in English in one of the countries, listed below, where English is the native or first Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Republic of Ireland • New Zealand • United Kingdom and Northern Ireland • United States of America, or • South Africa. <p>At the board's discretion, an exemption may be approved in special circumstances to applicants applying for registration. Examples would be, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform a demonstration in medical techniques, or • undertake research which involves limited or no patient contact, or • undertake postgraduate study or training while working in an appropriately supported environment which will ensure patient safety is not compromised. <p>In this standard, IELTS means the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) developed by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, The British Council and IDP Education Australia. The test is administered at least once a month by IELTS Australia and The British Council at over 230 centres worldwide.</p>

Areas where boards may require board-specific standards

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