

Communiqué

March 2020

February 2020 Podiatry Accreditation Committee meeting

Introduction

On 1 July 2018, the Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) determined that the accreditation functions for the podiatry profession would be exercised by a committee established by the Board. In July 2019, the Podiatry Accreditation Committee (the Accreditation Committee) commenced accreditation functions under the National Law.

The Communique provides information about the Accreditation Committee's recent activities. The Accreditation Committee publishes this communiqué on the Board's [accreditation webpage](#). Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Accreditation Committee meetings

The fourth meeting of the Accreditation Committee was held on 12 February 2020 in Melbourne.

The February meeting was the first meeting for 2020. The Accreditation Committee has four other meetings scheduled in 2020, being:

- 22 April 2020
- 18 June 2020
- 17 September 2020, and
- 19 November 2020.

2020 Accreditation Committee activities

In 2020 the Committee will, amongst other things:

- continue progressing the review and development of accreditation standards, professional capabilities and its revised accreditation process
- continue its evaluation of the routine annual monitoring submissions from all education providers delivering approved podiatry programs of study
- confirm its 2020/2021 schedule of accreditation fees
- provide its reports to the Board using new reporting requirements against key performance indicators and the quality framework
- develop and confirm its approach to the establishment of assessment teams; and
- call for applications for accreditation assessors in mid-2020.

These topics are covered more thoroughly below.

Review and development of accreditation standards and profession capabilities

The Accreditation Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing the accreditation standards against which education providers and their implementation of podiatry programs of study (programs) are assessed when applying for accreditation under the National Law. The Board is responsible for approving and publishing the accreditation standards.

At its September 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed to its project plan to review and develop accreditation standards and professional capabilities for podiatry. The Committee also agreed to establish an Expert Reference Group (ERG) to guide work on the professional capabilities. The Committee agreed membership would comprise of Committee and Board representation with relevant expertise. The ERG membership was confirmed in December 2019 and the ERG held its inaugural meeting in February 2020 to discuss and review an initial draft of professional capabilities.

At its February 2020 meeting, the Committee discussed and provided feedback on:

- the project team's first working draft of the accreditation standards for podiatry programs (entry level programs)
- the proposed approach to developing accreditation standards for podiatric surgery programs (podiatric surgery accreditation standards)
- the proposed approach to developing standalone endorsement for scheduled medicines programs (ESM accreditation standards); and
- the proposed approach to developing standalone podiatric therapeutics programs (therapeutics accreditation standards).

The Committee also discussed and provided feedback on its initial stakeholder engagement plan for the project.

The consultation phase of the project

Both the accreditation standards and professional capabilities will be consulted on at the same time. It is anticipated that a period of targeted preliminary consultations will commence in May 2020 and run for approximately eight weeks. A comprehensive public consultation period is expected for August 2020 and will run for approximately eight weeks. The Committee looks forward to receiving feedback from its core stakeholders, including education providers, during the consultation periods of this important project. The consultation package will be made available on the accreditation pages of the Board's website once public consultation commences.

It is anticipated that the revised/developed accreditation standards and professional capabilities will be ready for implementation in early 2021.

Development of revised accreditation processes for podiatry

At its September 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed to adopt the draft multi-professional guidelines for accreditation of education and training programs (guidelines). The guidelines are being developed in conjunction with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice and Paramedicine Accreditation Committees.

The guidelines were released for a targeted consultation and it is expected the guidelines will be published in the first half of 2020. These guidelines will replace the current *Accreditation procedures for Podiatry programs* and will be available [here](#).

Stakeholder engagement

The Program Accreditation Team on behalf of the Accreditation Committee continues to engage with education providers through correspondence via email; phone calls; and communiques via the Program Accreditation Team. The Accreditation Committee will seek stakeholder input on various consultations in 2020, including the draft accreditation standards for podiatry.

Monitoring approved programs of study

Under section 50 of the National Law, the Committee has a statutory responsibility to monitor approved programs of study and the education providers offering them, to ensure the Committee continues to be satisfied the program and provider meet the approved accreditation standards.

At its September 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed to implement the routine annual monitoring package to monitor education providers and their programs in 2019/2020.

At its February 2020 meeting, the Committee considered the first round of education providers' responses to the routine annual monitoring package. The Committee will consider further routine annual monitoring responses throughout the first half of 2020. Following each meeting, the Committee will provide the outcomes of their findings to the applicable education providers and the Board.

New arrangements for reporting to the Board and Ahpra

In November 2019, Ahpra's Agency Management Committee (AManC) finalised the initial reporting model for the current accreditation agreements and terms of reference, due dates for reports during the period of the current agreements and terms of reference, and initial report templates. The Accreditation Committee will submit its first report against the new requirements, to the Board and Ahpra by 31 March 2020. The reporting obligations are outlined in Attachment F and Attachment G of the Accreditation Committee's [Terms of Reference](#).

Podiatry assessment teams and recruitment of accreditation assessors

At its February 2020 meeting, the Accreditation Committee considered and discussed its proposed approach the establishment of its assessment teams

The Accreditation Committee will confirm its approach at its April 2020 meeting, and will then commence an expression of interest campaign for applications to the Podiatry Accreditation Committee pool of accreditation assessors. It is anticipated that the campaign will commence in May 2020, and the Accreditation Committee hopes to recruit its first pool of assessors by mid-late 2020. Further information on the selection criteria for interested parties will be available on the ['Assessor' accreditation page](#) of the Board's website from May 2020.

2020/2021 Schedule of accreditation fees

At its February 2020 meeting, the Accreditation Committee confirmed its schedule of accreditation fees for 2020/2021. The schedule will be published on the 'Accreditation fees' accreditation page of the Board's website. The Program Accreditation Team will advise education providers in due course of expected timing of invoices for the 2020/2021 annual accreditation fee.

Contact information

For any queries related to podiatry program accreditation, please contact the Podiatry Accreditation Committee via the Program Accreditation Team at program.accreditation@ahpra.gov.au.

For more information on podiatry accreditation please visit the Board's [accreditation](#) webpage. Further information will be added to the website as the Accreditation Committee's accreditation functions progress.

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