	Title: Position Statement 6: Overseas Qualified Practitioners	
	Date Reviewed: September 2014	Version PS6.14.0
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OVERSEAS QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS

Media Release

The ADOHTA supports the development of a process to allow dental and oral health therapists who have gained their qualifications outside of Australia, to achieve practice registration in Australia. An Australian based assessment process is underutilised thereby denying skilled professionals the ability to register to practice in Australia and the oral health workforce is the poorer for it. Dental Therapists registered in New Zealand are able to apply for registration in Australia under mutual recognition. A procedure for mutual recognition should be offered to dental therapists, dental hygienists and oral health therapists who hold qualifications and practice registration in other countries.

Further Information

The process of assessment for dental and oral health therapists who have received their qualification in any other country should be either- via direct entry with current registration and graduation from an approved and accredited program in selected countries, or by an entry exam, both written and pre-clinical. The current assessment process has been overseen by the Dental Board of Australia and has developed in conjunction with Curtin University of Technology in Perth and Technical and Further Education South Australia (TAFE SA) in Adelaide. An in-house assessment process is currently being developed by the Australian Dental Council in consultation with stakeholders – it will be similar to the examination the ADC conducts for overseas-qualified dentists seeking registration to practice in Australia.


The ADOHTA asserts that Dental Therapists educated in the Canada, United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland should be eligible to apply for registration within Australia under mutual recognition similar to that offered to Dentists educated in the Canada, United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Where there is a deficiency in the skill set, consideration should also be given to the development of a bridging course to enable overseas trained dental and oral health therapists to upgrade their skills to enable them to seek full registration as an Oral Health Therapist, Dental Therapist or Dental Hygienist within Australia.

As Dental Therapy and Oral Health Therapy are registered health practitioners requiring profession specific undergraduate preparation, only those people holding qualifications in Dental Therapy or Oral Therapy are eligible to apply for registration to practice in Australia.

People holding qualifications as a dentist should apply through the Overseas Qualified Dentists pathway available through the Australian Dental Council. All enquiries from Overseas Qualified Practitioners shall be referred to the Australian Dental Council and the Dental Board of Australia.

Australian Dental Council: <http://www.adc.org.au/index.php?id=6>

Dental Board of Australia: <http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/Registration/Overseas-Practitioner-Registration.aspx>

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Supporting Information

The purpose of this position statement is to identify and outline the pathways to recognition of overseas acquired dental and oral health therapy skills and qualifications and identify sources of information and assistance available for this purpose.

New Zealand

An assessment process for Overseas Qualified Practitioners to enable registration as a Dental Therapist and / or Dental Hygienist is conducted by the Dental Council of New Zealand. Successful applicants are then able to apply through Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition for registration within Australia. [1]

Overseas Trained Dentists

Currently overseas trained dentists have 3 options to enable them to gain registration within Australia

- 1) Complete an Australian Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) Program which is accredited by the Australian Dental Council.
- 2) By Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition for New Zealand trained dentists or by possessing an approved qualification immediately acceptable to the Dental Board of Australia eg from United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Canada.
- 3) Assessment and recognition of overseas qualifications by the Australian Dental Council (ADC) including and Occupational English Test [2] The ADC examination has been developed to assess, (for registration purposes), the dental knowledge and clinical skills of overseas trained dentists whose basic dental qualifications are not recognised by the Dental Board of Australia..

Additionally the Public Sector Dental Workforce Scheme (PSDWS) has been introduced to help alleviate workforce shortages in the public sector, particularly in rural and remote areas. Under this scheme graduates from some dental programs in Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa and the US are eligible to participate. Those eligible will be granted an exemption from the ADC Preliminary Examination and a form of restricted registration to enable them to practise in the public sector for a period up to 3 years during which time the ADC Final Examination must be undertaken.

References

Wright FAC, Satur J & Morgan MV, (January 2000) Evidence Based Health Promotion; Resources For Planning. No 1: Oral Health, Public Health Division, Department of Human Services
Available on line at; <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/dentistry/publications.htm>

WHO (2001) Jakarta Declaration on health promotion into the 21st century

WHO (2005), Bangkok declaration for health promotion in a globalized world