

FAQs - Changes to the Competent Authority Pathway

November 2017

Summary

The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) is making changes to the Competent Authority Pathway for international medical graduates (IMGs). The changes will take effect from 1 July 2014.

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been developed to assist applicants/registrants and employers to better understand the changes to the process for applications and registration after 1 July 2014.

Why are changes being made to the Competent Authority Pathway?

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme has opened up opportunities to streamline and simplify the assessment and registration of IMGs. In addition, one of the fundamental aims of the 2011/12 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing inquiry into registration processes and support for overseas trained doctors was to reduce red tape, duplication and administrative hurdles faced by IMGs, whilst ensuring that the Australian standard continues to be rigorously applied.

These changes go a significant way towards meeting this aim. The changes will also reduce the administrative burden on employers.

What are the changes being made to the application process for Competent Authority Pathway applicants?

From 1 July 2014, the Australian Medical Council (AMC) will no longer have a role in the assessment of IMGs in the Competent Authority Pathway. The IMG will no longer be required to apply to the AMC for the Certificate of Advanced Standing nor will they need to be awarded the AMC certificate at the end of their 12 months of supervised practice.

IMGs will apply directly to the Board for provisional registration. IMGs are still required to have secured an offer of employment prior to applying to the Board for registration.

In addition, satisfactory results of a pre-employment structured clinical interview (PESCI) are required for any general practice position. If required, a PESCI can be undertaken prior to applying for provisional registration. More information about the PESCI is accessible at

<http://www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration/International-Medical-Graduates/pesci.aspx>.

If you have any further questions about the PESCI process, IMGs should contact the state/territory AHPRA office in which they intend practising on Ph: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or Ph: +61 3 8708 9001 (from outside Australia) or forward an enquiry via AHPRA's [web enquiry form](#).

What type of registration will Competent Authority Pathway applicants apply for?

From 1 July 2014, IMGs via the Competent Authority Pathway will apply to the Board for provisional registration, rather than limited registration. Further information regarding the application process is available on the [Board's website](#).

IMGs applying for registration **prior to 1 July 2014**, will continue to apply to the AMC for assessment via the Competent Authority Pathway. Further information is available at www.amc.org.au. Once the Certificate of Advanced Standing is issued by the AMC, the IMG can apply to the Board for limited registration.

Will applicants still be required to undertake primary source verification (PSV) of their qualifications through the AMC?

Yes. Applicants will still be required to apply to the AMC for PSV and this must be done prior to applying directly to the Board for registration. For further information regarding the PSV process, please go to the [AMC website](#).

What are the requirements for general registration for Competent Authority Pathway registrants from 1 July 2014?

Once the Board has confirmed that the applicant is eligible to apply via the Competent Authority Pathway, and has approved the proposed employment position and proposed supervision arrangements, provisional registration will be granted to allow for the registrant to successfully complete a 12 month period of supervised practice (minimum of 47 weeks full time service). The period of supervised practice has a range of purposes, including ensuring that registrants are orientated to the Australian health care system and confirming that they are safe practitioners, practising at least at the level of an Australian or New Zealand qualified intern at the end of their intern year.

The Board will not define specific rotations that IMGs in the Competent Authority Pathway have to undertake, nor that they have to complete an accredited intern position. The Competent Authority Pathway recognises that the IMG has undertaken post qualification/assessment experience and that this 12 month period of supervised practice is consistent with requirements for IMGs in all other pathways to registration, enabling orientation to the Australian health care system and confirming the IMG's safe practice.

The IMG is required to submit a completed orientation report and work performance report after the initial three month period of employment in the approved position, and/or at any other intervals as determined by the Board.

Once the 12 month supervised practice period has been completed, registrants must provide written confirmation from term supervisors that they have satisfactorily completed the 12 month period (FTE) of supervised practice. This may be in the form of term reports or other specific reporting forms developed or approved by the Board and a letter of recommendation for general registration from the Director of Training, Director of Medical Services or other person authorised to sign off on the satisfactory completion of supervised practice.

The requirements for supervised practice are consistent with the Board's guidelines for supervised practice which apply to IMGs with provisional registration in the Competent Authority Pathway.

If the requirements for general registration have not been met when provisional/limited registration is due to be renewed, can the registrant renew their current registration?

Yes. The National Law allows for provisional registration to be renewed twice and limited registration to be renewed three times. However, this is subject to the applicant meeting all requirements for renewal of registration.

What do IMGs do if they currently hold limited registration via the Competent Authority Pathway?

There is no change for IMGs who have been awarded the Certificate of Advanced Standing by the AMC, and who currently hold limited registration with the Board. At the completion of the 12 month supervised practice period (minimum of 47 weeks full time service), current limited registrants are required to apply to an AMC-accredited authority for a letter to be sent to the AMC confirming successful completion of the 12 month period, and in support of the awarding of the AMC certificate.

Once the AMC certificate has been awarded, the IMG can apply to the Board for general registration.

More information on transitional arrangements for current registrants is available on the [Board's website](#).

Can IMGs apply to change to provisional registration if they currently hold limited registration with the Board via the Competent Authority Pathway?

Yes. IMGs who currently hold limited registration via the Competent Authority Pathway can apply to change to provisional registration. For this to occur, the IMG will need to lodge a new application for provisional registration, via the Competent Authority Pathway, with the Board. Please note that applicants will be required to pay relevant application and registration fees. This new application cannot be made until after 1 July 2014.

How long will it take to process the application?

If the application is deemed complete – i.e. AHPRA has received all the information it requires to complete an assessment under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law) – the processing time is generally 4 – 6 weeks. Further information relating to the registration process and processing times is available on the [AHPRA website](#).

It should be noted, however, that complex applications, including those requiring consideration by a Registration Committee or State Board, may take longer to process.

Where can IMGs find further information about the changes to the Competent Authority Pathway and the application forms?

Additional information, including application forms is available on the [Board's website](#).