



## Fact sheet

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1 July 2016

### Limited Registration – Information on how international medical graduates can demonstrate satisfactory progress towards gaining general or specialist registration

#### Background

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory, (the National Law) provides for the registration of international medical graduates (IMGs) who do not qualify for general and/or specialist registration. IMGs in these circumstances may be granted limited registration.

Some limited registrants gain experience and training in Australia and intend to return to their country of origin. Others wish to live more permanently in Australia. The Medical Board of Australia (the Board) expects that IMGs who intend to live in Australia long term will progress towards meeting the requirements for general or specialist registration over a few years. The approved registration standards for the four types of limited registration require medical practitioners to work towards meeting the requirements for general or specialist registration if they intend to apply for more than three renewals of registration.

This document has been developed to provide information to limited registrants about how to meet the requirements of the applicable registration standards when making an application for renewal of registration or a new application for limited registration.

#### Scope

This information is relevant to IMGs who hold:

- limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice
- limited registration for area of need
- limited registration for teaching or research
- limited registration in public interest, and who are seeking to practise medicine in Australia longer term.

As the National Law allows for the initial application for registration and three renewals of registration, the Board considers that “longer term” is for any period of registration beyond four years.

The document provides information on the requirements of the applicable registration standards and any training or supervised practice guidelines as issued by the Board from time to time. The information provided does not replace any specific requirements of applicable registration standards.

## Procedure and Requirements

### Pathways

On 1 July 2008 the Australian Medical Council (AMC) introduced a nationally consistent assessment process for IMGs. The assessment pathways for IMGs are:

- Competent Authority Pathway
- Standard Pathway (AMC examinations or examination and workplace based assessment)
- Standard Pathway (workplace-based assessment)
- Specialist Pathway (specialist recognition or area of need)

Details of the pathways can be found on the [Board's website](#) and the [AMC website](#).

IMGs on the standard pathway or specialist pathway may be granted limited registration.

### Requirements

Pursuant to section 72 of the National Law, limited registration may not be renewed more than three times. An IMG intending to practise medicine in Australia longer term must demonstrate annually, at each renewal of registration that they are progressing towards qualifying for general or specialist registration.

The requirements for progression towards general or specialist registration differ according to the pathway that the IMG is following. An IMG may apply for general or specialist registration at any time prior to the completion of four years of limited registration upon successfully completing the specific requirements for general or specialist registration.

In the event that an IMG has not qualified for general or specialist registration within four years, the IMG may make a new application for limited registration. The Board understands that there may be circumstances that prevent an IMG from applying for general or specialist registration at the end of the first four years of limited registration. For example, the training pathway for some specialist areas of practice may take longer than four years to complete. In these circumstances an IMG may make a new application for limited registration. In deciding whether to grant limited registration and any subsequent renewals of registration thereafter the Board will take into consideration:

- the requirements of the current applicable registration standard
- demonstration of satisfactory progress towards meeting the requirements qualifying for general or specialist registration;
- evidence that the practitioner is performing satisfactorily in their role.

An IMG who has been unable to meet the requirements of the applicable registration standard must provide the Board with as much information and evidence as possible outlining the reasons as to why the requirements have not been met with their new application for registration or application for renewal of registration.

In accordance with sections 80 and 110 of the National Law, the Board may require an IMG to undergo an examination or assessment prior to deciding a new application for limited registration or an application for renewal of limited registration.

The table below specifies the Board's progression requirements for limited registrants on the standard pathway or the specialist pathway.

## Standard Pathway (AMC Examination) and applicants initially registered pre 1 July 2008, not undertaking specialist training program/assessment and intending to practise in Australia >4 years

Progress point	Progress requirements for renewal of registration. Applicants to provide:
3 months from commencement of initial employment	Within 14 days of the end of the 3 month period an initial work performance report.
At end of 1 <sup>st</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Evidence of passing the AMC MCQ examination (for applicants initially registered before 1 July 2008).</li> </ol>
At end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Evidence of:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. application to sit the AMC clinical examination; or</li> <li>b. enrolment to sit the AMC clinical examination;</li> <li>c. results of the AMC clinical examination if have sat in the preceding 12 months.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
At end of 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of registration	<p>It is expected that by the end of the 3rd year that most practitioners in the standard pathway will have fulfilled the requirements for general registration. If they have not done so, their application will be assessed by the Registration Committee which on the basis of the information may decide to interview the registrant to explore the reasons for failing to achieve general registration and to provide recommendations for the next 12 months. The Registration Committee may also seek additional information from the applicant.</p> <p>At application, they must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Results of the AMC clinical examination if have sat in the preceding 12 months or confirmation that they are scheduled to sit the AMC clinical examination, and</li> <li>4. If the registrant has not passed the AMC clinical examination they should provide:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards general registration, and</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Progress point	Progress requirements for renewal of registration. Applicants to provide:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards general registration, and</li> <li>c. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration being renewed. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified at the AMC clinical examination, if the registrant has attempted the examination. (Prior to granting renewal of registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</li> </ul>
At end of final year of registration	<p>The Board expects that applicants for registration in the standard pathway will have completed the requirements for general registration within four years.</p> <p>These applications for registration will be considered by the Registration Committee who may decide to interview the practitioner, may require additional information and/or require that the applicant undergo an examination or assessment to determine the practitioner's ability to practise the profession safely.</p> <p>Applicants for registration (initial registration as no further renewals are possible) should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the performance improvement plan, and</li> <li>3. Results of the AMC clinical examination if have sat in the preceding 12 months or confirmation that they are scheduled to sit the AMC clinical examination, and</li> <li>4. If the registrant has not passed the AMC clinical examination they should provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards general registration, and</li> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards general registration, and</li> <li>c. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified at the AMC clinical examination, if the registrant has attempted the examination. (Prior to granting registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Standard Pathway (workplace-based assessment)

Applicants in this pathway must have passed the MCQ AMC examination

Progress Point	Progress Requirements for Renewal of Registration. Applicants to provide:
3 months from commencement of initial employment	Within 14 days of the end of the 3 month period an initial work performance report.
At end of 1 <sup>st</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held).</li> </ol>
At end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Confirmation from supervisors about which components of the assessment have been passed and which have not been passed as yet.</li> </ol>
At end of 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of registration	<p>It is expected that by the end of the 3rd year that most practitioners in the standard pathway (workplace-based assessment) will have fulfilled the requirements for general registration. If they have not done so, their application will be assessed by the Registration Committee who on the basis of the information may decide to interview the registrant to explore the reasons for failing to achieve general registration and to provide recommendations for the next 12 months. The Registration Committee may also require additional information.</p> <p>At application, they must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. If the registrant has not passed all parts of the workplace-based assessment, they should provide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards general registration, and</li> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards general registration, and</li> <li>c. Confirmation of what parts of the assessment have been passed and what parts have not been passed or assessed, and</li> <li>d. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration being renewed. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified by the workplace-based assessment. (Prior to granting renewal of registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
At end of final year	The Board expects that applicants for registration in the standard pathway will have completed the requirements for general registration within four years.

Progress Point	Progress Requirements for Renewal of Registration. Applicants to provide:
of registration	<p>These applications for registration will be considered by the Registration Committee who may decide to interview the practitioner, require additional information and/or require that the applicant undergo an examination or assessment to determine the practitioner's ability to practise the profession safely.</p> <p>Applicants for registration (initial registration as no further renewals are possible) should provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the performance improvement plan, and</li> <li>3. If the registrant has not passed the AMC workplace assessment, they should provide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards general registration, and</li> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards general registration, and</li> <li>c. Confirmation of what parts of the assessment have been passed and what parts have not been passed or assessed, and</li> <li>d. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified by the workplace-based assessment. (Prior to granting registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

## Specialist Pathway

Progress point	Progress requirements for renewal of registration. Applicants to provide:
3 months from commencement of initial employment	Within 14 days of the end of the 3 month period an initial work performance report.
At end of 1 <sup>st</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Evidence of compliance with all the requirements of the speciality college</li> </ol> <p><b>OR</b> Confirmation of intention to return to country of origin.</p>
At end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Evidence of compliance with all the requirements of the speciality college and confirmation of what further requirements must be met for eligibility for fellowship</li> </ol> <p><b>OR</b> Confirmation of intention to return to country of origin.</p>
At end of 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of registration	<p>The Board expects that most registrants in the specialist pathway will either have completed the requirements of the specialist college for eligibility for fellowship or will be returning to their country of origin after completing any training in Australia.</p> <p>Any applications for renewal of registration at the end of the third year of registration will be assessed by the Registration Committee which on the basis of the information may decide to interview the registrant to explore the reasons for failing to achieve specialist registration and to provide recommendations for the next 12 months. The Committee may request additional information.</p> <p>At application, they must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the training plan or professional development plan (whichever applies to the type of registration held), and</li> <li>3. Evidence of compliance with all the requirements of the specialty college, and</li> <li>4. If the registrant has not completed all the requirements of the specialist college for eligibility for fellowship, they should provide:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards specialist registration, and</li> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards specialist registration, and</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Progress point	Progress requirements for renewal of registration. Applicants to provide:
	<p>c. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration being renewed. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified at any College assessments. (Prior to granting renewal of registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</p> <p><b>OR</b> Confirmation of intention to return to country of origin.</p>
At end of final year of registration	<p>The Board expects that applicants for registration in the specialist pathway will have completed the requirements for specialist registration within four years or alternatively, will have completed their training in Australia.</p> <p>These applications for registration will be considered by the Registration Committee which may decide to interview the practitioner, require additional information and/or require that the applicant undergo an examination or assessment to determine the practitioner's ability to practise the profession safely. The examination or assessment is not a substitute for any College requirements.</p> <p>Applicants for registration (initial registration as no further renewals are possible) should provide an initial registration application with its requirements and also:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A work performance report for the previous registration period, and</li> <li>2. A statement of progress against the performance improvement plan, and</li> <li>3. Evidence of compliance with all the requirements of the specialty college, and</li> <li>4. If the registrant has not completed all the requirements of the specialist college for eligibility for fellowship, they should provide: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A statement as to why they have not made satisfactory progress towards specialist registration, and</li> <li>b. A statement from the supervisor as to why satisfactory progress has not been made towards specialist registration, and</li> <li>c. A performance improvement plan developed by the supervisor and the registrant for the period of registration. The plan should address any deficiencies that have been identified at any College assessments. (Prior to granting registration the plan must be approved by the State or Territory Board or Registration Committee).</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>OR</b> Date of intended return to country of origin.</p>



## Failure to make reasonable progress towards general or specialist registration

The Board may refuse to grant renewal of registration at the end of any registration period in accordance with the applicable registration standard.

As the primary role of the Board is to protect the public, the Board may refuse to renew registration if:

- the practitioner fails to comply with supervision requirements;
- the practitioner fails to demonstrate satisfactory progress towards general registration or specialist registration;
- during assessment or supervision, deficiencies are identified in the practitioner's practice that the Board considers are significant; or
- the practitioner fails to meet any other requirements specified in the applicable registration standard or under the National Law.

## Definitions

**Australian Medical Council (AMC)** is an independent national standards body for medical education and training in Australia. The AMC administers the Primary Source Verification (PSV) process for qualifications, in addition to administering national examinations for IMGs who wish to practise medicine in Australia.

**Board** means the Medical Board of Australia.

**Examination or assessment** means an examination or assessment to determine the applicant's ability to practise the profession for the registration sought. The applicant may be required to pay a fee for the examination or assessment.

**International Medical Graduate** means a person who has obtained his or her basic medical qualifications in a country outside Australia.

**Limited registration** for the purpose of this document refers to:

- Limited registration postgraduate training or supervised practice
- Limited registration for area of need
- Limited registration for teaching or research
- Limited registration in public interest

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory.

**State or Territory board** means the state or territory board of the Medical Board of Australia. For example, the Queensland Board of the Medical Board of Australia or the South Australian Board of the Medical Board of Australia.

**Supervised practice plan** means a plan that sets out the level of supervision required and how the supervision is to occur based on the level of risk attached to the position and the skill level of the IMG. A supervised practice plan and training plan may be combined as one plan as long as all the required elements are contained within the one plan.

**Training Plan** means a plan that sets out the learning needs and learning outcomes expected of the IMG within their area of practice. A training plan differs to a plan for supervised practice in that it sets out the core competencies that need to be attained in the area of practice and how it is proposed that these competencies will be attained. For example, a training plan should include a list of any professional development, training or programs to be completed, goals to be achieved and expected outcomes and timeframes for achievement of goals.

## Associated Documents

1. Registration standards for:
  - Limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice
  - Limited registration for area of need
  - Limited registration for teaching or research
  - Limited registration in public interest
2. Registration standard – Granting general registration to medical practitioners in the standard pathway who hold an AMC certificate
3. Guidelines - Supervised practice for international medical graduates
4. Application forms for registration – AANS-30, AANG-30, ALPS-30.