



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF RADIOGRAPHY

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The national professional organisation representing radiographers,
radiation therapists and sonographers.

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20th June 2005

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BY: MIG

Submission No. <u>8</u>
Date Received <u>21 June 05</u>

RCDIA

Ms. Paola Cerrato-D'Amico
Inquiry Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms. Cerrato-D'Amico

Re: Inquiry into skills recognition, upgrading and licensing

In reference to your letter dated 6th May 2005 informing the AIR of the above inquiry.

Enclosed please find the Australian Institute of Radiography's submission to this inquiry.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the writer on (03) 9419 3336.

Yours sincerely

E.M. Badawy
Executive Officer

cc: Board

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JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION

INQUIRY INTO SKILLS RECOGNITION, UPGRADING AND LICENSING.

Introduction

The Australian Institute of Radiography (AIR) is the national professional organisation representing radiographers, radiation therapists and sonographers. The AIR is authorised by AEI-NOOSR to assess the overseas qualifications of the above professions under Pre Application Skills Assessment (PASA). To facilitate this the Board of the AIR has created the Overseas Qualification Assessment Panel (OQAP) to undertake the assessment of the qualifications from applicants wishing to practice in radiography, radiation therapy or sonography in Australia.

Panel

The Overseas Qualification Assessment Panel (OQAP) represents a comprehensive cross section of the imaging spectrum and the above disciplines within the AIR, with members representing not only all imaging modalities, but also, diverse geographic locations. The panel also has representation from the Institutes Education Board and overseas qualified Radiographers who have been subject to assessment by OQAP or it's earlier manifestations. The Panel carries out assessments of overseas-qualified applicants to practice diagnostic and therapeutic radiography as well as ultrasound, including echocardiography, in Australia. The Panel is appointed by the Board of the AIR to act on their behalf.

Assessment

The panel utilises a prescribed set of guidelines that are, from time to time, reviewed by the Board of the AIR. The objective is to determine the academic and clinical qualifications of applicants and to make recommendations to the Board on the capabilities of the applicant to perform to a level and standard required of a practitioner in Australia.

Extensive postgraduate clinical experience is taken into account during the assessment process where an undergraduate academic program undertaken by the applicant fails to reach the minimum standard in Australia at the time of graduation. The application is assessed for recency of practice as well.

During the assessment process consideration is given to postgraduate programs undertaken by the applicant. These may relate to medical imaging and treatment but involve management or teaching as well as specialisation in specific areas of professional practice. Another aspect considered is evidence of Continuing Professional Development by the applicant.

Mindful of the shortage of imaging and treatment personnel in Australia, every effort is made to assist the application in achieving a recognised and suitable standard, leading to the granting of accreditation.

The vast majority of applications are processed at Panel meetings, which occur on a regular basis, thus ensuring the broadest range of interpretation and analysis by the 8 members of the Panel. Between Panel meetings the assessments are passed around members to allow a thorough scrutiny of the applications.

Appeals

The appeal process, whereby an applicant who feels they are suitable to practice in Australia, but have not been given accreditation, acts as a secondary review process, to ensure the decision is in the best interests of the patients, public and the professions as a whole.

OQAP's only role in the appeal process is to review its' original analysis of the application and report to the Board on any new or unrealised evidence to support the application.

Applicants Resident in Australia

If the applicant is resident in Australia at time of application and their academic qualifications and clinical experience does not meet the required level for recognition and accreditation they may be offered a Clinical Based Assessment (CBA) as a further assessment tool.

Access to Information

Potential applicants have access to the information required as well as application forms via the AIR web site www.a-i-r.com.au/cpd/OS.html. The process and the requirements are explained in detail here. All aspects of the application requirements are outlined.

Acceptance of overseas qualification by employers

Employment in most States and Territories in Australia for radiographers, radiation therapists and sonographers is by way of registration or licensing. The assessment and recognition of the applicant's qualifications enables the AIR to issue a Statement of Accreditation or in the case of ultrasound Certificate of Recognition. These documents will enable the overseas-qualified person to be registered or licensed to practice their profession. It also signals to the employer that the person is of an acceptable standard to practice in Australia.

Accredited Courses

As a means of dealing with applicants from countries where a large number of applicants come from the Board of the AIR through the Professional Accreditation and Education Board (PAEB) has assessed and recognised academic course as equivalent to those course undertaken in Australia. This recognition of courses is for some current undergraduate degree course for the UK, Ireland, New Zealand and Hong Kong. Applicants from these recognised courses must have undertaken 12 months clinical experience before seeking recognition for their qualification. Applicants from these courses are fast tracked through the system if the AIR is provided with the correct information. The AIR has accredited not all courses from these countries.

Conclusion

Whilst we feel that the current process employed by OQAP is a fair and equitable one, we are constantly reviewing our methods, and a significant amount of time at each meeting is given to discussion on ways to maintain the objective quality of the assessment process.

Marcia Fleet
Professional Liaison Officer