



australian
pharmacy
council

O-51 International Degree Program Accreditation Policy

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Term
AC	Accreditation Committee
Ahpra	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority
APC	Australian Pharmacy Council
CAOP	Competency Assessment for Overseas Pharmacists
KAPS	Knowledge of Pharmaceutical Sciences
PharmBA	Pharmacy Board of Australia

International Degree Program Accreditation Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance regarding decisions about the accreditation of international pharmacy degree programs.

2. Scope

The Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) accredits international pharmacy degree programs to assure their quality against the [Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Programs](#) ('Accreditation Standards') and to offer an independent review for quality improvement.

3. International accreditation

To be eligible to apply for accreditation, a degree program delivered outside of Australia (an 'international program') must meet a number of specific criteria before being invited to apply. The education provider is required to show that the program:

- is taught entirely in English, with an English curriculum
- leads to a qualification that compares to an Australian accredited 4-year Bachelor of Pharmacy program
- ranks in either Section 1 or Section 2 of the Australian Education International (AEI-NOOSR) Country Education Profile
- is in a country with a [Smartraveller travel advice](#) of either a normal or high degree of caution.

If these criteria are met and we agree to commence the accreditation process, the program will be required to submit an accreditation application against the [accreditation standards](#). Fees will apply as outlined on our [accreditation fees list](#).

4. Principles

The following principles apply to the process of international degree program accreditation:

1. Accreditation of international degree programs is undertaken against the [accreditation standards](#).
2. International degree programs that are granted accreditation are referred to as 'accredited with conditions'. These programs are unable to be described as 'accredited' as they are unable to meet two criteria in the [accreditation standards](#) (see Appendix A for more details).
3. International degree programs are subject to the same accreditation processes and monitoring (such as annual reporting) as Australian programs, except where specified in this policy or the APC [Accreditation Guide](#).
4. The [accreditation fees](#) for international degree programs are published on our website.

5. Graduates from an APC accredited international degree program are not eligible for the same Pharmacy Board of Australia (PharmBA) registration pathway as Australian program graduates (see part 7 of this policy).

5. Accreditation processes

The accreditation process for international degree programs is outlined in the APC [Accreditation Guide](#). International degree programs follow the same processes as Australian programs, where possible, and any differences between the processes are highlighted in the guide.

International degree programs are assessed against 36 of the 38 criteria in the [accreditation standards](#) (see Appendix A for more detail). For a further three of the 36 eligible criteria, the requirements for these programs are modified (see Appendix B for more details).

6. Accreditation decision making

The accreditation decision making process for international degree programs involves both the APC Board and the Accreditation Committee (AC). The decision-making responsibilities are designated as follows:

6.1. APC Board

- invites an education provider to apply for accreditation on the basis of meeting the criteria described in section 3 of this policy
- makes a decision on the initial accreditation status of the program ('accredited with conditions' or 'not accredited')
- makes a decision on accreditation renewal.

6.2. APC Accreditation Committee

- makes an accreditation recommendation to the APC Board to 'accredit with conditions' or 'not accredit'
- makes a decision on program conditions and/or monitoring requirements (to apply, revise or remove).

7. Graduate outcomes

Graduates of APC accredited international degree programs are not eligible for exemption from any stages of the APC skills assessment process, including the Knowledge of Pharmaceutical Sciences (KAPS) or the Competency Assessment for Overseas Pharmacists (CAOP) exams (as applicable for their country of training).

Graduates seeking registration with PharmBA will be required to apply via our existing [skills assessment and registration](#) process.

Appendix A Criteria in the accreditation standards that do not apply to international programs

International degree programs that are granted accreditation are only eligible for 'accreditation with conditions', due to these programs being unable to meet two criteria in the [accreditation standards](#). The two criteria are described below.

Criterion 2.2

Australian provider organisations are registered either with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) (HEIs) or Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) (RTOs).

Explanation

International programs are unable to meet the same regulatory requirements of Australian providers.

Criterion 3.4

Program design, content, delivery and assessment specifically emphasise and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, cultural safety and improved health outcomes. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should have direct input into curriculum design and content, and where possible should be involved directly in delivery and assessment.

Explanation

International programs are not expected to include program content and assessment that relates to, and includes input from, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Appendix B Criteria in the accreditation standards that apply to international programs with modifications

The requirements for three criteria in the [accreditation standards](#) will be modified for international programs to apply outside of the Australian context. The three criteria and the amended assessment requirements are described below.

Criterion 1.8

Effective processes are in place to ensure that the unit delivering the program maintains compliance with all obligations under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act, PharmBA and/or equivalent national and state/territory frameworks.

Explanation

International degree programs do not have obligations under Australian national laws and cannot be assessed against this requirement. They will only be assessed against the second requirement of this criterion to maintain compliance with all obligations under 'equivalent national and state frameworks.

Criterion 3.3

Program planning, design, implementation, evaluation, review and quality improvement processes are carried out in a systematic and inclusive manner, involving input where relevant from staff, students/interns, graduates, supervisors, practitioners, employers, patients and consumers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and other key external stakeholders to ensure that the program remains fit-for-purpose. Outcomes from these processes are clearly communicated in a timely manner to stakeholders.

Explanation

The criterion refers to the program gathering input 'where relevant' from a range of stakeholders. International programs are not expected to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their consultations. It is expected that the processes referred to in the criterion would be undertaken with input from the range of cultural groups relevant to the geographical location of the program.

Criterion 4.2

Program information, including selection policies, criteria and processes, inherent requirements, English language proficiency requirements, experiential and WIL requirements, PharmBA requirements, current accreditation status and any other relevant information, is accurate, accessible and comprehensive to ensure that potential applicants are given sufficient guidance to make an informed decision.

Criterion 4.2

Explanation

The PharmBA requirements referred to in this criterion do not apply for students and graduates of international degree programs seeking registration in their country of training. It is expected that international degree programs would ensure that potential candidates are provided with information on the equivalent requirements in the geographical location of the program.



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