

Submission to Optometry Board of Australia: consultation on accreditation

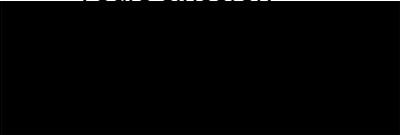
Introduction

1. Thank you for the opportunity to make submissions in relation to the consultation on future accreditation arrangements.
2. The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (ODO Board) of New Zealand is a statutory authority established under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (HPCAA). Its purpose is to ensure that optometrists and dispensing opticians are competent to practise their professions. The ODO Board is the New Zealand equivalent of the Optometry Board of Australia (OBA).

Submission

3. The ODO Board is aware that this consultation is being conducted across the National Boards in Australia.
4. As you will be aware, OCANZ, as with many other accreditation bodies, is a joint accreditation body for both New Zealand and Australia; it is dually funded by both countries. With that in mind, the ODO Board is surprised and disappointed that the consultation document (understood to be the same document for all professions) is silent on consideration of New Zealand regulators' "ownership" of shared accreditation bodies.
5. The ODO Board is not aware of any intent on the OBA's part to cease use of OCANZ as its external accreditation body, nor does the ODO Board have any such intent at this time. However the ODO Board asks that a requirement be built into the consideration process, and/or suggests that a new clause be added to existing MOUs, to ensure that National Boards that share accreditation functions with their New Zealand counterparts, and are considering a change, or are considering varying the terms of any arrangement with an external accreditation body, must raise this with their New Zealand counterpart at the first available opportunity, to allow time for discussion and, if necessary, implementation of alternative arrangements for New Zealand.

Yours sincerely



Rachael Heslop
Acting Registrar

