

Skills Recognition

The skills recognition process devised by the APC is designed to assess the competence of overseas trained pharmacists and students on visas completing an Australian pharmacy degree.

Following a review of its examination procedures in 2006, the Examining Committee (APEC) introduced an alternative examination procedure for overseas trained pharmacists from certain countries recognised by the APC as having substantially comparable educational processes, practice competencies and structures to Australia such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada and the United States of America. These pharmacists may demonstrate their competence to practise according to standards existing in Australia through this alternative process known as Stream B. For all other pharmacists with off shore qualifications the examination procedure is known as Stream A.

Both pathways aim to ensure pharmacists are appropriately qualified and equipped with the necessary knowledge for Australian pharmacy practice.

Examinations

The APC has developed a number of examinations which are used for the assessment of overseas-trained pharmacists. The APC has also developed assessment tools for use by the Australian pharmacy registering authorities in the assessment of Australian pre-registrants.

APC examination questions are compiled and reviewed by practising pharmacists across the full breadth of the profession in Australia. Suitable questions are validated by testing both Australian pre-registrants and practising pharmacists before being stored in a data bank from which the examination papers are generated.

The APC administers examinations in Australia and at a number of overseas locations.



AUSTRALIAN PHARMACY COUNCIL

THE ORGANISATION OF REGISTERING AUTHORITIES

OVERVIEW

Contact Details

Australian Pharmacy Council inc

PO Box 269

Civic Square ACT 2608

AUSTRALIA

Ph: +61 2 6262 9628

Fax: +61 2 6247 9611

Web: www.pharmacycouncil.org.au

Email: admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au



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Australian Pharmacy Council Overview

Introduction

The Australian Pharmacy Council (APC) is the national body representing the Australian state and territory pharmacy registering authorities. It was established in 2002 to enable a national approach to pharmacy regulation and accreditation thus supporting the primary goal of the registering authorities to protect the public.

The APC works collaboratively with governments, other pharmacy professional organisations, other regulatory groups, and the community to identify issues and trends in pharmacy that require a collegiate approach.

Our functions are:

- leadership in developing and implementing nationally consistent policies, processes and approaches to pharmacy practice, regulation and registration,
- accrediting pharmacy schools and programs; and authorising agencies to accredit continuing professional development;
- conducting examinations towards eligibility for registration, and
- assessing the qualifications and skills of pharmacy graduates towards Australian registration and permanent residency.



Our core values are:

- high ethical standards
- honesty and transparency in everything we do
- accountability to our clients and stakeholders
- evidence-based decision making
- high quality business processes and outcomes
- continuous improvement
- collaborative models of leadership

Our people are:

The Council – Each state and territory registering authority appoints a councillor to the Australian Pharmacy Council.

The members of the five standing Committees of Council:

- New Zealand and Australian Pharmacy Schools Accreditation Committee (NAPSAC)
- Australian Pharmacy Examining Committee (APEC)
- Australian Pharmacy Accreditation Committee (APAC)
- Finance Audit and Risk Management (FARM) Committee
- Executive Committee

Staff – The work of the Council is supported by professional and highly-skilled staff with appropriate experience and knowledge of pharmacy, regulation and accreditation.



What we do

Accreditation

The APC accredits pharmacy schools and programs intended to lead to registration as a pharmacist. To qualify for registration as a pharmacist in Australia, a person must have completed the following:

- a pharmacy degree course recognised by the registering authority as a registrable qualification; and
- a period of pre-registration training and supervised practice.

As pharmacy practice is not subject to specialisation, a registered pharmacist must be competent to practise across the full range of settings including hospital or community practice. The necessary competencies are set out in the Competency Standards for Pharmacists in Australia 2003 (<http://www.psa.org.au>). The accreditation process provides assurance that a person who has successfully completed an accredited program will achieve those competencies by the end of their pre-registration training period.

Accreditation involves assessment of program curriculum content, and ensures the program is structured and delivered in a manner that will impart the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes. The accreditation also involves assessment of the pharmacy school regarding the human and physical resources and the scholarly environment that is necessary to enable effective learning.

The APC also authorises appropriate organisations to accredit providers of continuing professional development activities.

This contributes significantly to the maintenance of the individual's skills and knowledge, and helps to ensure safe delivery of pharmacy services to the Australian community.

