



Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board

Te Poari o ngā Kaimātai Whatu me ngā Kaiwhakarato Mōhiti

CONSULTATION – PROPOSAL TO AMEND A QUALIFICATION FOR REGISTRATION IN THE DISPENSING OPTICIAN SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Released: 28 August 2019

Submissions Due: 9 October 2019

Introduction

- 1 The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board (the Board) is charged under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) with ensuring that optometrists and dispensing opticians are competent and fit to practise when they apply for registration and on an ongoing basis. Section 118 of the Act requires the Board to prescribe the qualifications required for scopes of practice, and for that purpose, to accredit and monitor education institutions, degrees, courses of studies or programmes.
- 2 Section 12 of the Act sets out the types of qualifications that can be prescribed, and section 13 of the Act sets out the principles the Board must be guided by when prescribing qualifications. These are:
 - the qualifications must be necessary to protect members of the public; and
 - the qualifications may not unnecessarily restrict the registration of persons as health practitioners; and
 - the qualifications may not impose undue costs on health practitioners or on the public.
- 3 Section 14 of the Act requires the Board to consult on a proposal to amend a prescribed qualification with:
 - people the Board considers are able to represent the view of health practitioners or of classes of health practitioners registered with the Board;
 - organisations that the Board considers will be affected by the proposal; and
 - organisations whose members the Board considers will be affected by the proposal.

Background

- 4 In October 2016, following consultation with practitioners and stakeholders, the Board prescribed the following qualification *Fellowship Diploma of the Association of British Dispensing Optician (Malaysia)* for registration as a Dispensing Optician with the Board.
- 5 Unlike the FBDO (UK) qualification which includes completion of practical experience hours *prior* to qualification achievement, the Malaysian qualification does not include this and therefore this prescribed qualification requires that a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience, within

two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board be provided in addition to confirmation of the qualification when applying for registration with the Board.

- 6 The Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO) has announced the introduction of an Australian-delivered Fellowship Diploma qualification. The ABDO has confirmed that it is identical to the Malaysian course and Australian and New Zealand students are now able to enrol in this course.

The ABDO have further indicated that with more than 20 destinations where students are currently enrolled in ABDO Fellowship Diploma courses that it is highly probable there will be further overseas Fellowship Diploma courses introduced. In anticipation of this and in the knowledge that the ABDO must advise the Board of any major changes to its prescribed qualifications, the Board is proposing to amend the 'FBDO (Malaysia)' prescribed qualification to read 'FBDO (Overseas)'. This newly-prescribed qualification would then apply to any FBDO Fellowship Diploma courses delivered in overseas ports (outside the UK).

Proposal

- 7 The Board proposes to **amend** the FBDO (Malaysia) qualification prescribed in the New Zealand Gazette for registration within the Dispensing Optician Scope of Practice, as follows:

*“The applicant holds the qualification Fellowship Diploma of the Association of British Dispensing Optician (Overseas) **and** has submitted a completed and signed record of training book showing evidence of the completion of a minimum of 800 hours of practical experience as specified in the record of training book, within two years of qualification or a period otherwise approved by the Board.”*

Summary

- 8 The Board has provided details above, of the reason for its proposal to amend the qualification as outlined in paragraphs 5 and 6. Stakeholders are invited to provide submissions on this proposal.

How to have your say

- 9 If you wish to make submissions, please provide them in writing **by 5.00 pm on the 9th of October 2019**. The Board does not guarantee that submissions received at the Board's offices after that date will be considered.

Submissions can be sent to:

The Registrar
Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board
PO Box 9644
Wellington 6141

Email: Lindsey.Pine@odob.health.nz